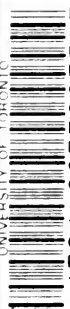
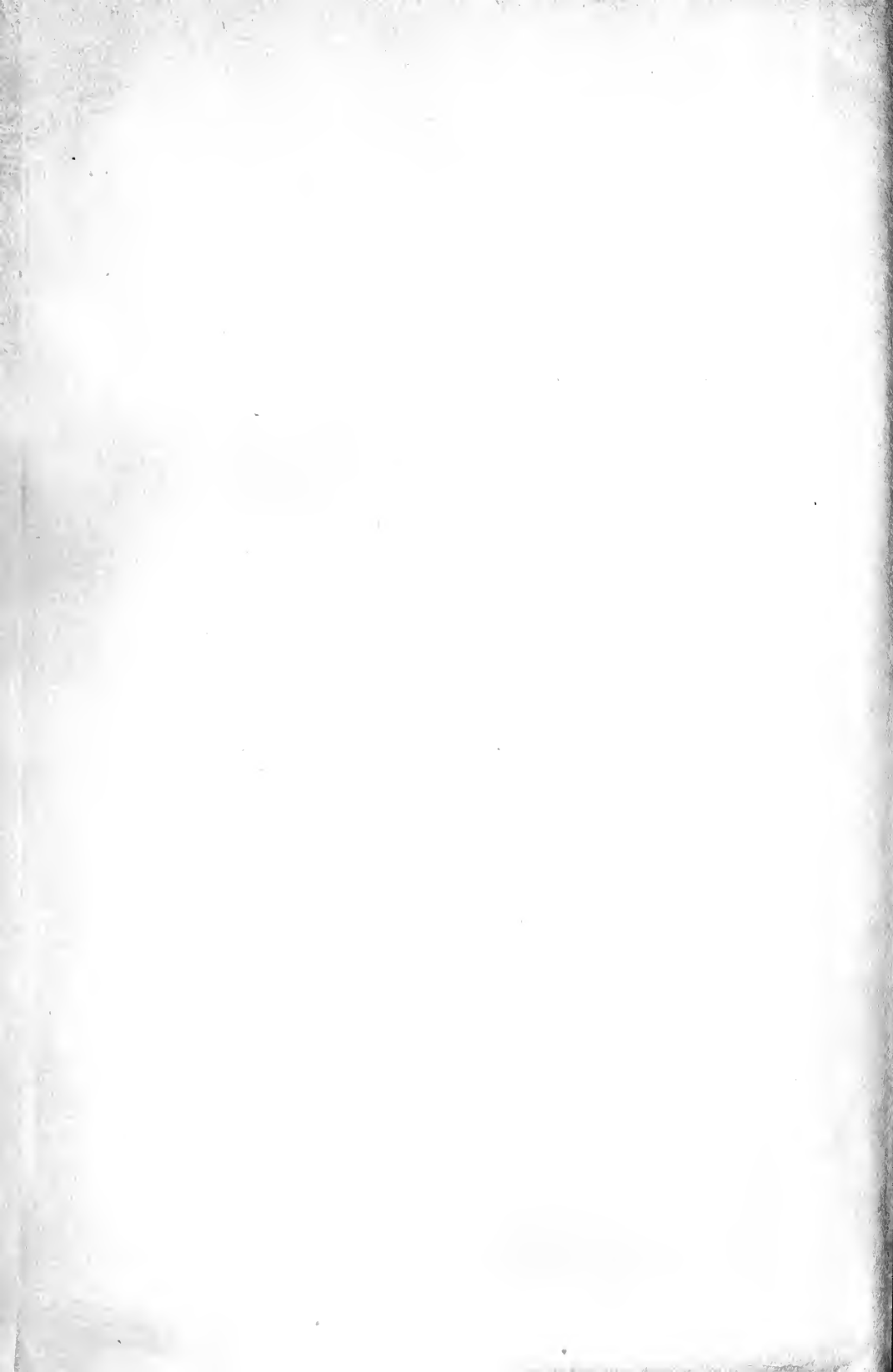


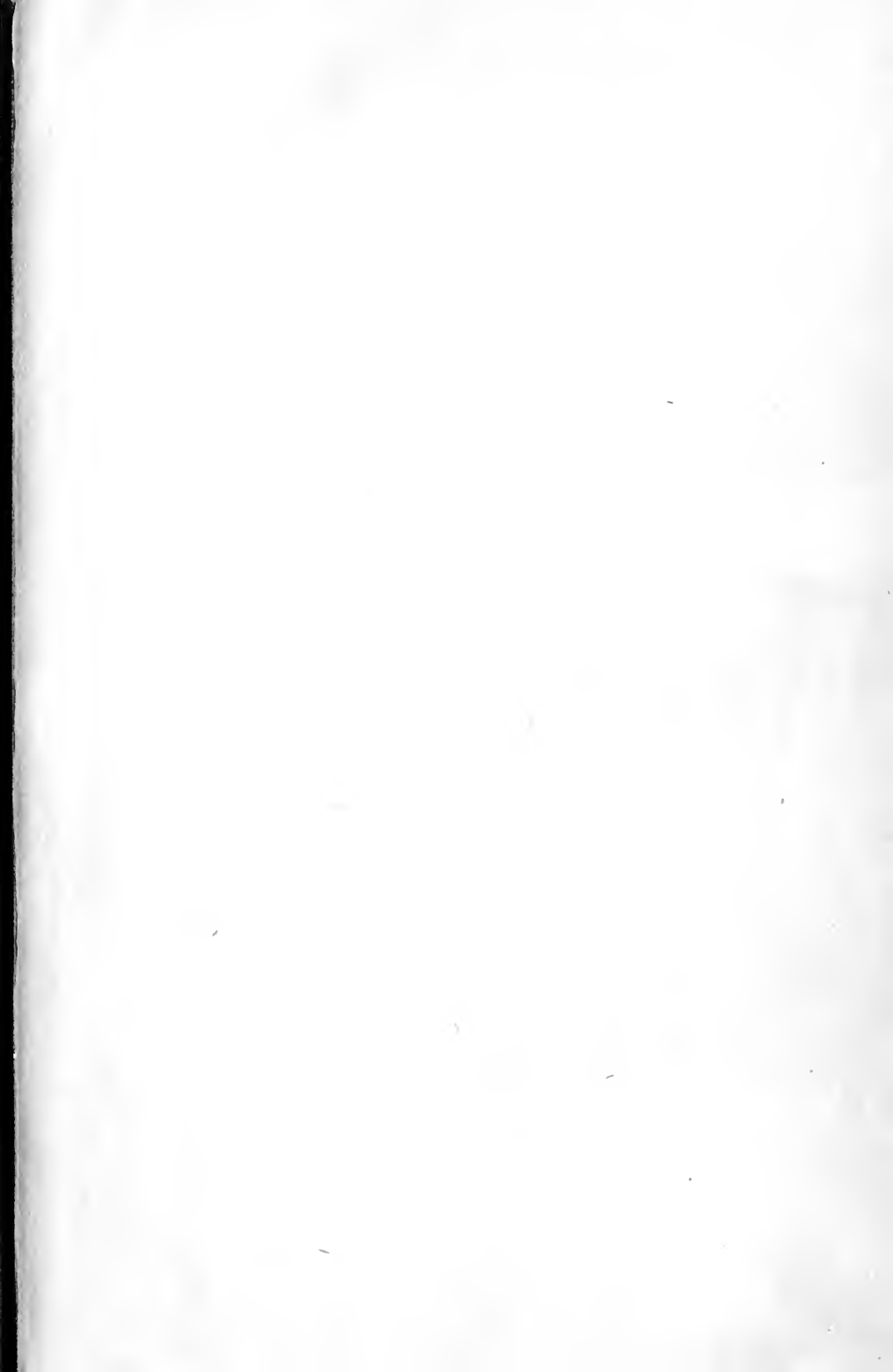
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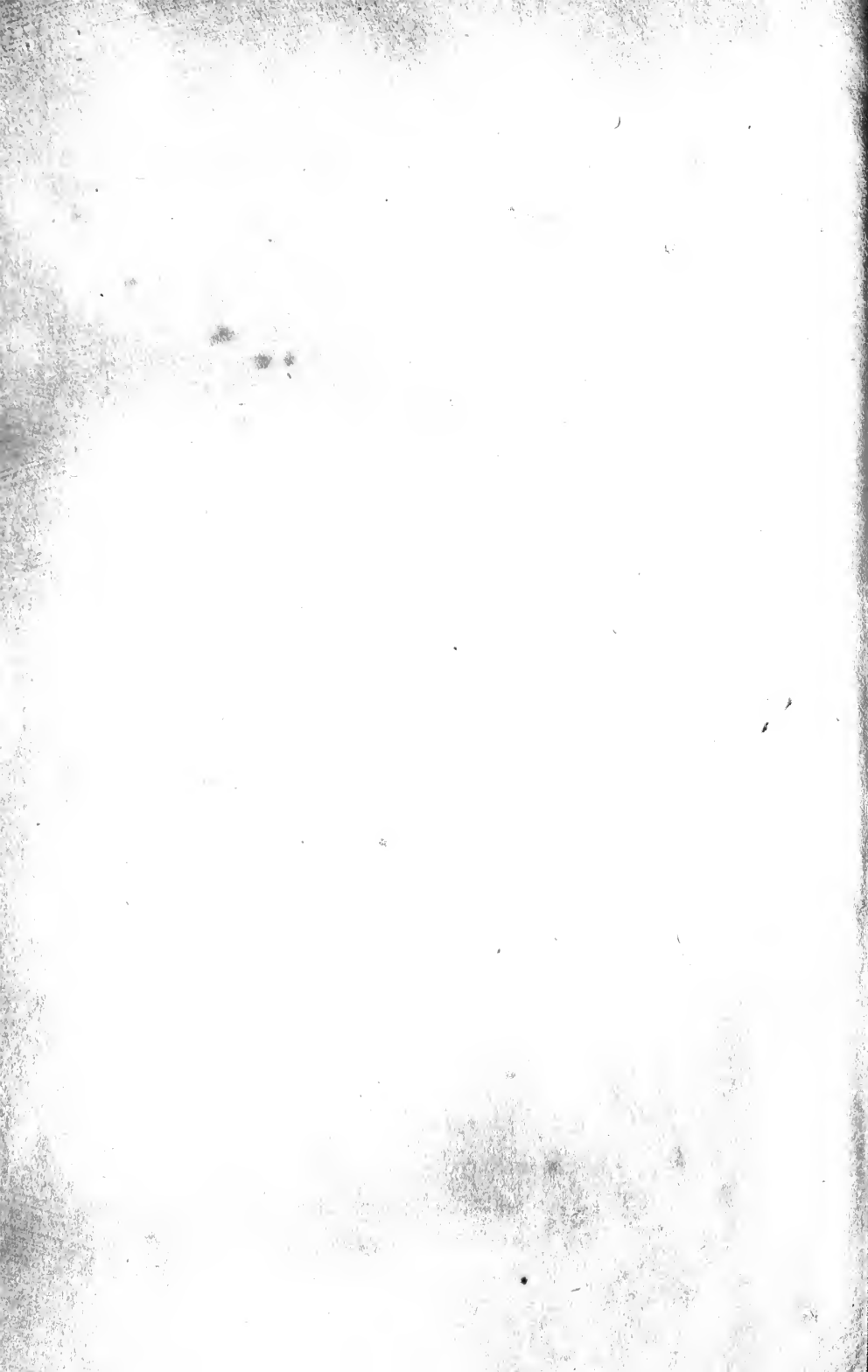


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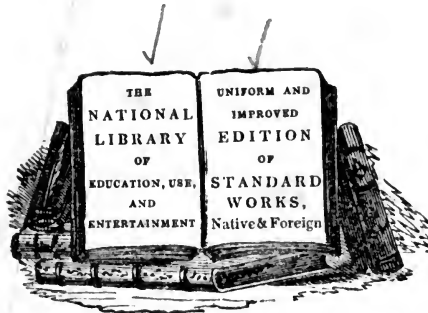
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III.

ANNALS

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THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

Sir PETER TEAZLE.
Sir OLIVER SURFACE.
JOSEPH SURFACE.
CHARLES SURFACE.
CRABTREE.
Sir BENJAMIN BACKBITE
ROWLEY.
MOSES.
TRIP.
SNAKE.
CARELESS.
Sir HARRY BUNPER.

Lady TEAZLE.
MARIA.
Lady SNEERWELL.
Mrs. CANDOUR.

ACT I

SCENE I.—*Lady Sneerwell's House.*

Discovered Lady SNEERWELL, at the dressing-table, SNAKE drinking chocolate.

Lady S. The paragraphs, you say, Mr. Snake, whence they inserted?

Snake. They were, madam; and as I copied them myself in a feigned hand, there can be no suspicion whence they came.

Lady S. Did you circulate the report of Lady Brittle's intrigue with Captain Boastall?

Snake. That's in as fine a train as your ladyship could wish. In the common course of things, I think it must reach Mrs. Clackitt's ears within four-and-twenty hours; and then, you know, the business is as good as done.

Lady S. Why, truly, Mrs. Clackitt has a very pretty talent, and a great deal of industry.

Snake. True, madam, and has been tolerably successful in her day. To my knowledge she has been the cause of six matches being broken off, and three sons being disinherited; of four forced elopements, as many close confinements, nine separate maintenances, and two divorces. Nay, I have more than once traced her causing a tête-à-tête in the Town and Country Magazine, when the parties, perhaps, had never seen each other's faces before in the course of their lives.

Lady S. She certainly has talents, but her manner is gross.

Snake. 'Tis very true. — She generally designs well, has a free tongue and a bold invention: but

her colouring is too dark, and her outlines often extravagant. She wants that delicacy of tint and mellowness of sneer, which distinguish your ladyship's scandal.

Lady S. Ah! you are partial, Snake.

Snake. Not in the least — everybody allows that Lady Sneerwell can do more with a word or a look than many can do with the most laboured detail, even when they happen to have a little truth on their side to support it.

Lady S. Yes, my dear Snake; and I am no hypocrite to deny the satisfaction I reap from the success of my efforts. Wounded myself in the early part of my life by the envenomed tongue of slander, I confess I have since known no pleasure equal to the reducing others to the level of my own reputation.

Snake. Nothing can be more natural. But, Lady Sneerwell, there is one affair in which you have lately employed me, wherein, I confess, I am at loss to guess your motives.

Lady S. I conceive you mean with respect to my neighbour, Sir Peter Teazle, and his family.

Snake. I do. Here are two young men, to whom Sir Peter has acted as a kind of guardian since their father's death; the eldest possessing the most amiable character, and universally well spoken of — the youngest, the most dissipated and extravagant young fellow in the kingdom, without friends or character: the former an avowed admirer of your ladyship's, and apparently your favourite: the latter attached to Maria, Sir Peter's ward, and confessedly beloved by her. Now, on the face of these circumstances, it is utterly unaccountable to me, why you, the widow of a city knight, with a good jointure, should not close with the passion of a man of such character and expectations as Mr. Surface; and more so why you should be so uncommonly earnest to destroy the mutual attachment subsisting between his brother Charles and Maria.

Lady S. Then at once to unravel this mystery, I must inform you, that love has no share whatever in the intercourse between Mr. Surface and me.

Snake. No!

Lady S. His real attachment is to Maria, or her fortune; but finding in his brother a favoured rival, he has been obliged to mask his pretensions, and profit by my assistance.

Snake. Yet still I am more puzzled why you should interest yourself in his success.

Lady S. Heavens! how dull you are! Cannot you surmise the weakness which I hitherto, through shame, have concealed even from you? Must I confess, that Charles, that libertine, that extravagant that bankrupt in fortune and reputation, that

he it is for whom I'm thus anxious and malicious, and to gain whom I would sacrifice every thing?

Snake. Now, indeed, your conduct appears consistent : but how came you and Mr. Surface so confidential?

Lady S. For our mutual interest. I have found him out a long time since. I know him to be artful, selfish, and malicious—in short, a sentimental knave; while, with Sir Peter, and indeed with all his acquaintance, he passes for a youthful miracle of prudence, good sense, and benevolence.

Snake. Yes : yet Sir Peter vows he has not his equal in England—and above all, he praises him as a man of sentiment.

Lady S. True—and with the assistance of his sentiment and hypocrisy, he has brought him entirely into his interest with regard to Maria; while poor Charles has no friend in the house, though, I fear, he has a powerful one in Maria's heart, against whom we must direct our schemes.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Mr. Surface.

Lady S. Show him up. [*Exit Servant.*] He generally calls about this time. I don't wonder at people giving him to me for a lover.

Enter JOSEPH SURFACE.

Joseph S. My dear Lady Sneerwell, how do you do to-day? Mr. Snake, your most obedient.

Lady S. Snake has just been rallying me on our mutual attachment; but I have informed him of our real views. You know how useful he has been to us, and, believe me, the confidence is not ill placed.

Joseph S. Madam, it is impossible for me to suspect a man of Mr. Snake's sensibility and discernment.

Lady S. Well, well, no compliments now; but tell me when you saw your mistress, Maria—or, what is more material to me, your brother.

Joseph S. I have not seen either since I left you; but I can inform you that they never meet. Some of your stories have taken a good effect on Maria.

Lady S. Ah! my dear Snake! the merit of this belongs to you: but do your brother's distresses increase?

Joseph S. Every hour. I am told he has had another execution in the house yesterday. In short, his dissipation and extravagance exceed anything I have ever heard of.

Lady S. Poor Charles!

Joseph S. True, madam; notwithstanding his vices, one cannot help feeling for him. Poor Charles! I'm sure I wish it were in my power to be of any essential service to him; for the man who does not feel for the distresses of a friend, even though merited by his own misconduct, deserves—

Lady S. O lud! you are going to be moral, and forget that you are among friends.

Joseph S. Egad, that's true!—I'll keep that sentiment till I see Sir Peter;—however, it is certainly a charity to rescue Maria from such a libertine, who, if he is to be reclaimed, can be so only by one of your ladyship's superior accomplishments and understanding.

Snake. I believe, Lady Sneerwell, here's company coming; I'll go and copy the letter I mentioned to you.—Mr. Surface, your most obedient.

Joseph S. Sir, your very devoted. [*Exit SNAKE.*]
Lady Sneerwell, I am very sorry you have put any further confidence in that fellow.

Lady S. Why so?

Joseph S. I have lately detected him in frequent conference with old Rowley, who was formerly my father's steward, and has never, you know, been a friend of mine.

Lady S. And do you think he would betray us?

Joseph S. Nothing more likely:—take my word for't, Lady Sneerwell, that fellow hasn't virtue enough to be faithful even to his own villany—Ah! Maria!

Enter MARIA.

Lady S. Maria, my dear, how do you do?—What's the matter?

Maria. Oh! there is that disagreeable lover of mine, Sir Benjamin Backbite, has just called at my guardian's, with his odious uncle, Crabtree; so I slipped out, and ran hither to avoid them.

Lady S. Is that all?

Joseph S. If my brother Charles had been of the party, madam, perhaps you would not have been so much alarmed.

Lady S. Nay, now you are severe; for I dare swear the truth of the matter is, Maria heard you were here.—But, my dear, what has Sir Benjamin done, that you should avoid him so?

Maria. Oh, he has done nothing—but 'tis for what he has said: his conversation is a perpetual libel on all his acquaintance.

Joseph S. Ay, and the worst of it is, there is no advantage in not knowing him—for he'll abuse a stranger just as soon as his best friend; and his uncle Crabtree's as bad.

Lady S. Nay, but we should make allowance.—Sir Benjamin is a wit and a poet.

Maria. For my part, I own, madam, wit loses its respect with me, when I see it in company with malice.—What do you think, Mr. Surface?

Joseph S. Certainly, madam; to smile at the jest which plants a thorn in another's breast, is to become a principal in the mischief.

Lady S. Pshaw!—there's no possibility of being witty without a little ill nature: the malice of a good thing is the barb that makes it stick.—What's your opinion, Mr. Surface?

Joseph S. To be sure, madam; that conversation, where the spirit of raillery is suppressed, will ever appear tedious and insipid.

Maria. Well, I'll not debate how far scandal may be allowable; but in a man, I am sure, it is always contemptible. We have pride, envy, rivalryship, and a thousand little motives to depreciate each other. but the male slanderer must have the cowardice of a woman before he can traduce one.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Madam, Mrs. Candour is below, and if your ladyship's at leisure, will leave her carriage.

Lady S. Beg her to walk in.—[*Exit Servant.*] Now, Maria, however, here is a character to your taste; for though Mrs. Candour is a little talkative, everybody allows her to be the best natured and best sort of woman.

Maria. Yes,—with a very gross affectation of good nature and benevolence, she does more mischief than the direct malice of old Crabtree.

Joseph S. I faith that's true, Lady Sneerwell: whenever I hear the current running against the characters of my friends, I never think them in such danger as when Candour undertakes their defence,

Lady S. Hush!—here she is!—

Enter Mrs. CANDOUR.

Mrs. Can. My dear Lady Sneerwell, how have you been this century?—*Mr. Surface*, what news do you hear?—though indeed it is no matter, for I think one hears nothing else but scandal.

Joseph S. Just so, indeed, ma'am.

Mrs. C. Oh, Maria! child,—what! is the whole affair off between you and Charles?—his extravagance, I presume—the town talks of nothing else.

Maria. I am very sorry, ma'am, the town has so little to do.

Mrs. C. True, true, child: but there's no stopping people's tongues. I own I was hurt to hear it, as I indeed was to learn, from the same quarter, that your guardian, Sir Peter, and Lady Teazle, have not agreed lately as well as could be wished.

Maria. 'Tis strangely impertinent for people to busy themselves so.

Mrs. C. Very true, child:—but what's to be done?—People will talk—there's no preventing it. Why, it was but yesterday I was told that Miss Gadabout had eloped with Sir Filigree Flirt.—But, Lord! there's no minding what one hears; though, to be sure, I had this from very good authority.

Maria. Such reports are highly scandalous.

Mrs. C. So they are, child—shameful, shameful! But the world is so censorious, no character escapes.—Lord, now, who would have suspected your friend, Miss Prim, of an indiscretion? Yet such is the ill-nature of people, that they say her uncle stopt her last week, just as she was stepping into the York mail with her dancing-master.

Maria. I'll answer for't, there are no grounds for that report.

Mrs. C. Ah, no foundation in the world, I dare swear; no more, probably, than for the story circulated last month, of Mrs. Festino's affair with Colonel Cassino;—though, to be sure, that matter was never rightly cleared up.

Joseph S. The license of invention some people take is monstrous indeed.

Maria. 'Tis so,—but, in my opinion, those who report such things are equally culpable.

Mrs. C. To be sure they are; tale-bearers are as bad as the tale-makers—'tis an old observation, and a very true one: but what's to be done, as I said before? how will you prevent people from talking? To-day, Mrs. Clackitt assured me, Mr. and Mrs. Honeymoon were at last become mere man and wife, like the rest of their acquaintance. She likewise hinted that a certain widow, in the next street, had got rid of her dropsy, and recovered her shape in a most surprising manner. And at the same time, Miss Tattle, who was by, affirmed, that Lord Buffalo had discovered his lady at a house of no extraordinary fame; and that Sir Harry Bouquet and Tom Saunter were to measure swords on a similar provocation.—But, Lord, do you think I would report these things?—No, no! tale-bearers, as I said before, are just as bad as the tale-makers.

Joseph S. Ah! Mrs. Candour, if everybody had your forbearance and good nature!

Mrs. C. I confess, Mr. Surface, I cannot bear to hear people attacked behind their backs; and when ugly circumstances come out against our acquaintance, I own I always love to think the best. By-the-by, I hope 'tis not true that your brother is absolutely ruined?

Joseph S. I am afraid his circumstances are very bad indeed, ma'am.

Mrs. C. Ah! I heard so—but you must tel him

to keep up his spirits; everybody almost is in the same way—Lord Spindle, Sir Thomas Splint, and Mr. Nickit—all up, I hear, within this week; so if Charles is undone, he'll find half his acquaintance ruined too, and that, you know, is a consolation.

Joseph S. Doubtless, ma'am—a very great one.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Mr. Crabtree and Sir Benjamin Backbite.

[*Exit Servant.*]

Lady S. So, Maria, you see your lover pursues you; positively you sha'n't escape.

Enter CRABTREE and Sir BENJAMIN BACKBITE.

Crab. Lady Sneerwell, I kiss your hand. Mrs. Candour, I don't believe you are acquainted with my nephew, Sir Benjamin Backbite? Egad! ma'am, he has a pretty wit, and is a pretty poet, too; isn't he, Lady Sneerwell?

Sir B. O fie, uncle!

Crab. Nay, egad, it's true; I back him at a rebus or a charade against the best rhymers in the kingdom.—Has your ladyship heard the epigram he wrote last week on Lady Frizzle's feather catching fire?—Do, Benjamin, repeat it, or the charade you made last night extempore at Mrs. Drowzie's conversazione. Come now;—your first is the name of a fish, your second a great naval commander, and—

Sir B. Uncle, now—pr'ythee—

Crab. I'faith, ma'am, 'twould surprise you to hear how ready he is at these things.

Lady S. I wonder, Sir Benjamin, you never publish anything.

Sir B. To say truth, ma'am, 'tis very vulgar to print; and as my little productions are mostly satires and lampoons on particular people, I find they circulate more by giving copies in confidence to the friends of the parties. However, I have some love elegies, which, when favoured with this lady's smiles, I mean to give the public.

Crab. 'Fore Heaven, ma'am, they'll immortalize you!—you will be handed down to posterity, like Petrarch's Laura, or Waller's Sacharissa.

Sir B. Yes, madam, I think you will like them, when you shall see them on a beautiful quarto page, where a neat rivulet of text shall murmur through a meadow of margin.—'Fore Gad they will be the most elegant things of their kind!

Crab. But, ladies, that's true—have you heard the news!

Mrs. C. What, sir, do you mean the report of—

Crab. No, ma'am, that's not it—Miss Nicely is going to be married to her own footman.

Mrs. C. Impossible!

Crab. Ask Sir Benjamin.

Sir B. 'Tis very true, ma'am; everything is fixed, and the wedding liveries bespoken.

Crab. Yes—and they do say there were very pressing reasons for it.

Lady S. Why, I have heard something of this before.

Mrs. C. It can't be—and I wonder any one should believe such a story, of so prudent a lady as Miss Nicely.

Sir B. O lud! ma'am, that's the very reason 'twas believed at once. She has always been so cautious and so reserved, that everybody was sure there was some reason for it at bottom.

Mrs. C. Why, to be sure, a tale of scandal is as fatal to the credit of a prudent lady of her stamp as a fever is generally to those of the strongest constitutions. But there is a sort of puny, sickly

reputation, that is always ailing, yet will outlive the robust characters of a hundred prudes.

Sir B. True, madam,—there are valetudinarians in reputation as well as constitution; who, being conscious of their weak part, avoid the least breath of air, and supply their want of stamina by care and circumspection.

Mrs. C. Well, but this may be all a mistake. You know, Sir Benjamin, very trifling circumstances often give rise to the most injurious tales.

Crab. That they do, I'll be sworn, ma'am.—Did you ever hear how Miss Piper came to lose her lover and her character last summer at Tunbridge?—Sir Benjamin, you remember it?

Sir B. Oh, to be sure!—the most whimsical circumstance.

Lady S. How was it, pray?

Crab. Why, one evening, at Mrs. Ponto's assembly, the conversation happened to turn on the breeding Nova Scotia sheep in this country. Says a young lady in company, I have known instances of it—for Miss Letitia Piper, a first cousin of mine, had a Nova Scotia sheep that produced her twins.—What! cries the lady dowager Dundizy (who you know is as deaf as a post), has Miss Piper had twins?—This mistake, as you may imagine, threw the whole company into a fit of laughter. However, 'twas the next day everywhere reported, and in a few days believed by the whole town, that Miss Letitia Piper had actually been brought to bed of a fine boy and a girl; and in less than a week there were some people who could name the father, and the farm-house where the babies were put to nurse.

Lady S. Strange, indeed!

Crab. Matter of fact, I assure you.—O lud! Mr. Surface, pray is it true that your uncle, Sir Oliver, is coming home?

Joseph S. Not that I know of, indeed, sir.

Crab. He has been in the East Indies a long time. You can scarcely remember him, I believe?—Sad comfort whenever he returns, to hear how your brother has gone on!

Joseph S. Charles has been imprudent, sir, to be sure; but I hope no busy people have already prejudiced Sir Oliver against him. He may reform.

Sir B. To be sure he may: for my part, I never believed him to be so utterly void of principle as people say; and, though he has lost all his friends, I am told nobody is better spoken of by the Jews.

Crab. That's true, egad, nephew. If the Old Jewry was a ward, I believe Charles would be an alderman: no man more popular there. 'fore Gad! I hear he pays as many annuities as the Irish ton-tune; and that, whenever he is sick, they have prayers for the recovery of his health in all the synagogues.

Sir B. Yet no man lives in greater splendour. They tell me, when he entertains his friends he will sit down to dinner with a dozen of his own securities; have a score of tradesmen waiting in the antechamber, and an officer behind every guest's chair.

Joseph S. This may be entertainment to you, gentlemen, but you pay very little regard to the feelings of a brother.

Maria. Their malice is intolerable. Lady Sneerwell, I must wish you a good morning: I'm not very well. [Exit MARIA.]

Mrs. C. O dear! she changes colour very much.

Lady S. Do, Mrs. Candour, follow her: she may want your assistance.

Mrs. C. That I will, with all my soul, ma'am.—Poor dear girl, who knows what her situation may be! [Exit Mrs. CANDOUR.]

Lady S. 'Twas nothing but that she could not bear to hear Charles reflected on, notwithstanding their difference.

Sir B. The young lady's penchant is obvious.

Crab. But Benjamin, you must not give up the pursuit for that: follow her, and put her into good humour. Repeat her some of your own verses. Come, I'll assist you.

Sir B. Mr. Surface, I did not mean to hurt you; but depend on't your brother is utterly undone.

Crab. O lud, aye! undone as ever man was.—Can't raise a guinea!

Sir B. And every thing sold, I'm told, that was moveable.—

Crab. I have seen one that was at his house.—Not a thing left but some empty bottles that were overlooked, and the family pictures, which I believe are framed in the wainscots—

Sir B. And I'm very sorry, also, to hear some bad stories against him.

Crab. Oh! he has done many mean things, that's certain.

Sir B. But, however, as he is your brother—

Crab. We'll tell you all another opportunity.

[Exit Mr. CRABTREE and Sir BENJAMIN.]

Lady S. Ha! ha! 'tis very hard for them to leave a subject they have not quite run down.

Joseph S. And I believe the abuse was no more acceptable to your ladyship than Maria.

Lady S. I doubt her affections are further engaged than we imagine. But the family are to be here this evening, so you may as well dine where you are, and we shall have an opportunity of observing further; in the meantime, I'll go and plot mischief, and you shall study sentiment.

[Exit.]

SCENE II.—Sir Peter's House.

Enter Sir PETER.

Sir P. When an old bachelor marries a young wife, what is he to expect? 'Tis now six months since Lady Teazle made me the happiest of men—and I have been the most miserable dog ever since. We tift a little going to church, and came to a quarrel before the bells had done ringing. I was more than once nearly choked with gall during the honeymoon, and had lost all comfort in life before my friends had done wishing me joy. Yet I chose with caution—a girl bred wholly in the country, who never knew luxury beyond one silk gown, nor dissipation above the annual gala of a race ball. Yet she now plays her part in all the extravagant fopperies of fashion and the town, with as ready a grace as if she had never seen a bush or a grass-plot out of Grosvenor-square! I am sneered at by all my acquaintance, and paragraphed in the newspapers. She dissipates my fortune, and contradicts all my humours; yet, the worst of it is, I doubt I love her, or I should never bear all this. However, I'll never be weak enough to own it.

Enter ROWLEY.

Rowley. Oh! Sir Peter, your servant: how is it with you, sir?

Sir P. Very bad, master Rowley, very bad. I meet with nothing but crosses and vexations.

Rowley. What can have happened since yesterday?

Sir P. A good question to a married man!

Rowley. Nay, I'm sure, Sir Peter, your lady cannot be the cause of your uneasiness.

Sir P. Why, has anybody told you she was dead?

Rowley. Come, come, Sir Peter, you love her, notwithstanding your tempers don't exactly agree.

Sir P. But the fault is entirely hers, master Rowley. I am, myself, the sweetest tempered man alive, and hate a teasing temper: and so I tell her a hundred times a day.

Rowley. Indeed!

Sir P. Ay! and what is very extraordinary, in all our disputes she is always in the wrong! But Lady Sneerwell, and the set she meets at her house, encourage the perverseness of her disposition. Then, to complete my vexation, Maria, my ward, whom I ought to have the power of a father over, is determined to turn rebel too, and absolutely refuses the man whom I have long resolved on for her husband; meaning, I suppose, to bestow herself on his profligate brother.

Rowley. You know, sir, I have always taken the liberty to differ with you on the subject of these two young gentlemen. I only wish you may not be deceived in your opinion of the elder. For Charles, my life on't! he will retrieve his errors yet. Their worthy father, once my honoured master, was, at his years, nearly as wild a spark; yet, when he died, he did not leave a more benevolent heart to lament his loss.

Sir P. You are wrong, master Rowley. On their father's death, you know, I acted as a kind of guardian to them both, till their uncle Sir Oliver's eastern liberality gave them an early independence: of course, no person could have more opportunities of judging of their hearts, and I was never mistaken in my life. Joseph is indeed a model for the young men of the age. He is a man of sentiment, and acts up to the sentiments he professes; but for the other, take my word for't, if he had any grain of virtue by descent, he has dissipated it with the rest of his inheritance. Ah! my old friend, Sir Oliver, will be deeply mortified when he finds how part of his bounty has been misapplied.

Rowley. I am sorry to find you so violent against the young man, because this may be the most critical period of his fortune. I came hither with news that will surprise you.

Sir P. What! let me hear.

Rowley. Sir Oliver is arrived, and at this moment in town.

Sir P. How! you astonish me! I thought you did not expect him this month.

Rowley. I did not; but his passage has been remarkably quick.

Sir P. Egad, I shall rejoice to see my old friend. 'Tis sixteen years since we met.—We have had many a day together;—but does he still enjoin us not to inform his nephews of his arrival?

Rowley. Most strictly. He means, before it is known, to make some trial of their dispositions.

Sir P. Ah! there needs no art to discover their merits—however, he shall have his way: but, pray, does he know I am married?

Rowley. Yes, and will soon wish you joy.

Sir P. What, as we drink health to a friend in a consumption. Ah! Oliver will laugh at me. We used to rail at matrimony together: but he has been steady to his text. Well, he must be at my house, though!—I'll instantly give orders for his reception. But, master Rowley, don't drop a word that Lady Teazle and I ever disagree.

Rowley. By no means.

Sir P. For I should never be able to stand Noll's jokes; so I'd have him think, Lord forgive me! that we are a very happy couple.

Rowley. I understand you:—but then you must be very careful not to differ while he is in the house with you.

Sir P. Egad, and so we must—and that's impossible. Ah! master Rowley, when an old bachelor marries a young wife, he deserves—no—the crime carries its punishment along with it. [Exeunt.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Sir Peter's House.*

Enter Lady TEAZLE and Sir PETER.

Sir P. Lady Teazle, Lady Teazle, I'll not bear it!

Lady T. Sir Peter, Sir Peter, you may bear it or not, as you please; but I ought to have my own way in everything; and what's more, I will too. What! though I was educated in the country, I know very well that women of fashion in London are accountable to nobody after they are married.

Sir P. Very well, ma'am, very well;—so a husband is to have no influence, no authority?

Lady T. Authority! No, to be sure—if you wanted authority over me, you should have adopted me, and not married me: I am sure you were old enough.

Sir P. Old enough!—ay—there it is. Well, well, Lady Teazle, though my life may be made unhappy by your temper, I'll not be ruined by your extravagance.

Lady T. My extravagance! I'm sure I'm not more extravagant than a woman of fashion ought to be.

Sir P. No, no, madam, you shall throw away no more sums on such unmeaning luxury. 'Slife! to spend as much to furnish your dressing-room with flowers in winter as would suffice to turn the Pantheon into a green-house, and give a fête champêtre at Christmas.

Lady T. Lord, Sir Peter, am I to blame, because flowers are dear in cold weather! You should find fault with the climate, and not with me. For my part, I'm sure, I wish it was spring all the year round, and that roses grew under our feet!

Sir P. Oons! madam—if you had been born to this, I shouldn't wonder at your talking thus; but you forget what your situation was when I married you.

Lady T. No, no, I don't; 'twas a very disagreeable one, or I should never have married you.

Sir P. Yes, yes, madam, you were then in somewhat a humbler style:—the daughter of a plain country squire. Recollect, Lady Teazle, when I saw you first sitting at your tambour, in a pretty figured linen gown, with a bunch of keys at your side; your hair combed smooth over a roll, and your apartment hung round with fruits in worsted, of your own working.

Lady T. O, yes! I remember it very well, and a curious life I led.—My daily occupation to inspect the dairy, superintend the poultry, make extracts from the family receipt book,—and comb my aunt Deborah's lap-dog.

Sir P. Yes, yes, ma'am, 'twas so indeed.

Lady T. And then, you know, my evening amusements! To draw patterns for ruffles, which I had not materials to make up; to play Pope Joan with the curate; to read a novel to my aunt; or to be stuck down to an old spinet to strum my father to sleep after a fox-chase.

Sir P. I am glad you have so good a memory. Yes, madam, these were the recreations I took you from; but now you must have your coach—vis-à-vis—and three powdered footmen before your chair; and, in the summer, a pair of white cats to draw you to Kensington-gardens. No recollection, I suppose, when you were content to ride double, behind the butler, on a dock'd coach-horse.

Lady T. No—I swear I never did that: I deny the butler and the coach-horse.

Sir P. This, madam, was your situation; and what have I done for you? I have made you a woman of fashion, of fortune, of rank; in short, I have made you my wife.

Lady T. Well, then,—and there is but one thing more you can make me add to the obligation, and that is—

Sir P. My widow, I suppose?

Lady T. Hem! hem!

Sir P. I thank you, madam—but don't flatter yourself; for though your ill conduct may disturb my peace of mind, it shall never break my heart, I promise you: however, I am equally obliged to you for the hint.

Lady T. Then why will you endeavour to make yourself so disagreeable to me, and thwart me in every little elegant expense!

Sir P. 'Slife, madam, I say, had you any of these little elegant expenses when you married me?

Lady P. Lud, Sir Peter! would you have me be out of the fashion!

Sir P. The fashion, indeed! What had you to do with the fashion before you married me?

Lady T. For my part, I should think you would like to have your wife thought a woman of taste.

Sir P. Ay—there again—taste—Zounds! madam, you had no taste when you married me!

Lady T. That's very true, indeed, Sir Peter; and after having married you, I should never pretend to taste again, I allow. But now, Sir Peter, since we have finished our daily jangle, I presume I may go to my engagement at Lady Sneerwell's.

Sir P. Ay, there's another precious circumstance—a charming set of acquaintance you have made there.

Lady T. Nay, Sir Peter, they are all people of rank and fortune, and remarkably tenacious of reputation.

Sir P. Yes, egad, they are tenacious of reputation with a vengeance: for they don't choose anybody should have a character but themselves!—Such a crew! Ah! many a wretch has rid on a hurdle who has done less mischief than these utterers of forged tales, coiners of scandal, and clippers of reputation.

Lady T. What! would you restrain the freedom of speech?

Sir P. Ah! they have made you just as bad as any one of the society.

Lady T. Why, I believe I do bear a part with a tolerable grace.

Sir P. Grace, indeed!

Lady T. But I vow I bear no malice against the people I abuse.—When I say an ill-natured thing, 'as out of pure good-humour; and I take it for

granted, they deal exactly in the same manner with me. But, Sir Peter, you know you promised to come to Lady Sneerwell's too.

Sir P. Well, well, I'll call in just to look after my own character.

Lady T. Then indeed you must make haste after me, or you'll be too late. So, good bye to ye. [Exit.]

Sir P. So—I have gain'd much by my intended expostulation: yet, with what a charming air she contradicts everything I say, and how pleasingly she shows her contempt for my authority! Well, though I can't make her love me, there is great satisfaction in quarrelling with her; and I think she never appears to such advantage as when she is doing everything in her power to plague me. [Exit.]

SCENE II.—*Lady Sneerwell's House.*—*Company sitting at the back of the stage at Card Tables.*

LADY SNEERWELL, MRS. CANDOUR, CRABTREE, SIR BENJAMIN BACKBITT, and JOSEPH SURFACE, discovered; Servants attending with Tea, &c.

Lady S. Nay, positively we will hear it.

Joseph S. Yes, yes, the epigram, by all means.

Sir B. O plague on't uncle! 'tis mere nonsense.

Crab. No, no; 'fore Gad, very clever for an extempore!

Sir B. But, ladies, you should be acquainted with the circumstance. You must know, that one day last week, as Lady Betty Currie was taking the dust in Hyde Park, in a sort of duodecimo phaeton, she desired me to write some verses on her ponies; upon which I took out my pocket-book, and in one moment produced the following:—

Sure never were seen two such beautiful ponies;
Other horses are clowns, but these macaronies:
To give them this title I'm sure is not wrong,
Their legs are so slim, and their tails are so long.

Crab. There, ladies, done in the smack of a whip, and on horseback too.

Joseph S. A very Phæbus, mounted—indeed, Sir Benjamin.

Sir B. O dear, sir! trifles—trifles.

Enter MARIA and Lady TEAZLE.

Mrs. C. I must have a copy.

Lady S. Lady Teazle, I hope we shall see Sir Peter?

Lady T. I believe he'll wait on your ladyship presently.

Lady S. Maria, my dear, you look grave. Come, you shall sit down to piquet with Mr. Surface.

Maria. I take very little pleasure in cards—however, I'll do as your ladyship pleases.

Lady T. I am surprised Mr. Surface should sit down with her; I thought he would have embraced this opportunity of speaking to me, before Sir Peter came. [Aside.]

Mrs. C. Now, I'll die, but you are so scandalous, I'll forswear your society.

Lady T. What's the matter, Mrs. Candour?

Mrs. C. They'll not allow our friend Miss Vermilion to be handsome.

Lady S. O, surely, she is a pretty woman.

Crab. I am very glad you think so, ma'am.

Mrs. C. She has a charming fresh colour.

Lady T. Yes, when it is fresh put on.

Mrs. C. O fie! I'll swear her colour is natural: I have seen it come and go.

Lady T. I dare swear you have, ma'am: it goes off at night, and comes again in the morning.

Mrs. C. Ha! ha! ha! how I hate to hear you talk so! But surely now, her sister is, or was, very handsome.

Crab. Who? *Mrs. Evergreen*? O Lord! she's six-and-fifty if she's an hour!

Mrs. C. Now positively you wrong her; fifty-two or fifty-three is the utmost—and I don't think she looks more.

Sir B. Ah! there's no judging by her looks, unless one could see her face.

Lady S. Well, well, if *Mrs. Evergreen* does take some pains to repair the ravages of time, you must allow she effects it with great ingenuity; and surely that's better than the careless manner in which the widow *Ochre* calks her wrinkles.

Sir B. Nay, now, *Lady Sneerwell*, you are severe upon the widow. Come, come, 'tis not that she paints so ill—but when she has finished her face, she joins it on so badly to her neck, that she looks like a mended statue, in which the connoisseur may see at once that the head is modern, though the trunk's antique.

Crab. Ha! ha! ha! Well said, nephew!

Mrs. C. Ha! ha! ha! Well, you make me laugh; but I vow I hate you for it. What do you think of *Miss Simper*?

Sir B. Why she has very pretty teeth.

Lady T. Yes, and on that account, when she is neither speaking or laughing (which very seldom happens), she never absolutely shuts her mouth, but leaves it always on a jar, as it were,—thus.

[Shows her teeth.]

Mrs. C. How can you be so ill-natured?

Lady T. Nay, I allow even that's better than the pains *Mrs. Prim* takes to conceal her losses in front. She draws her mouth till it positively resembles the aperture of a poor's box, and all her words appear to slide out edgewise, as it were,—thus—How do you do, madam? Yes, madam. [Mimics.]

Lady S. Very well, *Lady Teazle*; I see you can be a little severe.

Lady T. In defence of a friend it is but justice. But here comes *Sir Peter* to spoil our pleasantry.

Enter *Sir Peter Teazle*.

Sir P. Ladies, your most obedient. Mercy on me! here is the whole set! a character dead at every word, I suppose. [Aside.]

Mrs. C. I am rejoiced you are come, *Sir Peter*. They have been so censorious—they'll allow good qualities to nobody.

Sir P. That must be very distressing to you, indeed, *Mrs. Candour*.

Mrs. C. Not even good-nature to our friend *Mrs. Popsy*.

Lady T. What, the fat dowager who was at *Mrs. Quadrille's* last night?

Mrs. C. Nay, but her bulk is her misfortune; and when she takes such pains to get rid of it, you ought not to reflect on her.

Lady S. That's very true, indeed.

Lady T. Yes, I know she almost lives on acids and small whey; laces herself by pullies; and often, in the hottest noon in summer, you may see her on a little squat pony, with her hair plaited up behind like a drummer's, and puffing round the Ring on a full trot.

Mrs. C. I thank you, *Lady Teazle*, for defending her.

Sir P. Yes, a good defence, truly!

Mrs. C. But, *Sir Benjamin* is as censorious as *Miss Sallow*.

Crab. Yes, and she is a curious being to pretend to be censorious—an awkward gawky, without any one good point under heaven.

Mrs. C. Positively, you shall not be so very severe. *Miss Sallow* is a near relation of mine by marriage, and as for her person, great allowance is to be made; for, let me tell you, a woman labours under many disadvantages who tries to pass for a girl at six-and-thirty.

Lady S. Though, surely, she is handsome still—and for the weakness in her eyes, considering how much she reads by candlelight, it is not to be wondered at.

Mrs. C. True, and then as to her manner; upon my word, I think it is particularly graceful, considering she never had the least education; for you know her mother was a Welsh milliner, and her father a sugar-baker at Bristol.

Sir B. Ah! you are both of you too good-natured!

Sir P. Yes damned good-natured! This their own relation mercy on me! [Aside.]

Sir B. And *Mrs. Candour* is of so moral a turn.

Mrs. C. Well, I will never join in ridiculing a friend; and so I constantly tell my cousin *Ogle*; and you all know what pretensions she has to be critical on beauty.

Crab. O to be sure! she has herself the oddest countenance that ever was seen; 'tis a collection of features from all the different countries of the globe.

Sir B. So she has, indeed—an Irish front—

Crab. Caledonian locks—

Sir B. Dutch nose—

Crab. Austrian lips—

Sir B. Complexion of a Spaniard—

Crab. And teeth à la Chinois.

Sir B. In short, her face resembles a *table d'hôte* at Spa—where no two guests are of a nation—

Crab. Or a congress at the close of a general war—wherein all the members, even to her eyes, appear to have a different interest, and her nose and chin are the only parties likely to join issue.

Mrs. C. Ha! ha! ha!

Sir P. Mercy on my life!—a person they dine with twice a week. [Aside.]

Mrs. C. Nay, but I vow you shall not carry the laugh off so—for, give me leave to say, that *Mrs. Ogle*—

Sir P. Madam, madam, I beg your pardon—there's no stopping these good gentlemen's tongues. But when I tell you, *Mrs. Candour*, that the lady they are abusing is a particular friend of mine, I hope you'll not take her part.

Lady S. Ha! ha! ha! Well said, *Sir Peter*! but you are a cruel creature,—too phlegmatic yourself for a jest, and too peevish to allow wit in others.

Sir P. Ah! madam, true wit is more nearly allied to good-nature than your ladyship is aware of.

Lady T. True, *Sir Peter*; I believe they are so near akin that they can never be united.

Sir B. Or rather, suppose them man and wife, because one so seldom sees them together.

Lady T. But *Sir Peter* is such an enemy to scandal, I believe he would have it put down by parliament.

Sir P. 'Fore heaven, madam, if they were to consider the sporting with reputation of as much importance as poaching on manors, and pass an act for the preservation of game, as well as game, I believe many would thank them for the bill.

Lady S. O Lud! Sir Peter: would you deprive us of our privileges?

Sir P. Ay, madam; and then no person should be permitted to kill characters and run down reputations, but qualified old maids and disappointed widows.

Lady S. Go, you monster!

Mrs. C. But, surely, you would not be quite so severe on those who only report what they hear?

Sir P. Yes, madam. I would have law merchant for them too; and in all cases of slander currency, whenever the drawer of the lie was not to be found, the injured parties should have a right to come on any of the indorsers.

[*Servant enters and whispers* Sir PETER.

Crab. Well, for my part, I believe there never was a scandalous tale without some foundation.

Lady S. Come, ladies, shall we sit down to cards in the next room?

Sir P. [*To the Servant.*] I'll be with them directly. —I'll get away unperceived. [*Apart.*

[*Exit Servant.*

Lady S. Sir Peter, you are not going to leave us?

Sir P. Your ladyship must excuse me; I'm called away by particular business. But I leave my character behind me. [*Exit.*

Sir B. Well—certainly, Lady Teazle, that lord of yours is a strange being: I could tell you some stories of him would make you laugh heartily, if he were not your husband.

Lady T. O, pray don't mind that;—why don't you?—come, do let's hear them.

SURFACE and MARIA advance.

Joseph S. Maria, I see you have no satisfaction in this society.

Maria. How is it possible I should?—If to raise malicious smiles at the infirmities or misfortunes of those who have never injured us, be the province of wit or humour, Heaven grant me a double portion of dulness!

Joseph S. Yet they appear more ill-natured than they are,—they have no malice at heart.

Maria. Then is their conduct still more contemptible; for, in my opinion, nothing could excuse the intemperance of their tongues, but a natural and uncontrollable bitterness of mind.

Joseph S. But can you, Maria, feel thus for others, and be unkind to me alone?—Is hope to be denied the tenderest passion?

Maria. Why will you distress me by renewing this subject?

Joseph S. Ah, Maria! you would not treat me thus, and oppose your guardian, Sir Peter's will, but that I see that profligate Charles is still a favoured rival.

Maria. Ungenerously urged!—But whatever my sentiments are for that unfortunate young man, be assured I shall not feel more bound to give him up, because his distresses have lost him the regard even of a brother.

Joseph S. Nay, but Maria, do not leave me with a frown: by all that's honest, I swear. Gad's life, here's Lady Teazle!—[*Aside.*]—You must not—no, you shall not—for, though I have the greatest regard for Lady Teazle—

Maria. Lady Teazle!

Joseph S. Yet, were Sir Peter to suspect—

Enter Lady TEAZLE.

Lady T. What is this, pray? Does he take her

for me?—Child, you are wanted in the next room. —[*Exit MARIA.*]—What is all this, pray?

Joseph S. O, the most unlucky circumstance in nature! Maria has somehow suspected the tender concern I have for your happiness, and threatened to acquaint Sir Peter with her suspicions, and I was just endeavouring to reason with her when you came in.

Lady T. Indeed! but you seemed to adopt a very tender method of reasoning—do you usually argue on your knees?

Joseph S. O, she's a child, and I thought a little bombast.—But, Lady Teazle, when are you to give me your judgment on my library, as you promised?

Lady T. No, no; I begin to think it would be imprudent, and you know I admit you as a lover no farther than fashion requires.

Joseph S. True—a mere platonic cicisbeo—what every London wife is entitled to.

Lady T. Certainly, one must not be out of the fashion. However, I have so many of my country prejudices left, that, though Sir Peter's ill-humour may vex me ever so, it never shall provoke me to—

Joseph S. The only revenge in your power. Well—I applaud your moderation.

Lady T. Go—you are an insinuating wretch. But we shall be missed—let us join the company.

Joseph S. But we had best not return together.

Lady T. Well—don't stay; for Maria sha'n't come to hear any more of your reasoning, I promise you. [*Exit LADY TEAZLE.*

Joseph S. A curious dilemma, truly, my politics have run me into! I wanted, at first, only to ingratiate myself with Lady Teazle, that she might not be my enemy with Maria; and I have, I don't know how, become her serious lover. Sincerely, I begin to wish I had never made such a point of gaining so very good a character, for it has led me into so many damn'd rogueries, that I doubt I shall be exposed at last. [*Exit*

SCENE III.—SIR PETER TEAZLE'S.

Enter SIR OLIVER SURFACE and ROWLEY.

Sir O. Ha! ha! ha! So my old friend is married hey?—a young wife out of the country.—Ha! ha! ha! That he should have stood bluff to old bachelor so long, and sink into a husband at last.

Row. But you must not rally him on the subject, Sir Oliver; 'tis a tender point, I assure you, though he has been married only seven months.

Sir O. Then he has been just half a year on the stool of repentance!—Poor Peter!—But you say he has entirely given up Charles,—never sees him, hey?

Row. His prejudice against him is astonishing, and I am sure, greatly increased by a jealousy of him with Lady Teazle, which he has been industriously led into by a scandalous society in the neighbourhood, who have contributed not a little to Charles's ill name. Whereas, the truth is, I believe, if the lady is partial to either of them, his brother is the favourite.

Sir O. Ay, I know there are a set of malicious, prating prudent gossips, both male and female, who murder characters to kill time; and will rob a young fellow of his good name, before he has years to know the value of it.—But I am not to be prejudiced against my nephew by such, I promise you.—No, no,—if Charles has done nothing false or mean, I shall compound for his extravagance.

Row. Then, my life on't, you will reclaim him.—*Ab, sir!* it gives me new life to find that *your* heart is not turned against him; and that the son of my good old master has one friend, however, left.

Sir O. What, shall I forget, Master Rowley, when I was at his years myself?—*Egad*, my brother and I were neither of us very prudent youths; and yet, I believe, you have not seen many better men than your old master was.

Row. Sir, 'tis this reflection gives me assurance that Charles may yet be a credit to his family.—But here comes Sir Peter.

Sir O. Egad, so he does.—*Mercy on me!*—he's greatly altered—and seems to have a settled married look! One may read husband in his face at this distance!

Enter Sir PETER TEAZLE.

Sir P. Hah! Sir Oliver—my old friend! Welcome to England a thousand times!

Sir O. Thank you—thank you, Sir Peter! and 'faith I am glad to find you well, believe me.

Sir P. Oh! 'tis a long time since we met—fifteen years, I doubt, Sir Oliver, and many a cross accident in the time.

Sir O. Ay, I have had my share.—But, what! I find you are married, hey, my old boy?—Well, well—it can't be helped—and so—I wish you joy with all my heart.

Sir P. Thank you, thank you, Sir Oliver.—Yes, I have entered into—the happy state;—but we'll not talk of that now.

Sir O. True, true, Sir Peter: old friends should not begin on grievances at first meeting—no, no, no.—

Row. Take care, pray sir.

Sir O. Well—so one of my nephews is a wild rogue, I find, hey?

Sir P. Wild!—Ah! my old friend, I grieve for your disappointment there; he's a lost young man, indeed. However, his brother will make you amends; Joseph is, indeed, what a youth should be. Everybody in the world speaks well of him.

Sir O. I am sorry to hear it; he has too good a character to be an honest fellow. Everybody speaks well of him!—Pshaw! then he has bowed as low to knaves and fools as to the honest dignity of genius and virtue.

Sir P. What, Sir Oliver! do you blame him for not making enemies?

Sir O. Yes, if he has merit enough to deserve them.

Sir P. Well, well—you'll be convinced when you know him. 'Tis edification to hear him converse; he professes the noblest sentiments.

Sir O. Oh! plague of his sentiments! If he salutes me with a scrap of morality in his mouth, I shall be sick directly.—But, however, don't mistake me, Sir Peter; I don't mean to defend Charles's errors: but before I form my judgment of either of them, I intend to make a trial of their hearts; and my friend Rowley and I have planned something for the purpose.

Row. And Sir Peter shall own for once he has been mistaken.

Sir P. Oh! my life on Joseph's honour.

Sir O. Well—come, give us a bottle of good wine, and we'll drink the lads' health, and tell you our scheme.

Sir P. Allons then!

Sir O. And don't, Sir Peter, be so severe against your old friend's son. Odds my life I am not

sorry that he has run out of the course a little: for my part, I hate to see prudence clinging to the green suckers of youth; 'tis like ivy round a sapling, and spoils the growth of the tree. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—Sir PETER TEAZLE'S.

Enter Sir OLIVER SURFACE, Sir PETER TEAZLE, and ROWLEY.

Sir P. Well, then, we will see this fellow first, and have our wine afterwards:—but how is this, master Rowley! I don't see the jet of your scheme.

Row. Why, sir, this Mr. Stanley, whom I was speaking of, is nearly related to them by their mother. He was once a merchant in Dublin, but has been ruined by a series of undeserved misfortunes. He has applied, by letter, since his confinement, both to Mr. Surface and Charles; from the former he has received nothing but evasive promises of future service, while Charles has done all that his extravagance has left him power to do; and he is, at this time, endeavouring to raise a sum of money, part of which, in the midst of his own distresses, I know he intends for the service of poor Stanley.

Sir O. Ah; he is my brother's son!

Sir P. Well, but how is Sir Oliver personally to—

Row. Why, sir, I will inform Charles and his brother, that Stanley has obtained permission to apply personally to his friends, and as they have neither of them ever seen him, let Sir Oliver assume his character, and he will have a fair opportunity of judging, at least, of the benevolence of their dispositions; and believe me, sir, you will find in the youngest brother, one, who, in the midst of folly and dissipation, has still, as our immortal bard expresses it,—“a heart to pity, and a hand, open as day, for melting charity.”

Sir P. Pshaw! What signifies his having an open hand or purse either, when he has nothing left to give? Well, well—make the trial, if you please. But where is the fellow whom you brought for Sir Oliver to examine, relative to Charles's affairs?

Row. Below, waiting his commands, and no one can give him better intelligence. This, Sir Oliver is a friendly Jew, who, to do him justice, has done every thing in his power to bring your nephew to a proper sense of his extravagance.

Sir P. Pray let us have him in.

Row. Desire Mr. Moses to walk up stairs.

Sir P. But, pray, why should you suppose he will speak the truth?

Row. Oh! I have convinced him that he has no chance of recovering certain sums advanced to Charles, but through the bounty of Sir Oliver, who he knows is arrived; so that you may depend on his fidelity to his own interests: I have also another evidence in my power, one Snake, whom I have detected in a matter little short of forgery, and shall shortly produce to remove some of your prejudices, Sir Peter, relative to Charles and Lady Teazle.

Sir P. I have heard too much on that subject.

Row. Here comes the honest Israelite.—

Enter MOSES.

This is Sir Oliver.

Sir O. Sir, I understand you have lately had great dealings with my nephew, Charles.

Moses. Yes, Sir Oliver, I have done all I could for him; but he was ruined before he came to me for assistance.

Sir O. That was unlucky, truly; for you have had no opportunity of showing your talents.

Moses. None at all; I hadn't the pleasure of knowing his distresses till he was some thousands worse than nothing.

Sir O. Unfortunate, indeed!—but I suppose you have done all in your power for him, honest Moses?

Moses. Yes, he knows that;—this very evening I was to have brought him a gentleman from the city, who does not know him, and will, I believe, advance him some money.

Sir P. What!—one, Charles had never money from before?

Moses. Yes—Mr. Premium, of Crutched-friars, formerly a broker.

Sir P. Egad, Sir Oliver, a thought strikes me!—Charles, you say, does not know Mr. Premium?

Moses. Not at all.

Sir P. Now then, Sir Oliver, you may have a better opportunity of satisfying yourself than by an old romancing tale of a poor relation—go with my friend Moses, and represent Premium, and then, I'll answer for it, you'll see your nephew in all his glory.

Sir O. Egad I like this idea better than the other, and I may visit Joseph afterwards as old Stanley.

Sir P. True—so you may.

Row. Well, this is taking Charles rather at a disadvantage, to be sure;—however, Moses, you understand Sir Peter, and will be faithful?

Moses. You may depend upon me; [*Looks at his watch.*] this is near the time I was to have gone.

Sir O. I'll accompany you as soon as you please, Moses—But hold! I have forgot one thing—how the plague shall I be able to pass for a Jew?

Moses. There's no need—the principal is Christian.

Sir O. Is he? I'm very sorry to hear it. But then again, an't I rather too smartly dressed to look like a money-lender?

Sir P. Not at all; 'twould not be out of character, if you went in your own carriage,—would it, Moses?

Moses. Not in the least.

Sir O. Well—but how must I talk?—there's certainly some cant of usury and mode of treating that I ought to know.

Sir P. O! there's not much to learn. The great point, as I take it, is to be exorbitant enough in your demands—hey, Moses?

Moses. Yes, that's a very great point.

Sir O. I'll answer for't I'll not be wanting in that. I'll ask him eight or ten per cent. on the loan at least.

Moses. If you ask him no more than that, you'll be discovered immediately.

Sir O. Hey!—what the plague!—how much then?

Moses. That depends upon the circumstances. If he appears not very anxious for the supply, you should require only forty or fifty per cent.; but if you find him in great distress, and want the monies very bad, you may ask double.

Sir P. A good honest trade you're learning, Sir Oliver!

Sir O. Truly, I think so—and not unprofitable.

Moses. Then, you know, you hav'n't the monies

yourself, but are forced to borrow them for him of a friend.

Sir O. Oh! I borrow it of a friend, do I?

Moses. Yes; and your friend is an unconscionable dog; but you can't help that.

Sir O. My friend an unconscionable dog, is he?

Moses. Yes, and he himself has not the monies by him, but is forced to sell stock at a great loss.

Sir O. He is forced to sell stock at a great loss, is he? Well, that's very kind of him.

Sir P. I'faith, Sir Oliver—Mr. Premium, I mean,—you'll soon be master of the trade.

Sir O. Moses shall give me further instructions as we go together.

Sir P. You will not have much time, for your nephew lives hard by.

Sir O. O! never fear: my tutor appears so able, that though Charles lived in the next street, it must be my own fault if I am not a complete rogue before I turn the corner.

[*Exit Sir OLIVER SURFACE and MOSES.*]

Sir P. So, now, I think Sir Oliver will be convinced: you are partial, Rowley, and would have prepared Charles for the other plot.

Row. No, upon my word, Sir Peter.

Sir P. Well, go bring me this Snake, and I'll hear what he has to say, presently.—I see Maria, and want to speak with her. [*Exit ROWLEY.*] I should be glad to be convinced my suspicions of Lady Teazle and Charles were unjust. I have never yet opened my mind on this subject to my friend Joseph—I am determined I will do it—he will give me his opinion sincerely.

Enter MARIA.

So, child, has Mr. Surface returned with you?

Maria. No, sir; he was engaged.

Sir P. Well, Maria, do you not reflect, the more you converse with that uniaible young man, what return his partiality for you deserves?

Maria. Indeed, Sir Peter, your frequent importunity on this subject distresses me extremely—you compel me to declare, that I know no man who has ever paid me a particular attention, whom I would not prefer to Mr. Surface.

Sir P. So—here's perverseness!—No, no, Maria, 'tis Charles only whom you would prefer. 'Tis evident his vices and follies have won your heart.

Maria. This is unkind, sir. You know I have obeyed you in neither seeing nor corresponding with him: I have heard enough to convince me that he is unworthy my regard. Yet I cannot think it culpable, if, while my understanding severely condemns his vices, my heart suggests some pity for his distresses.

Sir P. Well, well, pity him as much as you please; but give your heart and hand to a worthier object.

Maria. Never to his brother!

Sir P. Go—perverse and obstinate! but take care, madam; you have never yet known what the authority of a guardian is: don't compel me to inform you of it.

Maria. I can only say, you shall not have just reason. 'Tis true, by my father's will, I am for a short period bound to regard you as his substitute; but must cease to think you so, when you would compel me to be miserable. [*Exit MARIA.*]

Sir P. Was ever man so crossed as I am? Every thing conspiring to fret me! I had not been involved in matrimony a fortnight, before her father, a hale and hearty man, died, on purpose, I believe,

for the pleasure of plaguing me with the care of his daughter. [*Lady TEAZLE sings without.*] But here comes my help-mate! She appears in great good humour. How happy I should be if I could tease her into loving me, though but a little!

Enter Lady TEAZLE.

Lady T. Lud! Sir Peter, I hope you haven't been quarrelling with Maria? It is not using me well to be ill-humoured when I am not by.

Sir P. Ah! Lady Teazle, you might have the power to make me good-humoured at all times.

Lady T. I am sure I wish I had; for I want you to be in a charming sweet temper at this moment. Do be good-humoured now, and let me have two hundred pounds, will you?

Sir P. Two hundred pounds! What, an't I to be in a good humour without paying for it? But speak to me thus, and i'faith there's nothing I could refuse you. You shall have it [*Gives her notes*]; but seal me a bond for the repayment.

Lady T. O no—there—my note of hand will do as well. [*Offering her hand.*]

Sir P. And you shall no longer reproach me with not giving you an independent settlement. I mean shortly to surprise you:—but shall we always live thus, hey?

Lady T. If you please. I'm sure I don't care how soon we leave off quarrelling, provided you'll own you were tired first.

Sir P. Well—then, let our future contest be, who shall be most obliging.

Lady T. I assure you, Sir Peter, good nature becomes you—you look now as you did before we were married, when you used to walk with me under the elms, and tell me stories of what a gallant you were in your youth, and chuck me under the chin, you would; and ask me if I thought I could love an old fellow, who would deny me nothing—didn't you?

Sir P. Yes, yes, and you were as kind and attentive—

Lady T. Ay, so I was, and would always take your part, when my acquaintance used to abuse you, and turn you into ridicule.

Sir P. Indeed!

Lady T. Ay, and when my cousin Sophy has called you a stiff, peevish old bachelor, and laughed at me for thinking of marrying one who might be my father, I have always defended you, and said, I didn't think you so ugly by any means.

Sir P. Thank you.

Lady T. And I dared say you'd make a very good sort of a husband.

Sir P. And you prophesied right; and we shall now be the happiest couple—

Lady T. And never differ again?

Sir P. No, never!—though at the same time, indeed, my dear Lady Teazle, you must watch your temper very seriously; for in all our little quarrels, my dear, if you recollect, my love, you always begin first.

Lady T. I beg your pardon, my dear Sir Peter: indeed, you always gave the provocation.

Sir P. Now see, my angel! take care—contradicting isn't the way to keep friends.

Lady T. Then don't you begin it, my love!

Sir P. There, now! you—you are going on. You don't perceive, my life, that you are just doing the very thing which you know always makes me angry.

Lady T. Nay, you know if you will be angry without any reason, my dear—

Sir P. There now! you want to quarrel again.

Lady T. No, I am sure I don't:—but if you will be so peevish—

Sir P. There now! who begins first?

Lady T. Why you, to be sure. I said nothing:—but there's no bearing your temper.

Sir P. No, no, madam: the fault's in your own temper.

Lady T. Ay, you are just what my cousin Sophy said you would be.

Sir P. Your cousin Sophy is a forward impertinent gipsy.

Lady T. You are a great bear, I'm sure, to abuse my relations.

Sir P. Now may all the plagues of marriage be doubled on me, if ever I try to be friend with you any more!

Lady T. So much the better.

Sir P. No, no, madam: 'tis evident you never cared a pin for me, and I was a madman to marry you—a pert, rural coquette, that had refused half the honest 'squires in the neighbourhood.

Lady T. And I am sure I was a fool to marry you—an old dangling bachelor, who was single at fifty, only because he never could meet with any one who would have him.

Sir P. Ay, ay, madam; but you were pleased enough to listen to me: you never had such an offer before.

Lady T. No! didn't I refuse Sir Tivy Terrier, who every body said would have been a better match? for his estate is just as good as yours, and he has broke his neck since we have been married.

Sir P. I have done with you, madam! You are an unfeeling, ungrateful—but there's an end of every thing. I believe you capable of every thing that is bad.—Yes, madam, I now believe the reports relative to you and Charles, madam.—Yes, madam, you and Charles are—not without grounds—

Lady T. Take care, Sir Peter! you had better not insinuate any such thing! I'll not be suspected without cause, I promise you.

Sir P. Very well, madam! very well! A separate maintenance as soon as you please. Yes, madam, or a divorce!—I'll make an example of myself for the benefit of all old bachelors.

Lady T. Agreed! agreed!—and now, my dear Sir Peter, we are of a mind once more, we may be the happiest couple—and never differ again, you know—ha! ha! ha! Well, you are going to be in a passion, I see, and I shall only interrupt you—so, bye-bye. [*Exit.*]

Sir P. Plagues and tortures! Can't I make her angry either! Oh, I am the most miserable fellow! but I'll not bear her presuming to keep her temper: no! she may break my heart, but she sha'n't keep her temper. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—Charles Surface's House.

Enter TRIP, Sir OLIVER SURFACE, and MOSES.

Trip. Here, master Moses! if you'll stay a moment, I'll try whether—what's the gentleman's name?

Sir O. Mr. Moses, what is my name?

Moses. Mr. Premium.

Trip. Premium—very well.

[*Exit Trip.*]

Sir O. To judge by the servants, one wouldn't believe the master was ruined. But what!—sure, this was my brother's house?

Moses. Yes, sir; Mr. Charles bought it of Mr. Joseph, with the furniture, pictures, &c., just as

the old gentleman left it. Sir Peter thought it a piece of extravagance in him.

Sir O. In my mind, the other's economy in selling it to him was more reprehensible by half.

Re-enter TRIP.

Trip. My master says you must wait, gentlemen: he has company, and can't speak with you yet.

Sir O. If he knew who it was wanted to see him, perhaps he would not send such a message?

Trip. Yes, yes, sir: he knows you are here—I did not forget little Premium: no, no, no.

Sir O. Very well; and I pray, sir, what may be your name.

Trip. Trip, sir; my name is Trip, at your service.

Sir O. Well, then, Mr. Trip, you have a pleasant sort of place here, I guess?

Trip. Why, yes—here are three or four of us pass our time agreeably enough; but then our wages are sometimes a little in arrear—and not very great either—but fifty pounds a year, and find our own bags and bouquets.

Sir O. Bags and bouquets! halters and bastinades! *[Aside.]*

Trip. And, *a-propos*, Moses—have you been able to get me that little bill discounted?

Sir O. Wants to raise money, too!—mercy on me! Has his distresses too, I warrant, like a lord, and affects creditors and duns. *[Aside.]*

Moses. 'Twas not to be done, indeed, Mr. Trip.

Trip. Good lack, you surprise me! My friend Brush has indorsed it, and I thought when he put his name at the back of a bill 'twas the same as cash.

Moses. No! 'twouldn't do.

Trip. A small sum—but twenty pounds. Hark'ee, Moses, do you think you couldn't get it me by way of annuity?

Sir O. An annuity! ha! ha! a footman raise money by way of annuity! Well done, luxury, egad! *[Aside.]*

Moses. Well, but you must ensure your place.

Trip. Oh, with all my heart! I'll ensure my place, and my life too, if you please.

Sir O. It's more than I would your neck. *[Aside.]*

Moses. But is there nothing you could deposit?

Trip. Why, nothing capital of my master's wardrobe has dropped lately; but I could give you a mortgage on some of his winter clothes, with equity of redemption before November—or you shall have the reversion of the French velvet, or a post-obit on the blue and silver: these, I should think, Moses, with a few pair of point ruffles, as a collateral security—Egad, I heard the bell! I believe, gentlemen, I can now introduce you. Don't forget the annuity, little Moses! This way, gentlemen. I'll insure my place, you know.

Sir O. If the man be a shadow of the master, this is the temple of dissipation indeed! *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE III.—*Antique Hall.*

CHARLES SURFACE, CARELESS, SIR HARRY, &c.,
at a table, with wine, &c.

Charles S. 'Fore heaven, 'tis true!—there's the great degeneracy of the age. Many of our acquaintance have taste, spirit, and politeness; but, plague on't, they won't drink wine.

Care. It is so indeed, Charles! they give into all the substantial luxuries of the table, and abstain from nothing but wine and wit. O, certainly so-

ciety suffers by it intolerably: for now, instead of the social spirit of raillery that used to mantle over a glass of bright Burgundy, their conversation is become just like the Spa water they drink, which has all the pertness and flatulency of Champagne, without its spirit or flavour.

Sir H. But what are they to do who love play better than wine?

Care. True: there's Sir Harry diets himself for gaming, and is now under a hazard regimen.

Charles. Then he'll have the worst of it. What! you wouldn't train a horse for the course by keeping him from corn? For my part, egad! I am never so successful as when I am a little merry: let me throw on a bottle of Champagne, and I never lose.

All. Hey, what?

Charles S. At least, I never feel my losses, which is exactly the same thing.

Care. Ay, that I believe.

Charles S. And then, what man can pretend to be a believer in love, who is an abjurer of wine! 'Tis the test by which the lover knows his own heart. Fill a dozen bumpers to a dozen beauties, and she that floats at the top is the maid that has bewitched you.

Care. Now then, Charles, be honest and give us your real favourite.

Charles S. Why, I have withheld her only in compassion to you. If I toast her, you must give a round of her peers, which is impossible—on earth.

Care. Oh! then we'll find some canonized vestals, or heathen goddesses that will do, I warrant!

Charles S. Here then, bumpers, you rogues! bumpers! Maria! Maria!—

Sir H. Maria who?

Charles S. O damn the surname—'tis too formal to be registered in Love's calendar;—Maria!

All. Maria!

Charles S. But now, Sir Harry, beware, we must have beauty superlative.

Care. Nay, never study, Sir Harry: we'll stand to the toast, though your mistress should want an eye, and you know you have a song will excuse you.

Sir H. Egad, so I have! and I'll give him the song instead of the lady.

SONG.

Here's to the maiden of bashful fifteen;

Here's to the widow of fifty;

Here's to the flaunting extravagant quean,

And here's to the housewife that's thrifty.

Chorus. Let the toast pass,—

Drink to the lass,

I'll warrant she'll prove an excuse for the glass.

Here's to the charmer whose dimples we prize;

Now to the maid who has none, sir:

Here's to the girl with a pair of blue eyes,

And here's to the nymph with but one, sir.

Chorus. Let the toast pass, &c.

Here's to the maid with a bosom of snow;

Now to her that's as brown as a berry:

Here's to the wife with a face full of woe,

And now to the damsel that's merry.

Chorus. Let the toast pass, &c.

For let 'em be clumsy, or let 'em be slim,

Young or ancient, I care not a feather;

So fill up your glasses, nay, fill to the brim,
And let us e'en toast them together.

Chorus. Let the toast pass, &c.

All. Bravo! bravo!

Enter TRIP, and whispers CHARLES SURFACE.

Charles S. Gentlemen, you must excuse me a little. Careless, take the chair, will you?

Care. Nay, prithee, Charles, what now? This is one of your peerless beauties, I suppose, has dropt in by chance?

Charles S. No, faith! To tell you the truth, 'tis a Jew and a broker, who are come by appointment.

Care. O damn it! let's have the Jew in.

Sir H. Ay, and the broker too, by all means.

Care. Yes, yes, the Jew and the broker.

Charles S. Egad, with all my heart! Trip, bid the gentlemen walk in—[*Exit TRIP*—though there's one of them a stranger, I can assure you.

Care. Charles, let us give them some generous Burgundy, and perhaps they'll grow conscientious.

Charles S. O hang 'em, no! wine does but draw forth a man's natural qualities; and to make them drink would only be to whet their knavery.

Enter TRIP, MOSES, and Sir OLIVER SURFACE.

Charles S. So, honest Moses, walk in; walk in, pray, Mr. Premium—that's the gentleman's name, isn't it, Moses?

Moses. Yes, sir.

Charles S. Set chairs, Trip—sit down, Mr. Premium—glasses, Trip—sit down, Moses. Come, Mr. Premium, I'll give you a sentiment; here's *Success to usury!*—Moses, fill the gentleman a bumper.

Moses. *Success to usury!*

Care. Right, Moses—usury is prudence and industry, and deserves to succeed.

Sir O. Then—here's all the success it deserves.

Care. No, no, that won't do! Mr. Premium, you have demurred at the toast, and must drink it in a pint bumper.

Sir H. A pint bumper, at least.

Moses. O pray, sir, consider—Mr. Premium's a gentleman.

Care. And therefore loves good wine.

Sir H. Give Moses a quart glass—this is mutiny, and a high contempt for the chair.

Charles S. No hang it, you shan't! Mr. Premium's a stranger.

Care. Plague on 'em then!—if they won't drink, we'll not sit down with them. Come, Harry, the dice are in the next room—Charles, you'll join us when you have finished your business with the gentlemen?

Charles S. I will! I will! [*Exeunt all the Gentlemen.*] Careless!

Care. [*Returning.*] Well!

Charles S. Perhaps I may want you.

Care. O, you know I am always ready: word, note, or bond, 'tis all the same to me. [*Exit.*]

Moses. Sir, this is Mr. Premium, a gentleman of the strictest honour and secrecy; and always performs what he undertakes. Mr. Premium, this is—

Charles S. Pshaw! Have done.—Sir, my friend Moses is a very honest fellow, but a little slow at expression: he'll be an hour giving us our titles. Mr. Premium, the plain state of the matter is this: I am an extravagant young fellow, who want money to borrow—you I take to be a prudent old fellow,

who has got money to lend.—I am blockhead enough to give fifty per cent. sooner than not have it; and you, I presume, are rogue enough to take a hundred if you can get it. Now, sir, you see we are acquainted at once, and may proceed to business without farther ceremony.

Sir O. Exceeding frank, upon my word.—I see, sir, you are not a man of many compliments.

Charles S. Oh no, sir, plain dealing in business I always think best.

Sir O. Sir, I like you the better for it—however, you are mistaken in one thing; I have no money to lend, but I believe I could procure some of a friend; but then he's an unconscionable dog; isn't he, Moses? And must sell stock to accommodate you—mustn't he, Moses?

Moses. Yes, indeed! You know I always speak the truth, and scorn to tell a lie!

Charles S. Right. People that speak truth generally do; but these are trifles, Mr. Premium. What! I know money isn't to be bought without paying for't!

Sir O. Well—but what security could you give? You have no land, I suppose?

Charles S. Not a mole-hill, nor a twig, but what's in the bough-pots out of the window!

Sir O. Nor any stock. I presume?

Charles S. Nothing but live stock—and that's only a few pointers and ponies. But pray, Mr. Premium, are you acquainted at all with any of my connexions?

Sir O. Why, to say truth, I am.

Charles S. Then you must know that I have a devilish rich uncle in the East Indies, Sir Oliver Surface, from whom I have the greatest expectations.

Sir O. That you have a wealthy uncle I have heard; but how your expectations will turn out, is more, I believe, than you can tell.

Charles S. O no!—there can be no doubt. They tell me I'm a prodigious favourite, and that he talks of leaving me everything.

Sir O. Indeed! this is the first I've heard of it.

Charles S. Yes, yes, 'tis just so—Moses knows 'tis true, don't you, Moses?

Sir O. Egad, they'll persuade me presently I'm at Bengal. [*Aside.*]

Charles S. Now I propose, Mr. Premium, if it's agreeable to you, a post-obit on Sir Oliver's life: though at the same time, the old fellow has been so liberal to me, that I give you my word, I should be very sorry to hear that anything had happened to him.

Sir O. Not more than I should, I assure you. But the bond you mention happens to be just the worst security you could offer me—for I might live to a hundred, and never see the principal.

Charles S. O, yes, you would—the moment Sir Oliver dies, you know, you would come on me for the money.

Sir O. Then I believe I should be the most unwelcome dun you ever had in your life.

Charles S. What! I suppose you're afraid that Sir Oliver is too good a life?

Sir O. No, indeed, I am not; though I have heard he is as hale and healthy as any man of his years in Christendom.

Charles S. There again, now you are misinformed. No, no, the climate has hurt him considerably, poor uncle Oliver! Yes, yes, he breaks apace, I'm told—and is so much altered lately, that his nearest relations would not know him!

Sir O. No! Ha! ha! ha! so much altered lately, that his nearest relations would not know him! ha! ha! egad—Ha! ha! ha!

Charles S. Ha! ha!—you're glad to hear that, little Premium?

Sir O. No, no, I'm not.

Charles S. Yes, yes, you are—ha! ha! ha!—You know that tends your chance.

Sir O. But I'm told Sir Oliver is coming over?—nay, some say he is actually arrived?

Charles S. Pshaw! Sure I must know better than you whether he's come or not. No, no; rely on't, he's at this moment at Calcutta—isn't he, Moses?

Moses. O yes, certainly.

Sir O. Very true, as you say, you must know better than I, though I have it from pretty good authority—hav'n't I, Moses?

Moses. Yes, most undoubtedly!

Sir O. But, sir, as I understand you want a few hundreds immediately—is there nothing you could dispose of?

Charles S. How do you mean?

Sir O. For instance, now, I have heard that your father left behind him a great quantity of massy old plate!

Charles S. O lud!—that's gone long ago.—Moses can tell you better than I can.

Sir O. Good luck! all the family race cups and corporation bowls. [Aside.]—Then it was also supposed that his library was one of the most valuable and complete.

Charles S. Yes, yes, so it was—vastly too much so for a private gentleman. For my part, I was always of a communicative disposition, so I thought it a shame to keep so much knowledge to myself.

Sir O. Mercy upon me! Learning that had run in the family like an heirloom! [Aside.]—Pray, what are become of the books?

Charles S. You must inquire of the auctioneer, Master Premium, for I don't believe even Moses can direct you.

Moses. I know nothing of books.

Sir O. So, so, nothing of the family property left, I suppose?

Charles S. Not much indeed; unless you have a mind to the family pictures. I have got a roomfull of ancestors above, and if you have a taste for old paintings, egad, you shall have 'em a bargain.

Sir O. Hey! what the devil! Sure, you wouldnt sell your forefathers, would you?

Charles S. Every man of them to the best bidder.

Sir O. What! your great uncles and aunts?

Charles S. Ay, and my great grandfathers and grandmothers too.

Sir O. Now I give him up. [Aside.]—What the plague, have you no bowels for your own kindred? Odd's life, do you take me for Shylock in the play, that you would raise money of me, on your own flesh and blood?

Charles S. Nay, my little broker, don't be angry: what need you care if you have your money's worth.

Sir O. Well, I'll be the purchaser: I think I can dispose of the family canvass. Oh, I'll never forgive him this! never! [Aside.]

Enter CARELESS.

Care. Come, Charles, what keeps you?

Charles S. I can't come yet: i'faith, we are going to have a sale above stairs; here's little Premium will buy all my ancestors.

Care. O, burn your ancestors!

Charles S. No, he may do that afterwards, if he pleases. Stay, Careless, we want you: egad, you shall be auctioneer; so come along with us.

Care. Oh, have with you, if that's the case, I can handle a hammer as well as a dice-box! Going! going!

Sir O. Oh, the profligates! [Aside.]

Charles S. Come, Moses, you shall be appraiser, if we want one. Gad's life, little Premium, you don't seem to like the business?

Sir O. O yes, I do, vastly. Ha! ha! ha! yes, yes, I think it a rare joke to sell one's family by auction—ha! ha!—O the prodigal! [Aside.]

Charles S. To be sure! when a man wants money, where the plague should he get assistance, if he can't make free with his own relations?

Sir O. I'll never forgive him; never! never! [Exeunt.]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—Picture Room at Charles's.

Enter CHARLES SURFACE, SIR OLIVER SURFACE, MOSES, and CARELESS.

Charles S. Walk in, gentlemen; pray walk in—here they are, the family of the Surfaces, up to the Conquest.

Sir O. And, in my opinion, a goodly collection.

Charles S. Ay, ay, these are done in the true spirit of portrait painting;—no *volontier grace* or expression. Not like the works of your modern Raphaels, who give you the strongest resemblance, yet contrive to make your portrait independent of you; so that you may sink the original, and not hurt the picture. No, no; the merit of these is the inveterate likeness—all stiff and awkward as the originals, and like nothing in human nature besides.

Sir O. Ah! we shall never see such figures of men again.

Charles S. I hope not.—Well, you see, Master Premium, what a domestic character I am: here I sit of an evening surrounded by my family.—But, come, get to your pulpit, Mr. Auctioneer; here's an old gouty chair of my grandfather's will answer the purpose.

Care. Ay, ay, this will do.—But, Charles, I hav'n't a hammer; and what's an auctioneer without his hammer?

Charles S. Egad, that's true; what parchment have we here?—O, our genealogy in full. Here, Careless,—you shall have no common bit of mahogany; here's the family tree for you, you rogue,—this shall be your hammer, and now you may knock down my ancestors with their own pedigree.

Sir O. What an unnatural rogue!—an *ex post facto* parricide! [Aside.]

Care. Yes, yes, here's a list of your generation indeed; faith, Charles, this is the most convenient thing you could have found for the business, for 'twill not only serve as a hammer, but a catalogue into the bargain.—Come, begin—A-going, a-going!

Charles S. Bravo, Careless!—Well, here's my great uncle, Sir Richard Raveline, a marvellous good general in his day, I assure you. He served in all the Duke of Marlborough's wars, and go

that cut over his eye at the battle of Malplaquet.—What say you, Mr. Premium?—look at him—there's a hero, not cut out of his features, as your modern-elypt captains are, but enveloped in wig and regimentals, as a general should be.—What do you bid?

Sir O. [Aside to Moses.] Bid him speak.

Moses. Mr. Premium would have you speak.

Charles S. Why, then, he shall have him for ten pounds, and I'm sure that's not dear for a staff-officer.

Sir O. Heaven deliver me! his famous uncle Richard for ten pounds! [*Aside.*—Very well, sir, I take him at that.

Charles S. Careless, knock down my uncle Richard.—Here, now, is a maiden sister of his, my great aunt Deborah, done by Kneller in his best manner, and esteemed a very formidable likeness.—There she is, you see, a shepherdess feeding her flock.—You shall have her for five pounds ten—the sheep are worth the money.

Sir O. Ah! poor Deborah! a woman who set such a value on herself! [*Aside.*—Five pounds ten—she's mine.

Charles S. Knock down my aunt Deborah, Careless!—This, now, is a grandfather of my mother's, a learned judge, well known on the western circuit.—What do you rate him at, Moses?

Moses. Four guineas.

Charles S. Four guineas!—Gad's life, you don't bid me the price of his wig.—Mr. Premium, you have more respect for the woolsack; do let us knock his lordship down at fifteen.

Sir O. By all means.

Care Gone!

Charles S. And there are two brothers of his, William and Walter Blunt, Esquires, both members of parliament, and noted speakers; and what's very extraordinary, I believe, this is the first time they were ever bought or sold.

Sir O. That is very extraordinary, indeed! I'll take them at your own price, for the honour of parliament.

Care. Well said, little Premium!—I'll knock them down at forty.

Charles S. Here's a jolly fellow—I don't know what relation, but he was mayor of Norwich: take him at eight pounds.

Sir O. No, no: six will do for the mayor.

Charles S. Come, make it guineas, and I throw out the two aldermen there into the bargain.

Sir O. They're nine.

Charles S. Careless, knock down the mayor and aldermen.—But, plague on't, we shall be all day retailing in this manner: do let us deal wholesale: what say you, little Premium? Give me three hundred pounds, and take all that remains on each side in a lump.

Care. Ay, ay, that will be the best way.

Sir O. Well, well, anything to accommodate you;—they are mine. But there is one portrait which you have always passed over.

Care. What, that ill-looking little fellow over the settee?

Sir O. Yes, sir, I mean that, though I don't think him so ill-looking a little fellow, by any means.

Charles S. What! that?—Oh! that's my uncle Oliver; 'twas done before he went to India.

Care. Your uncle Oliver!—Gad, then you'll never be friends, Charles. That, now, to me, is as stern a looking rogue as ever I saw; an unforgiving eye, and a damned disinheriting countenance!

an inveterate knave, depend on't. Don't you think so, little Premium?

Sir O. Upon my soul, sir, I do not; I think it as honest a looking face as any in the room, dead or alive;—but I suppose uncle Oliver goes with the rest of the lumber?

Charles S. No, hang it; I'll not part with poor Noll. The old fellow has been very good to me, and, egad, I'll keep his picture while I've a room to put it in.

Sir O. The rogue's my nephew after all! [*Aside.*—But, sir, I have somehow taken a fancy to that picture.

Charles S. I'm sorry for't, for you certainly will not have it.—Oons, haven't you got enough of them?

Sir O. I forgive him everything! [*Aside.*—But, sir, when I take a whim in my head I don't value money. I'll give you as much for that as for all the rest.

Charles S. Don't tease me, master broker; I tell you I'll not part with it, and there's an end of it.

Sir O. How like his father the dog is! [*Aside.*—Well, well, I have done.—I did not perceive it before, but I think I never saw such a resemblance. [*Aside.*—Here is the draught for your sum.

Charles S. Why, 'tis for eight hundred pounds.

Sir O. You will not let Sir Oliver go?

Charles S. Zounds! no!—I tell you once more.

Sir O. Then never mind the difference, we'll balance that another time—but give me your hand on the bargain; you are an honest fellow, Charles—I beg pardon, sir, for being so free.—Come, Moses.

Charles S. Egad, this is a whimsical old fellow! But hark'ee, Premium, you'll prepare lodgings for these gentlemen?

Sir O. Yes, yes, I'll send for them in a day or two.

Charles S. But hold; do now send a genteel conveyance for them, for I assure you, they were most of them used to ride in their own carriages.

Sir O. I will, I will—for all but Oliver.

Charles S. Ay, all but the little nabob.

Sir O. You're fixed on that?

Charles S. Peremptorily.

Sir O. A dear extravagant rogue! [*Aside.*—Good day!—Come, Moses.—Let me hear now who dares call him profligate!

[*Exeunt* Sir OLIVER SURFACE and MOSES.]

Care. Why, this is the oddest genius of the sort I ever met with.

Charles S. Egad, he's the prince of brokers, I think. I wonder how the devil Moses got acquainted with so honest a fellow.—But hark! here's Rowley; do, Careless, say I'll join the company in a few moments.

Care. I will—don't let that old blockhead persuade you to squander any of that money on old musty debts, or any such nonsense; for tradesmen, Charles, are the most exorbitant fellows.

Charles S. Very true, and paying them is only encouraging them. Ay, ay, never fear.—[*Exit* CARELESS.]—Soh! this was an odd old fellow, indeed.—Let me see—two-thirds of this five hundred and thirty odd pounds are mine by right. 'Fore Heaven! I find one's ancestors are more valuable relations than I took them for!—Ladies and gentlemen, your most obedient and very grateful servant.—

[*Enter* ROWLEY.]

Hah! old Rowley! egad, your just come in time to take leave of your old acquaintance.

Row. Yes, I heard they were a going. But I wonder you can have such spirits under so many distresses.

Charles S. Why, there's the point! my distresses are so many, that I can't afford to part with my spirits; but I shall be rich and splenetic, all in good time. However, I suppose you are surprised that I am not more sorrowful at parting with so many near relations; to be sure, 'tis very affecting: but you see they never move a muscle, so why should I?

Row. There's no making you serious a moment.

Charles S. Yes, faith, I am so now. Here, my honest Rowley, here, get me this changed directly, and take a hundred pounds of it immediately to old Stanley.

Row. A hundred pounds! Consider only—

Charles S. Gad's life, don't talk about it: poor Stanley's wants are pressing, and if you don't make haste, we shall have some one call that has a better right to the money.

Row. Ah! there's the point! I never will cease dunning you with the old proverb—

Charles S. "Be just before you're generous."—Why, so I would if I could; but Justice is an old hobbling beldame, and I can't get her to keep pace with Generosity for the soul of me.

Row. Yet, Charles, believe me, one hour's reflection—

Charles S. Ay, ay, it's very true; but, hark'ee, Rowley, while I have, by Heaven I'll give; so damn your economy, and away to old Stanley with the money. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—A Saloon.

Enter MOSES and Sir OLIVER SURFACE.

Moses. Well, sir, I think, as Sir Peter said, you have seen Mr. Charles in high glory; 'tis great pity he's so extravagant.

Sir O. But he would not sell my picture.

Moses. And loves wine and women so much.

Sir O. But he would not sell my picture.

Moses. And games so deep.

Sir O. But he would not sell my picture.—O, here's Rowley.

Enter ROWLEY.

Row. So, Sir Oliver, I find you have made a purchase—

Sir O. Yes, yes, our young rake has parted with his ancestors like old tapestry

Row. And here has he commissioned me to redeliver you part of the purchase-money—I mean, though, in your necessary character of old Stanley.

Moses. Ah! there is the pity of all; he is so damned charitable.

Row. And I left a hosier and two tailors in the hall, who, I'm sure, won't be paid, and this hundred would satisfy them.

Sir O. Well, well, I'll pay his debts, and his benevolence too.—But now I am no more a broker, and you shall introduce me to the elder brother as old Stanley.

Row. Not yet awhile; Sir Peter, I know, means to call there about this time.

Enter TRIP.

Trip. O, gentlemen, I beg pardon for not showing you out; this way.—Moses, a word.

[Exeunt TRIP and MOSES.]

Sir O. There's a fellow for you—would you be-

lieve it, that puppy intercepted the Jew on our coming, and wanted to raise money before he got to his master.

Row. Indeed!

Sir O. Yes, they are now planning an annuity business.—Ah! master Rowley, in my days servants were content with the follies of their masters, when they were worn a little threadbare; but now, they have their vices, like their birth-day clothes, with the gloss on. [Exeunt.]

SCENE III.—A Library, a large Screen, Pembroke Table, with a book on it; two Chairs.

JOSEPH SURFACE and a Servant discovered.

Joseph S. No letter from Lady Teazle.

Serv. No, sir.

Joseph S. I am surprised she has not sent, if she is prevented from coming. Sir Peter certainly does not suspect me. Yet, I wish I may not lose the heiress, through the scrape I have drawn myself into with the wife; however, Charles's imprudence and bad character are great points in my favour. [Knocking heard without]

Serv. I believe that must be Lady Teazle.

Joseph S. Hold!—See whether it is or not before you go to the door: I have a particular message for you, if it should be my brother.

Serv. 'Tis her ladyship, sir; she always leaves her chair at the milliner's in the next street.

Joseph S. Stay, stay; draw that screen before the window—[Servant does so.]—that will do; my opposite neighbour is a lady of curious temper.—[Servant exit.]—I have a difficult hand to play in this affair. Lady Teazle has lately suspected my views on Maria; but she must by no means be let into that secret,—at least, till I have her more in my power.

Enter Lady TEAZLE.

Lady T. What! sentiment in soliloquy now? Have you been very impatient?—O lud! don't pretend to look grave.—I vow I could not come before.

Joseph S. O madam, punctuality is a species of constancy very unfashionable in a lady of quality.

Lady T. Upon my word you ought to pity me. Do you know Sir Peter is grown so ill-natured to me of late, and so jealous of Charles too—that's the best of the story, isn't it?

Joseph S. I am glad my scandalous friends keep that up. [Aside.]

Lady T. I am sure I wish he would let Maria marry him, and then perhaps he would be convinced; don't you, Mr. Surface?

Joseph S. Indeed I do not. [Aside.]—Oh certainly I do! for then my dear Lady Teazle would also be convinced how wrong her suspicions were, of my having any design on the silly girl.

Lady T. Well, well, I'm inclined to believe you. But, isn't it provoking, to have the most ill-natured things said of one?—And there's my friend, Lady Sneerwell, has circulated I don't know how many scandalous tales of me, and all without any foundation too—that's what vexes me.

Joseph S. Ay, madam, to be sure, that is the provoking circumstance—without foundation; yes, yes, there's the mortification, indeed; for when a scandalous story is believed against one, there certainly is no comfort like the consciousness of having deserved it.

Lady T. No, to be sure, then I'd forgive their

malice; but to attack me, who am really so innocent, and who never say an ill-natured thing of any body—that is, of any friend; and then Sir Peter too, to have him so peevish, and so suspicious, when I know the integrity of my own heart—indeed, 'tis monstrous!

Joseph S. But, my dear Lady Teazle, 'tis your own fault if you suffer it. When a husband entertains a groundless suspicion of his wife, and withdraws his confidence from her, the original compact is broken, and she owes it to the honour of her sex to endeavour to outwit him.

Lady T. Indeed!—so that if he suspects me without cause, it follows, that the best way of curing his jealousy is to give him reason for't.

Joseph S. Undoubtedly—for your husband should never be deceived in you,—and in that case it becomes you to be frail in compliment to his discernment.

Lady T. To be sure, what you say is very reasonable; and when the consciousness of my innocence—

Joseph S. Ah! my dear madam, there is the great mistake: 'tis this very conscious innocence that is of the greatest prejudice to you. What is it makes you negligent of forms, and careless of the world's opinion?—why, the consciousness of your own innocence. What makes you thoughtless in your conduct, and apt to run into a thousand little imprudences?—why, the consciousness of your own innocence. What makes you impatient of Sir Peter's temper, and outrageous at his suspicions?—why, the consciousness of your innocence.

Lady T. 'Tis very true!

Joseph S. Now, my dear Lady Teazle, if you would but once make a trifling *faux pas*, you can't conceive how cautious you would grow, and how ready to humour and agree with your husband.

Lady T. Do you think so?

Joseph S. Oh! I am sure on't; and then you would find all scandal would cease at once; for, in short, your character at present is like a person in a plethora, absolutely dying from too much health.

Lady T. So, so; then I perceive your prescription is, that I must sin in my own defence, and part with my virtue to preserve my reputation.

Joseph S. Exactly so, upon my credit, ma'am.

Lady T. Well, certainly this is the oddest doctrine, and the newest receipt for avoiding calumny!

Joseph S. An infallible one, believe me. Prudence, like experience, must be paid for.

Lady T. Why, if my understanding were once convinced—

Joseph S. O, certainly, madam, your understanding should be convinced.—Yes, yes—Heaven forbid I should persuade you to do anything you thought wrong. No, no, I have too much honour to desire it.

Lady T. Don't you think we may as well leave honour out of the argument?

Joseph S. Ah! the ill effects of your country education, I see, still remain with you.

Lady T. I doubt they do, indeed; and I will fairly own to you, that if I could be persuaded to do wrong, it would be by Sir Peter's ill usage, sooner than your honourable logic after all.

Joseph S. Then, by this hand, which he is unworthy of—

[*Taking her hand.*]

Enter Servant.

'Sdeath, you blockhead—what do you want?

Serv. I beg your pardon, sir, but I thought you

ACT. DRAMA.—NO. III.

would not choose Sir Peter to come up without announcing him.

Joseph S. Sir Peter!—Oons—the devil!

Lady T. Sir Peter! O lud—I'm ruined—I'm ruined!

Serv. Sir, 'twasn't I let him in.

Lady T. Oh! I'm quite undone! What will become of me? Now, Mr. Logic—Oh! mercy, sir, he's on the stairs—I'll get behind here—and if ever I'm so imprudent again—

[*Goes behind the screen.*]

Joseph S. Give me that book. [*Sits down.*]

Enter Sir PETER.

Sir P. Ay, ever improving himself—Mr. Surface, Mr. Surface!

Joseph S. Oh! my dear Sir Peter, I beg your pardon—I have been dosing over a stupid book.—Well, I am much obliged to you for this call. You haven't been here, I believe, since I fitted up this room.—Books, you know, are the only things I am a coxcomb in.

Sir P. 'Tis very neat indeed.—Well, well, that's proper; and you can make even your screen a source of knowledge—hung, I perceive, with maps?

[*Walking up towards the screen.*]

Joseph S. O, yes, I find great use in that screen.

[*Turning Sir PETER away from the screen.*]

Sir P. I dare say you must, certainly, when you want to find anything in a hurry.

Joseph S. Aye, or to hide anything in a hurry either. [*Aside.*]

Sir P. Well, I have a little private business—

Joseph S. You need not stay. [*Exit Servant.*]

Here's a chair, Sir Peter—I beg—
Sir P. Well, now we are alone, there is a subject, my dear friend, on which I wish to unburden my mind to you—a point of the greatest moment to my peace; in short, my good friend, Lady Teazle's conduct of late has made me very unhappy.

Joseph S. Indeed! I am very sorry to hear it.

Sir P. Yes, 'tis but too plain she has not the least regard for me; but, what's worse, I have pretty good authority to suppose she has formed an attachment to another.

Joseph S. Indeed! you astonish me!

Sir P. Yes; and, between ourselves, I think I've discovered the person.

Joseph S. How! you alarm me exceedingly.

Sir P. Ay, my dear friend, I knew you would sympathize with me!

Joseph S. Yes—believe me, Sir Peter, such a discovery would hurt me just as much as it would you.

Sir P. I am convinced of it.—Ah! it is a happiness to have a friend whom we can trust even with one's family secrets. But have you no guess who I mean?

Joseph S. I haven't the most distant idea. It can't be Sir Benjamin Backbite?

Sir P. Oh, no! What say you to Charles?

Joseph S. My brother! impossible!

Sir P. Oh! my dear friend, the goodness of your own heart misleads you. You judge of others by yourself.

Joseph S. Certainly, Sir Peter, the heart that is conscious of its own integrity is ever slow to credit another's treachery.

Sir P. True—but your brother has no sentiment—you never hear him talk so.

Joseph S. Yet, I can't but think Lady Teazle herself has too much principle.

Sir P. Ay,—but what is principle against the flattery of a handsome, lively, young fellow?

Joseph S. That's very true.

Sir P. And then, you know, the difference of our ages makes it very improbable that she should have any very great affection for me; and if she were to be frail, and I were to make it public, why the town would only laugh at me, the foolish old bachelor, who had married a girl.

Joseph S. That's true, to be sure—they would laugh.

Sir P. Laugh—ay, and make ballads, and paragraphs, and the devil knows what, of me.

Joseph S. No—you must never make it public.

Sir P. But then again—that the nephew of my old friend Sir Oliver, should be the person to attempt such a wrong, hurts me more nearly.

Joseph S. Ay, there's the point.—When ingratitude bars the dart of injury, the wound has double danger in it.

Sir P. Ay—I, that was in a manner, left his guardian; in whose house he had been so often entertained; who never in my life denied him—any advice.

Joseph S. O, 'tis not to be credited. There may be a man capable of such baseness, to be sure; but for my part, till you can give me positive proofs, I cannot but doubt it. However, if it should be proved on him, he is no longer a brother of mine—I disclaim kindred with him: for the man who can break through the laws of hospitality, and tempt the wife of his friend, deserves to be branded as the pest of society.

Sir P. What a difference there is between you! what noble sentiments!

Joseph S. Yet, I cannot suspect Lady Teazle's honour.

Sir P. I am sure I wish to think well of her, and to remove all ground of quarrel between us. She has lately reproached me more than once with having made no settlement on her; and, in our last quarrel, she almost hinted that she should not break her heart if I was dead. Now, as we seem to differ in our ideas of expense, I have resolved she shall have her own way, and be her own mistress, in that respect, for the future; and if I were to die, she will find I have not been inattentive to her interest while living. Here, my friend, are the drafts of two deeds, which I wish to have your opinion on.—By one, she will enjoy eight hundred a year independent while I live; and, by the other, the bulk of my fortune after my death.

Joseph S. This conduct, Sir Peter, is indeed truly generous.—I wish it may not corrupt my pupil.

[Aside.]

Sir P. Yes, I am determined she shall have no cause to complain, though I would not have her acquainted with the latter instance of my affection yet awhile.

Joseph S. Nor I, if I could help it. [Aside.]

Sir P. And now, my dear friend, if you please, we will talk over the situation of your hopes with Maria.

Joseph S. O, no, Sir Peter; another time, if you please.

Sir P. I am sensibly chagrined at the little progress you seem to make in her affections.

Joseph S. I beg you will not mention it, sir. What are my disappointments when your happiness is in debate!—'Sdeath! I shall be ruined every way.

[Aside.]

Sir P. And though you are so averse to my ac-

quainting Lady Teazle with your passion, I'm sure she's not your enemy in the affair.

Joseph S. Pray, Sir Peter, now oblige me. I am really too much affected by the subject we have been speaking of, to bestow a thought on my own concerns. The man who is intrusted with his friend's distresses can never—

Enter Servant.

Well, sir?

Serv. Your brother, sir, is speaking to a gentleman in the street, and says he knows you are within.

Joseph S. 'Sdeath, blockhead, I'm not within—I'm out for the day.

Sir P. Stay—hold—a thought has struck me:—you shall be at home.

Joseph S. Well, well, let him up. [Exit Servant.] He'll interrupt Sir Peter, however. [Aside.]

Sir P. Now, my good friend, oblige me, I entreat you.—Before Charles comes, let me conceal myself somewhere—then do you tax him on the point we have been talking, and his answer may satisfy me at once.

Joseph S. O fie, Sir Peter! would you have me join in so mean a trick!—To trepan my brother, too!

Sir P. Nay, you tell me you are sure he is innocent; if so, you do him the greatest service by giving him an opportunity to clear himself, and you will set my heart at rest. Come, you shall not refuse me: [Going up] here, behind this screen will be—Hey! what the devil! there seems to be one listener here already—I'll swear I saw a petticoat.

Joseph S. Ha! ha! ha! Well this is ridiculous enough. I'll tell you, Sir Peter, though I hold a man of intrigue to be a most despicable character, yet, you know, it does not follow that one is to be an absolute Joseph either! Hark'ee, 'tis a little French milliner—a silly rogue that plagues me,—and having some character to lose, on your coming, sir, she ran behind the screen.

Sir P. Ah! Joseph! Joseph! Did I ever think that you—But, egad, she has overheard all I have been saying of my wife.

Joseph S. O, 'twill never go any farther, you may depend upon it.

Sir P. No! then, faith, let her hear it out—Here's a closet will do as well.

Joseph S. Well, go in there.

Sir P. Sly rogue! sly rogue!

[Going into the closet.]

Joseph S. A narrow escape, indeed! and a curious situation I'm in, to part man and wife in this manner.

Lady T. Couldn't I steal off?

Joseph S. Keep close, my angel!

Sir P. Joseph, tax him home.

Joseph S. Back, my dear friend!

Lady T. Couldn't you lock Sir Peter in?

Joseph S. Be still, my life!

Sir P. You're sure the little milliner won't blab?

Joseph S. In, in, my dear Sir Peter—Fore gad, I wish I had a key to the door.

Enter CHARLES SURFACE.

Charles S. Holla! brother, what has been the matter? Your fellow would not let me up at first. What! have you had a Jew or a wench with you?

Joseph S. Neither, brother, I assure you?

Charles S. But what has made Sir Peter steal off? I thought he had been with you.

Joseph S. He was, brother; but hearing you were coming, he did not choose to stay.

Charles S. What! was the old gentleman afraid I wanted to borrow money of him?

Joseph S. No, sir: but I am sorry to find, Charles, that you have lately given that worthy man grounds for great uneasiness.

Charles S. Yes, they tell me I do that to a great many worthy men—But how so, pray?

Joseph S. To be plain with you, brother—he thinks you are endeavouring to gain Lady Teazle's affections from him.

Charles S. Who, I? O lud! not I, upon my word.—Ha, ha, ha, ha! So the old fellow has found out that he has got a young wife, has he?

Joseph S. This is no subject to jest on, brother. He who can laugh—

Charles S. True, true, as you were going to say—then, seriously, I never had the least idea of what you charge me with, upon my honour.

Joseph S. Well, it will give Sir Peter great satisfaction to hear this. *[Aloud.]*

Charles S. To be sure, I once thought the lady seemed to have taken a fancy to me; but, upon my soul, I never gave her the least encouragement: besides, you know my attachment to Maria.

Joseph S. But sure, brother, even if Lady Teazle had betrayed the fondest partiality for you—

Charles S. Why, look'ee, Joseph, I hope I shall never deliberately do a dishonourable action; but if a pretty woman was purposely to throw herself in my way—and that pretty woman married to a man old enough to be her father—

Joseph S. Well—

Charles S. Why, I believe I should be obliged to—Joseph S. What?

Charles S. To borrow a little of your morality, that's all.—But, brother, do you know now, that you surprise me exceedingly, by naming me with Lady Teazle; for, faith, I always understood you were her favourite.

Joseph S. O, for shame, Charles! This retort is foolish.

Charles S. Nay, I swear I have seen you exchange such significant glances—

Joseph S. Nay, nay, sir, this is no jest.

Charles S. Egad, I'm serious.—Don't you remember one day when I called here—

Joseph S. Nay, prythee, Charles—

Charles S. And found you together—

Joseph S. Zounds, sir! I insist—

Charles S. And another time when your servant—

Joseph S. Brother, brother, a word with you! Gad, I must stop him. *[Aside.]*

Charles S. Informed, I say, that—

Joseph S. Hush! I beg your pardon, but Sir Peter has heard all we have been saying. I knew you would clear yourself, or I should not have consented.

Charles S. How, Sir Peter! Where is he?

Joseph S. Softly; there! *[Points to the closet.]*

Charles S. O, 'fore heaven, I'll have him out.

Sir Peter, come forth! *[Trying to get to the closet.]*

Joseph S. No, no— *[Preventing him.]*

Charles S. I say, Sir Peter, come into court—*[Pulls in Sir PETER.]* What! my old guardian—What! turn inquisitor, and take evidence incog? O, fie! O, fie!

Sir P. Give me your hand, Charles—I believe I have suspected you wrongfully; but you musn't be angry with Joseph—'twas my plan!

Charles S. Indeed!

Sir P. But I acquit you. I promise you I don't think near so ill of you as I did: what I have heard has given me great satisfaction.

Charles S. Egad, then, 'twas lucky you didn't hear any more—wasn't it, Joseph?

[Apart to JOSEPH.]

Sir P. Ah! you would have retorted on him.

Charles S. Ay, ay, that was a joke.

Sir P. Yes, yes, I know his honour too well.

Charles S. But you might as well have suspected him as me in this matter, for all that—mightn't he, Joseph? *[Apart to JOSEPH.]*

Sir P. Well, well, I believe you.

Joseph S. Would they were both out of the room? *[Aside.]*

Sir P. And in future, perhaps, we may not be such strangers.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Lady Sneerwell is below, and says she will come up.

Joseph S. Lady Sneerwell! Gads life! she must not come here! Gentlemen, I beg pardon—I must wait on you down stairs: here is a person come on particular business.

Charles S. Well, you can see him in another room. Sir Peter and I have not met a long time, and I have something to say to him.

Joseph S. They must not be left together. *[Aside.]* I'll send Lady Sneerwell away, and return directly.—Sir Peter, not a word of the French milliner. *[Apart to Sir PETER.]*

Sir P. I! not for the world!—*[Apart to JOSEPH.]*—Ah! Charles, if you associated more with your brother, one might indeed hope for your reformation. He is a man of sentiment—Well, there is nothing in the world so noble as a man of sentiment!

Charles S. Pshaw! he is too moral by half—and so apprehensive of his good name, as he calls it, that he would as soon let a priest into his house as a wench.

Sir P. No, no.—Come, come,—you wrong him.—No, no! Joseph is no rake, but he is no such saint either, in that respect.—I have a great mind to tell him—we should have such a laugh at Joseph. *[Aside.]*

Charles S. Oh, hang him! He's a very anchorite, a young hermit.

Sir P. Hark'ee—you must not abuse him: he may chance to hear of it again, I promise you.

Charles S. Why, you won't tell him?

Sir P. No—but—this way. Egad, I'll tell him.—*[Aside.]* Hark'ee—have you a mind to have a good laugh at Joseph?

Charles S. I should like it of all things.

Sir P. Then, i'faith, we will—I'll be quit with him for discovering me—He had a girl with him when I called. *[Whispers.]*

Charles S. What! Joseph?—you jest.

Sir P. Hush!—a little French milliner—and the best of the jest is—she's in the room now.

Charles S. The devil she is! *[Looking at closet.]*

Sir P. Hush! I tell you! *[Points to screen.]*

Charles S. Behind the screen! 'Slife, let us unveil.

Sir P. No, no—he's coming—you shant, indeed!

Charles S. O, egad, we'll have a peep at the little milliner! *[Endeavouring to get towards screen, Sir PETER preventing.]*

Sir P. Not for the world, Joseph will never forgive me—

Charles S. I'll stand by you—

Sir P. Odds, here he is! *[JOSEPH S. enters just as CHARLES S. throws down the screen.]*

Charles S. Lady Teazle! by all that's wonderful!

Sir P. Lady Teazle! by all that's damnable!

Charles S. Sir Peter, this is one of the smartest French milliners I ever saw. Egad, you seem all to have been diverting yourselves here at hide and seek, and I don't see who is out of the secret.—Shall I beg your ladyship to inform me? Not a word!—Brother, will you be pleased to explain this matter? What! is Morality dumb too?—Sir Peter, though I found you in the dark, perhaps you are not so now! All mute!—Well—though I can make nothing of the affair, I suppose you perfectly understand one another—so I'll leave you to yourselves. Brother, I'm sorry to find you have given that worthy man grounds for so much uneasiness.—Sir Peter! there's nothing in the world so noble as a man of sentiment. [Exit CHARLES.]

Joseph S. Sir Peter—notwithstanding—I confess—that appearances are against me—if you will afford me your patience—I make no doubt—but I shall explain every thing to your satisfaction.

Sir P. If you please, sir.

Joseph S. The fact is, sir, that Lady Teazle, knowing my pretensions to your ward Maria—I say, sir, Lady Teazle, being apprehensive of the jealousy of your temper—and knowing my friendship to the family—she, sir, I say,—called here—in order that—I might explain these pretensions—but on your coming—being apprehensive—as I said—of your jealousy—she withdrew—and this, you may depend on it, is the whole truth of the matter.

Sir P. A very clear account, upon my word; and I dare swear the lady will vouch for every article of it.

Lady T. For not one word of it, Sir Peter!

Sir P. How! don't you think it worth while to agree in the lie?

Lady T. There is not one syllable of truth in what that gentleman has told you.

Sir P. I believe you, upon my soul, ma'am?

Joseph S. [Aside.]—Sdeath, madam, will you betray me?

Lady T. Good, Mr. Hypocrite, by your leave, I'll speak for myself.

Sir P. Ay, let her alone, sir; you'll find she'll make out a better story than you, without prompting.

Lady T. Hear me, Sir Peter!—I came hither on no matter relating to your ward, and even ignorant of this gentleman's pretensions to her. But I came seduced by his insidious arguments, at least to listen to his pretended passion, if not to sacrifice your honour to his baseness.

Sir P. Now, I believe, the truth is coming, indeed!

Joseph S. The woman's mad!

Lady T. No, sir,—she has recovered her senses, and your own arts have furnished her with the means.—Sir Peter, I do not expect you to credit me—but the tenderness you expressed for me, when I am sure you could not think I was a witness to it, has penetrated to my heart, that had I left the place without the shame of this discovery, my future life should have spoken the sincerity of my gratitude. As for that smooth-tongued hypocrite, who would have seduced the wife of his too credulous friend, while he affected honourable addresses to his ward—I behold him now in a light so truly despicable, that I shall never again respect myself for having listened to him.

[Exit LADY TEAZLE.]

Joseph S. Notwithstanding all this, Sir Peter, Heaven knows—

Sir P. That you are a villain! and so I leave you to your conscience.

Joseph S. You are too rash, Sir Peter; you shall hear me.—The man who shuts out conviction by refusing to—

Sir P. O, damn your sentiments!

[Exit Sir PETER and SURFACE.]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—The Library.

Enter JOSEPH SURFACE and Servant.

Joseph S. Mr. Stanley!—and why should you think I would see him? You must know he comes to ask something.

Serv. Sir, I should not have let him in, but that Mr. Rowley came to the door with him.

Joseph S. Pshaw! blockhead! to suppose that I should now be in a temper to receive visits from poor relations!—Well, why don't you show the fellow up!

Serv. I will, sir.—Why, sir, it was not my fault that Sir Peter discovered my lady—

Joseph S. Go, fool! [Exit Servant.]—Sure Fortune never played a man of my policy such a trick before. My character with Sir Peter, my hopes with Maria, destroyed in a moment! I'm in a rare humour to listen to other people's distresses! I shan't be able to bestow even a benevolent sentiment on Stanley.—So! here he comes, and Rowley with him. I must try to recover myself, and put a little charity into my face, however.

[Exit.]

Enter Sir OLIVER SURFACE and ROWLEY.

Sir O. What! does he avoid us!—That was he, was it not?

Row. It was, sir. But I doubt you are come a little too abruptly. His nerves are so weak, that the sight of a poor relation may be too much for him. I should have gone first to break it to him.

Sir O. O, plague of his nerves! Yet this is he whom Sir Peter extols as a man of the most benevolent way of thinking!

Row. As to his way of thinking, I cannot pretend to decide; for, to do him justice, he appears to have as much speculative benevolence as any private gentleman in the kingdom, though he is seldom so sensual as to indulge himself in the exercise of it.

Sir O. Yet he has a string of charitable sentiments, I suppose, at his fingers' ends.

Row. Or rather, at his tongue's end, Sir Oliver; for I believe there is no sentiment he has such faith in as that "Charity begins at home."

Sir O. And his, I presume, is of that domestic sort which never stirs abroad at all.

Row. I doubt you'll find it so;—but he's coming. I mustn't seem to interrupt you; and you know immediately as you leave him, I come in to announce your arrival in your real character.

Sir O. True; and afterwards you'll meet me at Sir Peter's.

Row. Without losing a moment. [Exit.]

Sir O. I don't like the complaisance of his features.

Enter JOSEPH SURFACE.

Joseph S. Sir, I beg you ten thousand pardons

for keeping you a moment waiting—Mr. Stanley, I presume.—

Sir O. At your service.

Joseph S. Sir, I beg you will do me the honour to sit down—I entreat you, sir!—

Sir O. Dear sir—there's no occasion—too civil by half!

[*Aside.*
Joseph S. I have not the pleasure of knowing you, Mr. Stanley; but I am extremely happy to see you look so well. You were nearly related to my mother, Mr. Stanley, I think?

Sir O. I was, sir;—so nearly that my present poverty, I fear, may do discredit to her wealthy children, else I should not have presumed to trouble you.

Joseph S. Dear sir, there needs no apology:—he that is in distress, though a stranger, has a right to claim kindred with the wealthy. I am sure I wish I was one of that class, and had it in my power to offer you even a small relief.

Sir O. If your uncle, Sir Oliver, were here, I should have a friend.

Joseph S. I wish he was, sir, with all my heart: you should not want an advocate with him, believe me, sir.

Sir O. I should not need one—my distresses would recommend me. But I imagined his bounty would enable you to become the agent of his charity.

Joseph S. My dear sir, you were strangely misinformed. Sir Oliver is a worthy man, a very worthy man; but avarice, Mr. Stanley, is the vice of age. I will tell you, my good sir, in confidence, what he has done for me has been a mere nothing; though people, I know, have thought otherwise; and, for my part, I never chose to contradict the report.

Sir O. What! has he never transmitted to you bullion—rupees—pagodas?

Joseph S. O, dear sir, nothing of the kind:—No, no—a few presents now and then—china, shawls, congou tea, avadavats, and Indian crackers—little more, believe me.

Sir O. Here's gratitude for twelve thousand pounds!—Avadavats and Indian crackers!

[*Aside.*
Joseph S. Then, my dear sir, you have heard, I doubt not, of the extravagance of my brother: there are very few would credit what I have done for that unfortunate young man.

Sir O. Not I, for one?

[*Aside.*
Joseph S. The sums I have lent him!—Indeed, I have been exceedingly to blame; it was an amiable weakness: however, I don't pretend to defend it,—and now I feel it doubly culpable, since it has deprived me of the pleasure of serving you, Mr. Stanley, as my heart dictates.

Sir O. Dissembler? [*Aside.*]—Then, sir, you can't assist me?

Joseph S. At present, it grieves me to say, I cannot; but, whenever I have the ability, you may depend upon hearing from me.

Sir O. I am extremely sorry—

Joseph S. Not more than I, believe me;—to pity, without the power to relieve, is still more painful than to ask and be denied.

Sir O. Kind sir, your most obedient humble servant.

Joseph S. You leave me deeply affected, Mr. Stanley.—William, be ready to open the door.

Sir O. O, dear sir, no ceremony.

Joseph S. Your very obedient.

Sir O. Sir, your most obsequious.

Joseph S. You may depend upon hearing from me, whenever I can be of service.

Sir O. Sweet sir, you are too good!

Joseph S. In the mean time, I wish you health and spirits.

Sir O. Your ever grateful and perpetual humble servant.

Joseph S. Sir, yours as sincerely.

Sir O. Now I am satisfied!

[*Aside: Exit.*
Sir O. This is one bad effect of a good character: it invites application from the unfortunate, and there needs no small degree of address to gain the reputation of benevolence without incurring the expense. The silver ore of pure charity is an expensive article in the catalogue of a man's good qualities; whereas the sentimental French plate I use instead of it, makes just as good a show, and pays no tax.

Enter ROWLEY.

Row. Mr. Surface, your servant: I was apprehensive of interrupting you, though my business demands immediate attention, as this note will inform you.

Joseph S. Always happy to see Mr. Rowley,—a rascal! [*Aside.—Reads the letter.*]—Sir Oliver Surface! My uncle is arrived!

Row. He is, indeed: we have just parted with him—quite well, after a speedy voyage, and impatient to embrace his worthy nephew.

Joseph S. I am astonished!—William! stop Mr. Stanley, if he's not gone.

Row. Oh! he's out of reach, I believe.

Joseph S. Why did you not let me know this when you came in together?

Row. I thought you had particular business;—but I must begone to inform your brother, and appoint him here to meet your uncle. He will be with you in a quarter of an hour.

Joseph S. So he says. Well, I am strangely overjoyed at his coming.—Never, to be sure, was any thing so damned unlucky.

[*Aside.*
Row. You will be delighted to see how well he looks.

Joseph S. Oh! I am overjoyed to hear it—Just at this time!

[*Aside.*
Row. I'll tell him how impatiently you expect him.

[*Exit.*
Joseph S. Do, do; pray give my best duty and affection, I cannot express the sensations I feel at the thought of seeing him—Certainly his coming just at this time is the cruellest piece of ill-fortune!

SCENE II.—SIR PETER TEAZLE'S.

Enter Maid and Mrs. CANDOUR.

Maid. Indeed, ma'am, my lady will see nobody at present.

Mrs. C. Did you tell her it was her friend, Mrs. Candour.

Maid. Yes ma'am; but she begs you will excuse her.

Mrs. C. Do go again,—I shall be glad to see her, if it be only for a moment, for I am sure she must be in great distress. [*Exit Maid.*] Dear heart, how provoking! I'm not mistress of half the circumstances! We shall have the whole affair in the newspapers, with the names of the parties at length, before I have dropped the story at a dozen houses.

Enter Sir BENJAMIN BACKBITE.

Oh, dear Sir Benjamin! you have heard, I suppose—

Sir B. Of Lady Teazle and Mr. Surface—

Mrs. C. And Sir Peter's discovery—

Sir B. O! the strangest piece of business, to be sure!

Mrs. C. Well, I never was so surprised in my life. I am so sorry for all parties, indeed.

Sir B. Now I don't pity Sir Peter at all: he was so extravagantly partial to Mr. Surface.

Mrs. C. Mr. Surface! Why, 'twas with Charles Lady Teazle was detected.

Sir B. No such thing, I tell you—Mr. Surface is the gallant.

Mrs. C. No, no, Charles is the man. 'Twas Mr. Surface brought Sir Peter on purpose to discover them.

Sir B. I tell you I had it from one—

Mrs. C. And I have it from one—

Sir B. Who had it from one, who had it—

Mrs. C. From one immediately—but here comes Lady Sneerwell; perhaps she knows the whole affair.

Enter Lady SNEERWELL.

Lady S. So, my dear Mrs. Candour, here's a sad affair of our friend Teazle.

Mrs. C. Ay, my dear friend, who would have thought—

Lady S. Well, there is no trusting appearances; though, indeed, she was always too lively for me.

Mrs. C. To be sure, her manners were a little too free: but then she was so young!

Lady S. And had, indeed, some good qualities.

Mrs. C. So she had, indeed. But have you heard the particulars?

Lady S. No; but everybody says that Mr. Surface—

Sir B. Ay, there; I told you Mr. Surface was the man.

Mrs. C. No, no: indeed the assignation was with Charles.

Lady S. With Charles! You alarm me, Mrs. Candour!

Mrs. C. Yes, yes, he was the lover. Mr. Surface, to do him justice, was only the informer.

Sir B. Well, I'll not dispute with you, Mrs. Candour; but, be it which it may, I hope that Sir Peter's wound will not—

Mrs. C. Sir Peter's wound! O, mercy! I didn't hear a word of their fighting.

Lady S. Nor I, a syllable.

Sir B. No! what, no mention of the duel?

Mrs. C. Not a word.

Sir B. O, yes: they fought before they left the room.

Lady S. Pray, let us hear.

Mrs. C. Ay, do oblige us with the duel.

Sir B. "Sir," says Sir Peter, immediately after the discovery, "you are a most ungrateful fellow."

Mrs. C. Ay, to Charles.

Sir B. No, no—to Mr. Surface—"a most ungrateful fellow; and old as I am, sir," says he, "I insist on immediate satisfaction."

Mrs. C. Ay, that must have been to Charles; for 'tis very unlikely Mr. Surface should fight in his own house.

Sir B. Gad's life ma'am, not at all—"Giving me immediate satisfaction." On this, ma'am, Lady Teazle, seeing Sir Peter in such danger, ran out of the room in strong hysterics, and Charles after

her, calling out for hartshorn and water; then, madam, they began to fight with swords—

Enter CRABTREE.

Crab. With pistols, nephew—pistols; I have it from undoubted authority.

Mrs. C. O, Mr. Crabtree, then it is all true!

Crab. Too true, indeed, madam, and Sir Peter is dangerously wounded—

Sir B. By a thrust in seagoon quite through his left side—

Crab. By a bullet lodged in the thorax.

Mrs. C. Mercy on me! Poor Sir Peter.

Crab. Yes, madam; though Charles would have avoided the matter, if he could.

Mrs. C. I told you who it was; I knew Charles was the person.

Sir B. My uncle, I see, knows nothing of the matter.

Crab. But Sir Peter taxed him with the basest ingratitude.

Sir B. That I told you, you know—

Crab. Do, nephew, let me speak!—and insisted on immediate—

Sir B. Satisfaction! Just as I said—

Crab. Odds life, nephew, allow others to know something too. A pair of pistols lay on the bureau (for Mr. Surface, it seems, had come home the night before late from Salthill, where he had been to see the Montem with a friend, who has a son at Eton), so, unluckily, the pistols were left charged.

Sir B. I heard nothing of this.

Crab. Sir Peter forced Charles to take one; and they fired, it seems, pretty nearly together. Charles's shot took effect, as I tell you, and Sir Peter's missed; but, what is very extraordinary, the ball struck against a little bronze Shakspeare that stood over the fire-place, grazed out of the window at a right angle, and wounded the postman, who was just coming to the door with a double letter from Northamptonshire.

Sir B. My uncle's account is more circumstantial, I confess; but I believe mine is the only true one, for all that.

Lady S. I am more interested in this affair than they imagine, and must have better information.—

Aside. [Exit Lady SNEERWELL.]

Sir B. Ah! Lady Sneerwell's alarm is very easily accounted for.

Crab. Yes, yes, they certainly do say—but that's neither here nor there.

Mrs. C. But, pray, where is Sir Peter at present?

Crab. Oh! they brought him home, and he is now in the house, though the servants are ordered to deny him.

Mrs. C. I believe so, and Lady Teazle, I suppose, attending him.

Crab. Yes, yes; and I saw one of the faculty enter just before me.

Sir B. Hey! who comes here?

Crab. O, this is he: the physician, depend on't.

Mrs. C. O, certainly, it must be the physician; and now we shall know.

Enter Sir OLIVER SURFACE.

Crab. Well, doctor, what hopes?

Mrs. C. Ay, doctor, how's your patient?

Sir B. Now, doctor, isn't it a wound with a small-sword?

Crab. A bullet lodged in the thorax, for a hundred.

Sir O. Doctor! a wound with a small-sword! and a bullet in the thorax Oons, are you mad, good people?

Sir B. Perhaps, sir, you are not a doctor?

Sir O. Truly I am to thank you for my degree, if I am.

Crab. Only a friend of Sir Peter's, then, I presume. But, sir, you must have heard of his accident?

Sir O. Not a word!

Crab. Not of his being dangerously wounded?

Sir O. The devil he is!

Sir B. Run through the body—

Crab. Shot in the breast—

Sir B. By one Mr. Surface—

Crab. Ay, the younger.

Sir O. Hey! what the plague! you seem to differ strangely in your accounts: however, you agree that Sir Peter is dangerously wounded.

Sir B. O yes, we agree in that.

Crab. Yes, yes, I believe there can be no doubt of that.

Sir O. Then, upon my word, for a person in that situation, he is the most imprudent man alive; for here he comes walking as if nothing at all were the matter.

Enter Sir PETER TEAZLE.

Odd's heart, Sir Peter, you are come in good time, I promise you; for we had just given you over.

Sir B. Egad, uncle, this is the most sudden recovery.

Sir O. Why, man, what do you do out of bed with a small-sword through your body, and a bullet lodged in your thorax?

Sir P. A small-sword, and a bullet!

Sir O. Ay, these gentlemen would have killed you without law or physic, and wanted to dub me a doctor, to make me an accomplice.

Sir P. Why, what is all this?

Sir B. We rejoice, Sir Peter, that the story of the duel is not true, and are sincerely sorry for your other misfortune.

Sir P. So, so; all over the town already.

[Aside.

Crab. Though, Sir Peter, you were certainly vastly to blame to marry at your years.

Sir P. Sir, what business is that of yours?

Mrs. C. Though, indeed, as Sir Peter made so good a husband, he is very much to be pitied.

Sir P. Plague on your pity, ma'am! I desire none of it.

Sir B. However, Sir Peter, you must not mind the laughing and jests you will meet with on the occasion.

Sir P. Sir, sir, I desire to be master in my own house.

Crab. 'Tis no uncommon case, that's one comfort.

Sir P. I insist on being left to myself: without ceremony—I insist on your leaving my house directly.

Mrs. C. Well, well, we are going, and depend on't we'll make the best report of it we can.

Sir P. Leave my house!

Crab. And tell how hardly you've been treated.

Sir P. Leave my house!

Sir B. And how patiently you bear it.

[Exeunt Mrs. CANDOUR, Sir BENJAMIN, and CRABTREE.]

Sir P. Leave my house!—Fiends! vipers! furies! O, that their own venom would choke them!

Sir O. They are very provoking, indeed, Sir Peter.

Enter ROWLEY.

Row. I heard high words; what has ruffled you sir?

Sir P. Pshaw! what signifies asking? Do I ever pass a day without my vexations?

Row. Well, I am not inquisitive.

Sir O. Well, I am not inquisitive; I come only to tell you that I have seen both my nephews in the manner we proposed.

Sir P. A precious couple they are!

Row. Yes, and Sir Oliver is convinced that your judgment was right, Sir Peter.

Sir O. Yes, I find Joseph is indeed the man, after all.

Row. Ay, as Sir Peter says, he is a man of sentiment.

Sir O. And acts up to the sentiments he professes.

Row. It certainly is edification to hear him talk.

Sir O. Oh, he's a model for the young men of the age!—But how's this, Sir Peter? You don't join us in your friend Joseph's praise, as I expected.

Sir P. Sir Oliver, we live in a damned wicked world, and the fewer we praise the better.

Row. What! do you say so, Sir Peter, who were never mistaken in your life?

Sir P. Pshaw! Plague on you both! I see by your sneering you have heard the whole affair. I shall go mad among you!

Row. Then, to fret you no longer, Sir Peter, we are indeed acquainted with it all. I met Lady Teazle coming from Mr. Surface's so humble, that she deigned to request me to be her advocate with you.

Sir P. And does Sir Oliver know all this?

Sir O. Every circumstance.

Sir P. What of the closet and the screen, hey?

Sir O. Yes, yes, and the little French milliner. O, I have been vastly diverted with the story! Ha! ha! ha!

Sir P. 'Twas very pleasant.

Sir O. I never laughed more in my life, I assure you: Ha! ha! ha!

Sir P. O, vastly diverting! Ha! ha! ha!

Row. To be sure, Joseph with his sentiments: Ha! ha! ha!

Sir P. Yes, yes, his sentiments! Ha! ha! ha! Hypocritical villain!

Sir O. Ay, and that rogue Charles to pull Sir Peter out of the closet: Ha! ha! ha!

Sir P. Ha! ha! 'Twas devilish entertaining, to be sure!

Sir O. Ha! ha! ha! Egad, Sir Peter, I should like to have seen your face when the screen was thrown down. Ha! ha!

Sir P. Yes, yes, my face when the screen was thrown down: Ha, ha, ha! Oh, I must never show my head again!

Sir O. But come, come; it isn't fair to laugh at you neither, my old friend; though, upon my soul, I can't help it.

Sir P. O pray don't restrain your mirth on my account: it does not hurt me at all! I laugh at the whole affair myself. Yes, yes, I think being a standing jest for all one's acquaintance a very happy situation. O yes, and then of a morning to read the paragraphs about Mr. S—, Lady T—, and Sir P—, will be so entertaining! I shall cer-

tainly leave town to-morrow, and never look mankind in the face again.

Row. Without affectation, Sir Peter, you may despise the ridicule of fools: but I see Lady Teazle going towards the next room; I am sure you must desire a reconciliation as earnestly as she does.

Sir O. Perhaps my being here prevents her coming to you. Well, I'll leave honest Rowley to mediate between you; but he must bring you all presently to Mr. Surface's, where I am now returning, if not to reclaim a libertine, at least to expose hypocrisy. [Exit.]

Sir P. Ah, I'll be present at your discovering yourself there with all my heart; though 'tis a vile unlucky place for discoveries. She is not coming here, you see, Rowley.

Row. No, but she has left the door of that room open, you perceive. See, she is in tears.

Sir P. Certainly a little mortification appears very becoming in a wife. Don't you think it will do her good to let her pine a little?

Row. Oh, this is ungenerous in you!

Sir P. Well, I know not what to think. You remember the letter I found of hers, evidently intended for Charles?

Row. A mere forgery, Sir Peter, laid in your way on purpose. This is one of the points which I intend Snake shall give you conviction of.

Sir P. I wish I were once satisfied of that. She looks this way. What a remarkably elegant turn of the head she has! Rowley, I'll go to her.

Row. Certainly.

Sir P. Though when it is known that we are reconciled, people will laugh at me ten times more.

Row. Let them laugh, and retort their malice only by showing them you are happy in spite of it.

Sir P. Faith, so I will! and, if I'm not mistaken, we may yet be the happiest couple in the county.

Row. Nay, Sir Peter, he who once lays aside suspicion—

Sir P. Hold, master Rowley! If you have any regard for me, never let me hear you utter anything like a sentiment: I have had enough of them to serve me the rest of my life.

SCENE III.—The Library.

Enter Lady SNEERWELL and JOSEPH SURFACE.

Lady S. Impossible! Will not Sir Peter immediately be reconciled to Charles, and of consequence no longer oppose his union with Maria? The thought is distraction to me.

Joseph S. Can passion furnish a remedy?

Lady S. No, nor cunning neither. O! I was a fool, an idiot, to league with such a blunderer!

Joseph S. Sure, Lady Sneerwell, I am the greatest sufferer; yet you see I bear the accident with calmness. Well, I admit I have been to blame. I confess I deviated from the direct road of wrong, but I don't think we're so totally defeated neither.

Lady S. No!

Joseph S. You tell me you have made a trial of Snake since we met, and that you still believe him faithful to us.

Lady S. I do believe so.

Joseph S. And that he has undertaken, should it be necessary, to swear and prove, that Charles is at this time contracted by vows and honour to your ladyship, which some of his former letters to you will serve to support.

Lady S. This, indeed, might have assisted.

Joseph S. Come, come; it is not too late yet. [Knocking at the door.] But hark! this is probably my uncle, Sir Oliver: retire to that room; we'll consult further when he is gone.

Lady S. Well, but if he should find you out, too?
Joseph S. Oh, I have no fear of that. Sir Peter will hold his tongue for his own credit's sake—and you may depend on it, I shall soon discover Sir Oliver's weak side!

Lady S. I have no diffidence of your abilities! only be constant to one rigour at a time.

[Exit Lady SNEERWELL.]

Joseph S. I will, I will. So! 'tis confounded hard, after such bad fortune, to be baited by one's confederate in evil. Well, at all events, my character is so much better than Charles's, that I certainly—Hey!—what!—this is not Sir Oliver, but old Stanley again. Plague on't! that he should return to tease me just now—I shall have Sir Oliver come and find him here—and—

Enter Sir OLIVER SURFACE.

Gad's life, Mr. Stanley, why have you come back to plague me at this time? You must not stay now, upon my word.

Sir O. Sir, I hear your uncle Oliver is expected here, and though he has been so penurious to you, I'll try what he'll do for me.

Joseph S. Sir, 'tis impossible for you to stay now, so I must beg—Come any other time, and I promise you, you shall be assisted.

Sir O. No: Sir Oliver and I must be acquainted.

Joseph S. Zounds, sir! then I insist on your quitting the room directly.

Sir O. Nay, sir—

Joseph S. Sir, I insist on't: here, William! show this gentleman out. Since you compel me, sir,—not one moment—this is such insolence!

[Going to push him out.]

Enter CHARLES SURFACE.

Charles S. Hey day! what's the matter now! What the devil, have you got hold of my little broker here? Zounds, brother, don't hurt little Premium. What's the matter, my little fellow?

Joseph S. So! he has been with you too, has he?

Charles S. To be sure he has. Why, he's as honest a little—But sure, Joseph, you have not been borrowing money too, have you?

Joseph S. Borrowing! No! But, brother, you know we expect Sir Oliver here every—

Charles S. O Gad, that's true! Noll mustn't find the little broker here, to be sure!

Joseph S. Yet Mr. Stanley insists—

Charles S. Stanley! why his name's Premium.

Joseph S. No, sir, Stanley.

Charles S. No, no, Premium.

Joseph S. Well, no matter which—but—

Charles S. Ay, ay, Stanley or Premium, 'tis the same thing, as you say; for I suppose he goes by half a hundred names, besides A.B. at the coffee-house.

Joseph S. 'Sdeath, here's Sir Oliver at the door. Now I beg, Mr. Stanley—

Charles S. Ay, ay, and I beg, Mr. Premium—

Sir O. Gentlemen—

Joseph S. Sir, by heaven you shall go!

Charles S. Ay, out with him, certainly!

Sir O. This violence—

Joseph S. Sir, 'tis your own fault.

Charles S. Out with him, to be sure.

[Both forcing Sir Oliver out.]

Enter Lady TEAZLE and Sir PETER, MARIA, and ROWLEY.

Sir P. My old friend, Sir Oliver—hey! What in the name of wonder—here are dutiful nephews—assault their uncles at a first visit!

Lady T. Indeed, Sir Oliver, 'twas well we came in to rescue you.

Row. Truly, it was; for I perceive, Sir Oliver, the character of old Stanley was no protection to you.

Sir O. Nor of Premium either; the necessities of the former could not extort a shilling from that benevolent gentleman; and with the other, I stood a chance of faring worse than my ancestors, and being knocked down without being bid for.

Joseph S. Charles!

Charles S. Joseph!

Joseph S. 'Tis now complete!

Charles S. Very!

Sir O. Sir Peter, my friend, and Rowley too—look on that elder nephew of mine. You know what he has already received from my bounty; and you also know how gladly I would have regarded half my fortune as held in trust for him: judge then my disappointment in discovering him to be destitute of truth, charity, and gratitude.

Sir P. Sir Oliver, I should be more surprised at this declaration, if I had not myself found him to be selfish, treacherous, and hypocritical.

Lady T. And if the gentleman pleads not guilty to these, pray let him call me to his character.

Sir P. Then, I believe, we need add no more: if he knows himself, he will consider it as the most perfect punishment, that he is known to the world.

Charles S. If they talk this way to honesty, what will they say to me, by and by? [*Aside.*]

[*Sir PETER, Lady TEAZLE, and MARIA, retire.*]

Sir O. As for that prodigal, his brother, there—

Charles S. Ay, now comes my turn: the damned family pictures will ruin me. [*Aside.*]

Joseph S. Sir Oliver—uncle, will you honour me with a hearing?

Charles S. Now if Joseph would make one of his long speeches, I might recollect myself a little. [*Aside.*]

Sir O. I suppose you would undertake to justify yourself? [*To Joseph.*]

Joseph S. I trust I could.

Sir O. Nay, if you desert your roguery in its distress, and try to be justified—you have even less principle than I thought you had.—[*To Charles.*] Well, sir! you could justify yourself too, I suppose?

Charles S. Not that I know of, Sir Oliver.

Sir O. What!—Little Premium has been let too much into the secret, I suppose?

Charles S. True, sir; but they were family secrets, and should not be mentioned again, you know.

Row. Come, Sir Oliver, I know you cannot speak of Charles's follies with anger.

Sir O. Odd's heart, no more I can; nor with gravity either. Sir Peter, do you know, the rogue bargained with me for all his ancestors; sold me judges and generals by the foot, and maiden aunts as cheap as broken china.

Charles S. To be sure, Sir Oliver, I did make a little free with the family canvass, that's the truth on't. My ancestors may certainly rise up in judgment against me; there's no denying it; but be-

lieve me sincere when I tell you—and upon my soul I would not say so if I was not—that if I do not appear mortified at the exposure of my follies, it is because I feel at this moment the warmest satisfaction in seeing you, my liberal benefactor.

Sir O. Charles, I believe you; give me your hand again; the ill-looking little fellow over the settee has made your peace.

Charles S. Then, sir, my gratitude to the original is still increased.

Lady T. [*Advancing, MARIA on her left hand.*] Yet, I believe, Sir Oliver, here is one whom Charles is still more anxious to be reconciled to.

Sir O. Oh, I have heard of his attachment there; and, with the young lady's pardon, if I construe right—that blush—

Sir P. Well, child, speak your sentiments!

Maria. Sir, I have little to say, but that I shall rejoice to hear that he is happy; for me—what-ever claim I had to his attention, I willingly resign to one who has a better title.

Charles S. How, Maria!

Sir P. Hey-day! what's the mystery now?—While he appeared an incorrigible rake, you would give your hand to no one else; and now that he is likely to reform, I'll warrant you won't have him.

Maria. His own heart and Lady Sneerwell know the cause.

Charles S. Lady Sneerwell!

Joseph S. Brother, it is with great concern I am obliged to speak on this point, but my regard to justice compels me, and Lady Sneerwell's injuries can no longer be concealed. [*Opens the door.*]

Enter Lady SNEERWELL.

Sir P. So! another French milliner! Egad, he has one in every room in the house, I suppose.

Lady S. Ungrateful Charles! Well may you be surprised, and feel for the indelicate situation your perfidy has forced me into.

Charles S. Pray, uncle, is this another plot of yours? For, as I have life, I don't understand it.

Joseph S. I believe, sir, there is but the evidence of one person more necessary to make it extremely clear.

Sir P. And that person, I imagine, is Mr. Snake. Rowley, you were perfectly right to bring him with us, and pray let him appear.

Row. Walk in, Mr. Snake.

Enter SNAKE.

I thought his testimony might be wanted: however, it happens unluckily, that he comes to confront Lady Sneerwell, not to support her.

Lady S. A villain! Treacherous to me at last!—Speak, fellow; have you, too, conspired against me?

Snake. I beg your ladyship ten thousand pardons: you paid me extremely liberally for the lie in question; but I, unfortunately, have been offered double to speak the truth.

Sir P. Plot and counter-plot! I wish your ladyship joy of your negotiation.

Lady S. The torments of shame and disappointment on you all!

Lady T. Hold, Lady Sneerwell: before you go, let me thank you for the trouble you and that gentleman have taken, in writing letters from me to Charles, and answering them yourself; and let me also request you to make my respects to the scandalous college, of which you are president, and inform them, that Lady Teazle, licentiate, begs leave

to return the diploma they granted her, as she leaves off practice, and kills characters no longer.

Lady S. You, too, madam—provoking—insolent.—May your husband live these fifty years! [*Exit.*]

Sir P. Oons! what a fury!

Lady T. A malicious creature, indeed!

Sir P. What! Not for her last wish?

Lady T. O no!

Sir O. Well, sir, and what have you to say now?

Joseph S. Sir, I am so confounded, to find that Lady Sneerwell could be guilty of suborning Mr. Snake in this manner, to impose on us all, that I know not what to say: however, lest her revengeful spirit should prompt her to injure my brother, I had certainly better follow her directly. For the man who attempts to—

[*Exit.*]

Sir P. Moral to the last!

Sir O. Ay, and marry her,—Joseph, if you can. Egad! you'll do very well together.

Row. I believe we have no more occasion for Mr. Snake, at present.

Snake. Before I go, I beg pardon once for all, for whatever uneasiness I have been the humble instrument of causing to the parties present.

Sir P. Well, well, you have made atonement by a good deed at last.

Snake. But I must request of the company, that it shall never be known.

Sir P. Hey—What the plague!—Are you ashamed of having done a right thing once in your life?

Snake. Ah, sir, consider,—I live by the badness of my character; and if it were once known that I had been betrayed into an honest action, I should lose every friend I have in the world. [*Exit.*]

Sir O. Well, well; we'll not traduce you by saying anything in your praise, never fear.

Lady T. See, Sir Oliver, there needs no persuasion now to reconcile your nephew and Maria.

Sir O. Ay, ay, that's as it should be; and, egad, we'll have the wedding to-morrow morning.

Charles S. Thank you, dear uncle!

Sir P. What, you rogue! don't you ask the girl's consent first!

Charles S. Oh, I have done that a long time—a minute ago—and she has looked yes.

Maria. For shame, Charles!—I protest, Sir Peter, there has not been a word.

Sir O. Well, then, the fewer the better;—may your love for each other never know abatement!

Sir P. And may you live as happily together as Lady Teazle and I intend to do!

Charles S. Rowley, my old friend, I am sure you congratulate me; and I suspect that I owe you much.

Sir P. Ay, honest Rowley always said you would reform.

Charles S. Why, as to reforming, Sir Peter, I'll make no promises, and that I take to be a proof that I intend to set about it; but here shall be my monitor—my gentle guide.—Ah! can I leave the virtuous path those eyes illumine?

Though thou, dear maid, should'st wave thy
beauty's sway,

Thou still must rule, because I will obey:

A humble fugitive from folly view,

No sanctuary near but Love and you;

[*To the audience.*]

You can, indeed, each anxious fear remove,

For even Scandal dies, if you approve.

[*Curtain drops.*]

THE CRITIC;

OR,

A TRAGEDY REHEARSED.

BY RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN,

Author of "The School for Scandal," &c.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

DANGLE.

SNEER.

SIR FRETFUL PLAGIARY.

Under Prompter.

PUFF.

MRS. DANGLE.

Characters of the Tragedy.

LORD BURLEIGH.

Governor of Tilbury Fort.

EARL OF LEICESTER.

SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

SIR CHRISTOPHER HATTON.

Master of the Horse.

BEEFEATER.

DON FEROLLO WHISKERANDOS.

Sentinels.

First Niece.

Second Niece.

Confidant.

TILBURINA.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Breakfast-table, with coffee-equipage, two chairs, Mr. and Mrs. DANGLE discovered at breakfast, reading newspapers.*

Dan. [*Reading.*] Pshaw!—Nothing but politics—and I hate all politics but theatrical politics.—Where's the Morning Chronicle?

Mrs. D. Yes, that's your Gazette.

Dan. So, here we have it.—

"Theatrical intelligence extraordinary."—"We hear there is a new tragedy in rehearsal at Drury-lane Theatre, called the 'Spanish Armada,' said to be written by Mr. Puff, a gentleman well known in the theatrical world: if we may allow ourselves to give credit to the report of the performers, who, truth to say, are in general but indifferent judges, this piece

abounds with the most striking and received beauties of modern composition."—So! I am very glad my friend Puff's tragedy is in such forwardness.—Mrs. Dangle, my dear, you will be very glad to hear that Puff's tragedy—

Mrs. D. Lord, Mr. Dangle, why will you plague me about such nonsense?—Now the plays are begun I shall have no peace.—Isn't it sufficient to make yourself ridiculous by your passion for the theatre, without continually teasing me to join you? Why can't you ride your hobbyhorse without desiring to place me on a pillion behind you, Mr. Dangle?

Dan. Nay, my dear, I was only going to read—

Mrs. D. No, no, you will never read anything that's worth listening to:—havn't you made yourself the jest of all your acquaintance by your interference in matters where you have no business? Are you not call'd a theatrical quidnunc, and a mock Mæcenas to second-hand authors?

Dan. True; my power with the managers is pretty notorious; but is it no credit to have applications from all quarters for my interest?—From lords to recommend fiddlers, from ladies to get boxes, from authors to get answers, and from actors to get engagements.

Mrs. D. Yes, truly; you have contrived to get a share in all the plague and trouble of theatrical property, without the profit, or even the credit of the abuse that attends it.

Dan. I am sure, Mrs. Dangle, you are no loser by it, however: you have all the advantages of it:—mightn't you, last winter, have had the reading of the new pantomime a fortnight previous to its performance? And doesn't Mr. Notter let you take places for a play before it is advertis'd, and set you down for a box for every new piece through the season? And didn't my friend, Mr. Smatter, dedicate his last farce to you at my particular request, Mrs. Dangle?

Mrs. D. [*Rising.*] Yes, but wasn't the farce damn'd, Mr. Dangle? And to be sure it is extremely pleasant to have one's house made the motley rendezvous of all the lackeys of literature.

Dan. Mrs. Dangle, Mrs. Dangle, you will not

easily persuade me that there is no credit or importance in being at the head of a band of critics, who take upon them to decide for the whole town, whose opinion and patronage all writers solicit, and whose recommendation no manager dares refuse?

Mrs. D. Ridiculous!—Both managers and authors of the least merit laugh at your pretensions.—The Public is their Critic—without whose fair approbation they know no play can rest on the stage, and with whose applause they welcome such attacks as yours, and laugh at the malice of them, where they can't at the wit.

Dan. Very well, madam—very well.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Mr. Sneer, sir, to wait on you.

Dan. O, show Mr. Sneer up. [*Exit Servant.*] Plague on't, now we must appear loving and affectionate, or Sneer will hitch us into a story.

Mrs. D. With all my heart; you can't be more ridiculous than you are.

Dan. You are enough to provoke—

Enter Mr. SNEER.

—Ha! my dear Sneer, I am vastly glad to see you. My dear, here's Mr. Sneer; Mr. Sneer, my dear; my dear, Mr. Sneer.

Mrs. D. Good morning to you, sir.

Dan. Mrs. Dangle and I have been diverting ourselves with the papers.—Pray, Sneer, won't you go to Drury-lane Theatre the first night of Puff's tragedy?

Sneer. Yes; but I suppose one shan't be able to get in, for on the first night of a new piece they always fill the house with orders to support it. But here, Dangle, I have brought you two pieces, one of which you must exert yourself to make the managers accept; I can tell you that, for 'tis written by a person of consequence.

[*Gives DANGLE two manuscripts.*]

Dan. [*Reading.*] "Bursts into tears, and exit." What, is this a tragedy?

Sneer. No; that's genteel comedy, not a translation—only taken from the French; it is written in a style which they have lately tried to run down; the true sentimental, and nothing ridiculous in it from the beginning to the end.

Mrs. D. Well, if they had kept to that, I should not have been such an enemy to the stage; there was some edification to be got from those pieces, Mr. Sneer.

Sneer. I am quite of your opinion, Mrs. Dangle.

Dan. [*Looking at the other MS.*] But what have we here?—This seems a very odd—

Sneer. O, that's a comedy, on a very new plan; replete with wit and mirth, yet of a most serious moral! You see it is call'd "The Reformed Housebreaker;" where, by the mere force of humour, housebreaking is put into so ridiculous a light, that if the piece has its proper run, I have no doubt but that bolts and bars will be entirely useless by the end of the season.

Dan. Egad, this is new, indeed!

Sneer. Yes; it is written by a particular friend of mine, who has discovered that the follies and foibles of society are subjects unworthy of the notice of the Comic Muse, who should be taught to stoop only at the greater vices and blacker crimes of humanity—gibbeting capital offences in five acts, and pillorying petty larcenies in two.—In short,

his idea is to dramatize the penal laws, and make the stage a court of ease to the Old Bailey.

Dan. That is to unite poetry and justice indeed!

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir Fretful Plagiary, sir.

Dan. Beg him to walk up.—[*Exit Servant.*] Now, Mrs. Dangle, Sir Fretful Plagiary is an author to your own taste.

Mrs. D. I confess he is a favourite of mine, because everybody else abuses him.

Sneer. Very much to the credit of your charity, madam, if not of your judgment.

Dan. But, egad, he allows no merit to any author but himself; that's the truth on't, though he's my friend.

Sneer. Never.—He's as envious as an old maid verging on the desperation of six-and-thirty.

Dan. Very true, egad—though he's my friend.

Sneer. Then his affected contempt of all newspaper strictures; though, at the same time, he is the sorest man alive, and shrinks like scorch'd parchment from the fiery ordeal of true criticism.

Dan. There's no denying it—though he is my friend.

Sneer. You have read the tragedy he has just finished, haven't you?

Dan. O, yes; he sent it to me yesterday.

Sneer. Well, and you think it execrable, don't you?

Dan. Why, between ourselves, egad I must own—though he's my friend—that it is one of the most—He's here [*Aside*—finished and admirable performance—

[*Sir FRETFUL without.*] Mr. Sneer with him, did you say?

Enter Sir FRETFUL.

Dan. Ah, my dear friend!—Egad, we were just speaking of your tragedy.—Admirable, Sir Fretful, admirable!

Sneer. You never did anything beyond it, Sir Fretful—never in your life.

Sir F. You make me extremely happy; for, without a compliment, my dear Sneer, there isn't a man in the world whose judgment I value as I do yours—and Mr. Dangle's.

Mrs. D. They are only laughing at you, Sir Fretful, for it was but just now that—

Dan. Mrs. Dangle! Ah, Sir Fretful, you know Mrs. Dangle.—My friend Sneer was rallying just now—He knows how she admires you, and—

Sir F. O Lord, I am sure Mr. Sneer has more taste and sincerity than to—[*Aside.*] A damn'd double-faced fellow!

Dan. Yes, yes,—Sneer will jest—but a better humour'd—

Sir F. O, I know—

Dan. He has a ready turn for ridicule—his wit costs him nothing.—

Sir F. No, egad,—or I should wonder how he came by it. [*Aside.*]

Dan. But, Sir Fretful, have you sent your play to the managers yet?—or can I be of any service to you?

Sir F. No, no, I thank you; I sent it to the manager of Covent-garden Theatre this morning.

Sneer. I should have thought now, that it might have been cast (as the actors call it) better at Drury-lane.

Sir F. O lud! no—never send a play there while I live—harkee!

[*Whispers SNEER.*]

Sneer. "Writes himself!" I know he does—

Sir F. I say nothing—I take away from no man's merit—am hurt at no man's good fortune—I say nothing—But this I will say—through all my knowledge of life, I have observed—that there is not a passion so strongly rooted in the human heart as envy!

Sneer. I believe you have reason for what you say, indeed.

Sir F. Besides—I can tell you it is not always so safe to leave a play in the hands of those who write themselves.

Sneer. What, they may steal from them, hey, my dear Plagiary?

Sir F. Steal!—to be sure they may; and, egad, serve your best thoughts as gypsies do stolen children, disfigure them to make 'em pass for their own.

Sneer. But your present work is a sacrifice to Melpomene, and he you know never—

Sir F. That's no security.—A dext'rous plagiarist may do anything.—Why, sir, for aught I know, he might take out some of the best things in my tragedy, and put them into his own comedy.

Sneer. That might be done, I dare be sworn.

Sir F. And then, if such a person gives you the least hint or assistance, he is devilish apt to take the merit of the whole—

Dan. If it succeeds.

Sir F. Aye,—but with regard to this piece, I think I can hit that gentleman, for I can safely swear he never read it.

Sneer. I'll tell you how you may hurt him more—

Sir F. How?

Sneer. Swear he wrote it.

Sir F. Plague on't now, *Sneer*, I shall take it ill.—I believe you want to take away my character as an author!

Sneer. Then I am sure you ought to be very much oblig'd to me.

Sir F. Hey!—Sir!

Dan. O you know he never means what he says.

Sir F. Sincerely, then—you do like the piece?

Sneer. Wonderfully!

Sir F. But come now, there must be something that you think might be mended, hey?—Mr. Dangle, has nothing struck you?

Dan. Why, faith, it is but an ungracious thing, for the most part, to—

Sir F. With most authors it is just so indeed; they are in general strangely tenacious!—But, for my part, I am never so well pleased as when a judicious critic points out any defect to me; for what is the purpose of showing a work to a friend, if you don't mean to profit by his opinion?

Sneer. Very true. Why then, though I seriously admire the piece upon the whole, yet there is one small objection; which, if you'll give me leave, I'll mention.

Sir F. Sir, you can't oblige me more.

Sneer. I think it wants incident.

Sir F. Good God!—you surprise me!—wants incident!

Sneer. Yes; I own I think the incidents are too few.

Sir F. Good God!—Believe me, Mr. *Sneer*, there is no person for whose judgment I have a more implicit deference.—But I protest to you, Mr. *Sneer*, I am only apprehensive that the incidents are too crowded.—My dear *Dangle*, how does it strike you?

Dan. Really, I can't agree with my friend *Sneer*.—I think the plot quite sufficient; and the four first acts by many degrees the best I ever read or saw in my life. If I might venture to suggest anything, it is that the interest rather falls off in the fifth.

Sir F. Rises, I believe you mean, sir—

Dan. No; I don't, upon my word.

Sir F. Yes, yes, you do, upon my soul—it certainly don't fall off, I assure you—No, no, it don't fall off.

Dan. Now, Mrs. Dangle, didn't you say it struck you in the same light?

Mrs. D. No, indeed, I did not—I did not see a fault in any part of the play from the beginning to the end.

Sir F. Upon my soul, the women are the best judges after all!

Mrs. D. Or, if I made any objection, I am sure it was to nothing in the piece! but that I was afraid it was, on the whole, a little too long.

Sir F. Pray, madam, do you speak as to duration of time; or do you mean that the story is tediously spun out?

Mrs. D. O lud! no.—I speak only with reference to the usual length of acting plays.

Sir F. Then I am very happy—very happy indeed—because the play is a short play, a remarkably short play: I should not venture to differ with a lady on a point of taste; but, on these occasions, the watch, you know, is the critic.

Mrs. D. Then, I suppose, it must have been Mr. Dangle's drawing manner of reading it to me.

Sir F. O, if Mr. Dangle read it! that's quite another affair!—But I assure you, Mrs. Dangle, the first evening you can spare me three hours and a half, I'll undertake to read you the whole from beginning to end, with the Prologue and Epilogue, and allow time for the music between the acts.

Mrs. D. I hope to see it on the stage next. [*Exit.*]

Dan. Well, Sir Fretful, I wish you may be able to get rid as easily of the newspaper criticisms as you do of ours.

Sir F. The newspapers!—Sir, they are the most villanous—licentious—abominable—infernal—Not that I ever read them! No! I make it a rule never to look into a newspaper.

Dan. You are quite right—for it certainly must hurt an author of delicate feelings to see the liberties they take.

Sir F. No!—quite the contrary;—their abuse is, in fact, the best panegyric—I like it of all things. An author's reputation is only in danger from their support.

Sneer. Why, that's true—and that attack now on you the other day—

Sir F. What? where?

Dan. Aye, you mean in a paper of Thursday; it was completely ill-natur'd, to be sure.

Sir F. O, so much the better—Ha! ha! ha!—I wouldn't have it otherwise.

Dan. Certainly, it is only to be laugh'd at; for—

Sir F. You don't happen to recollect what the fellow said, do you?

Sneer. Pray, Dangle—Sir Fretful seems a little anxious!

Sir F. O lud, no!—anxious,—not I,—not the least. I—But one may as well hear, you know.

Dan. *Sneer*, do you recollect?—Make out something. [*Aside.*]

Sneer. I will. [*To DANGLE.*] Yes, yes, I remember perfectly.

Sir F. Well, and pray now—not that it signifies—what might the gentleman say?

Sneer. Why, he roundly asserts that you have not the slightest invention or original genius whatever: though you are the greatest traducer of all other authors living.

Sir F. Ha! ha! ha! Very good!

Sneer. That, as to comedy, you have not one idea of your own, he believes, even in your common-place-book, where stray jokes and pilfered witticisms are kept with as much method as the ledger of the Lost and Stolen Office.

Sir F. Ha! ha! ha! Very pleasant!

Sneer. Nay, that you are so unlucky as not to have the skill even to steal with taste: but that you glean from the refuse of obscure volumes, where more judicious plagiarists have been before you; so that the body of your work is a composition of dregs and sediments, like a bad tavern's worst wine.

Sir F. Ha! ha!

Sneer. In your more serious efforts, he says, your bombast would be less intolerable, if the thoughts were ever suited to the expression; but the homeliness of the sentiment stares through the fantastic encumbrance of it's fine language, like a clown in one of the new uniforms!

Sir F. Ha! ha!

Sneer. That your occasional tropes and flowers suit the general coarseness of your style, as tambour sprigs would a ground of linsey-wolsey; while your imitations of Shakspeare resemble the mimicry of Falstaff's page, and about as near the standard of the original.

Sir F. Ha!

Sneer. In short, that even the finest passages you steal are of no service to you; for the poverty of your own language prevents their assimilating; so that they lie on the surface like lumps of marl on a barren moor, encumbering what it is not in their power to fertilize!

Sir F. [After great agitation.] Now, another person would be vex'd at this.

Sneer. Oh! but I wouldn't have told you, only to divert you.

Sir F. I know it—I am diverted,—Ha! ha! ha!—not the least invention!—Ha! ha! ha! very good! very good!

Sneer. Yes—no genius! Ha! ha! ha!

Dan. A severe rogue! ha! ha! But you are quite right, Sir Fretful, never to read such nonsense.

Sir F. To be sure—for, if there is anything to one's praise, it is a foolish vanity to be gratified at it; and if it is abuse,—why, one is always sure to hear of it from one damn'd good-natur'd friend or another!

Enter Servant.

Serv. Mr. Puff, sir, has sent word that the last rehearsal is to be this morning, and that he'll call on you presently.

Dan. That's true—I shall certainly be at home. [Exit Servant.] Now, Sir Fretful, if you have a mind to have justice done you in the way of answer—Egad, Mr. Puff's your man.

Sir F. Pshaw! sir, why should I wish to have it answered, when I tell you I am pleased at it?

Dan. True, I had forgot that.—But I hope you are not fretted at what Mr. Sneer—

Sir F. Zounds! no, Mr. Dangle, don't I tell you these things never fret me in the least,

Dan. Nay, I only thought—

Sir F. And let me tell you, Mr. Dangle, 'tis damn'd affronting in you to suppose that I am hurt, when I tell you I am not.

Sneer. But why so warm, Sir Fretful?

Sir F. Gadslife! Mr. Sneer, you are as absurd as Dangle: how often must I repeat it to you, that nothing can vex me but your supposing it possible for me to mind the damn'd nonsense you have been repeating to me!—And let me tell you, if you continue to believe this, you must mean to insult me, gentlemen—and then your disrespect will affect me no more than the newspaper criticisms—and I shall treat it with exactly the same calm indifference and philosophic contempt—and so your servant. [Exit.]

Sneer. Ha! ha! ha! Poor Sir Fretful! Now will he go and vent his philosophy in anonymous abuse of all modern critics and authors. But, Dangle, you must get your friend Puff to take me to the rehearsal of his tragedy.

Dan. I'll answer for't, he'll thank you for desiring it.

Re-enter Servant.

Serv. Mr. Puff, sir.

Dan. My dear Puff!

Enter PUFF.

Puff. My dear Dangle, how is it with you?

Dan. Mr. Sneer, give me leave to introduce Mr. Puff to you.

Puff. Mr. Sneer is this? Sir, he is a gentleman whom I have long panted for the honour of knowing—a gentleman, whose critical talents and transcendend judgment—

Sneer. Dear sir—

Dan. Nay, don't be modest, Sneer; my friend Puff only talks to you in the style of his profession.

Sneer. His profession!

Puff. Yes, sir; I make no secret of the trade I follow—among friends and brother authors, Dangle knows I love to be frank on the subject, and to advertise myself *viva voce*.—I am, sir, a Practitioner in Panegyric, or, to speak more plainly—a Professor of the Art of Puffing, at your service—or anybody else's.

Sneer. Sir, you are very obliging!—I believe, Mr. Puff, I have often admired your talents in the daily prints.

Puff. Yes, sir, I flatter myself I do as much business in that way as any six of the fraternity in town—Devilish hard work all the summer—Friend Dangle never work'd harder!—But harkee,—the winter managers were a little sore, I believe.

Dan. No! I believe they took it all in good part.

Puff. Aye!—Then that must have been affectation in them; for, egad, there were some of the attacks which there was no laughing at!

Sneer. Aye, the humorous ones. But I should think, Mr. Puff, that authors would in general be able to do this sort of work for themselves.

Puff. Why, yes—but in a clumsy way. Besides, we look on that as an encroachment, and so take the opposite side. I dare say now you conceive half the very civil paragraphs and advertisements you see, to be written by the parties concerned, or their friends? No such thing. Nine out of ten, manufactured by me in the way of business.

Sneer. Indeed!

Puff. Even the auctioneers now—the auctioneers, I say, though the rogues have lately got some

credit for their language—not an article of the merit theirs!—Take them out of their pulpits, and they are as dull as catalogues!—No, sir; 'twas I first enriched their style—'twas I first taught them to crowd their advertisements with panegyric superlatives, each epithet rising above the other—like the bidders in their own auction-rooms! From ME they learn'd to enlay their phraseology with variegated chips of exotic metaphor; by ME, too, their inventive faculties were called forth. Yes, sir, by ME they were instructed to clothe ideal walls with gratuitous fruit—to insinuate obsequious rivulets into visionary groves—to teach courteous shrubs to nod their approbation of the grateful soil! or, on emergencies, to raise upstart oaks, where there had never been an acorn; to create a delightful vicinage, without the assistance of a neighbour; or fix the temple of Hygeia in the fens of Lincolnshire!

Dan. I am sure you have done them infinite service; for now, when a gentleman is ruined, he parts with his house with some credit.

Sneer. Service! if they had any gratitude, they would erect a statue to him. But pray, Mr. Puff, what first put you on exercising your talents in this way?

Puff. Egad, sir—sheer necessity—the proper parent of an art so nearly allied to invention; you must know, Mr. Sneer, that from the first time I tried my hand at an advertisement, my success was such, that, for some time after, I led a most extraordinary life indeed!

Sneer. How, pray?

Puff. Sir, I supported myself two years entirely by my misfortunes.

Sneer. By your misfortunes?

Puff. Yes, sir, assisted by long sickness, and other occasional disorders; and a very comfortable living I had of it.

Sneer. From sickness and misfortune!

Puff. Harkee!—By advertisements—"To the charitable and humane!" and "To those whom Providence hath blessed with affluence!"

Sneer. Oh,—I understand you.

Puff. And, in truth, I deserved what I got; for I suppose never man went through such a series of calamities in the same space of time!—Sir, I was five times made a bankrupt, and reduced from a state of affluence, by a train of unavoidable misfortunes! Then, sir, though a very industrious tradesman, I was twice burnt out, and lost my little all, both times! I lived upon those fires a month. I soon after was confined by a most excruciating disorder, and lost the use of my limbs! That told very well; for I had the case strongly attested, and went about to collect the subscriptions myself.

Dan. Egad, I believe that was when you first called on me—

Puff. What, in November last?—O no! When I called on you I was a close prisoner in the Marshalsea, for a debt benevolently contracted to serve a friend! I was afterwards twice tapped for a dropsy, which declined into a very profitable consumption! I was then reduced to—O no—then, I became a widow with six helpless children,—after having had eleven husbands pressed, and being left every time eight months gone with child, and without money to get me into an hospital!

Sneer. And you bore all with patience, I make no doubt?

Puff. Why, yes,—though I made some occasional attempts at *jelo de se*; but as I did not find those *rash actions* answer, I left off killing myself very soon.—Well, sir,—at last, what with bankruptcies, fires, gout, dropsies, imprisonments, and other valuable calamities, having got together a pretty handsome sum, I determined to quit a business which had always gone rather against my conscience, and in a more liberal way still to indulge my talents for fiction and embellishments, through my favourite channels of diurnal communication—and so, sir, you have my history.

Sneer. Most obligingly communicative, indeed. But surely, Mr. Puff, there is no great *mystery* in your present profession?

Puff. Mystery! Sir, I will take upon me to say the matter was never scientifically treated, nor reduced to rule, before.

Sneer. Reduced to rule?

Puff. O lud, sir! you are very ignorant, I am afraid.—Yes, sir,—Puffing is of various sorts:—the principal are—the Puff direct—the Puff preliminary—the Puff collateral—the Puff collusive—and the Puff oblique, or Puff by implication. These all assume, as circumstances require, the various forms of—Letter to the Editor—Occasional Anecdote—Impartial Critique—Observation from Correspondent—or Advertisements from the Party.

Sneer. The Puff direct, I can conceive—

Puff. O yes, that's simple enough,—for instance—A new Comedy or Farce is to be produced at one of the Theatres (though, by the by, they don't bring out half what they ought to do): the author, suppose Mr. Smatter, or Mr. Dapper, or any particular friend of mine—very well; the day before it is to be performed, I write an account of the manner in which it was received—I have the plot from the author,—and only add—Characters strongly drawn—highly coloured—hand of a master—fund of genuine humour—mine of invention—neat dialogue—attic salt!—Then for the performance—Mr. Baker was astonishingly great in the character of *Sir Harry*! That universal and judicious actor, Mr. Egerton, perhaps never appeared to more advantage than in the *Colonel*: but it is not in the power of language to do justice to Mr. Jones!—Indeed, he more than merited those repeated bursts of applause which he drew from a most brilliant and judicious audience! In short, we are at a loss which to admire most,—the unrivalled genius of the author, the great attention and liberality of the managers, the wonderful abilities of the painter, or the incredible exertions of all the performers!

Sneer. That's pretty well, indeed, sir.

Puff. O cool, quite cool, to what I sometimes do.

Sneer. And do you think there are any who are influenced by this?

Puff. O, lud! yes, sir; the number of those who undergo the fatigue of judging for themselves is very small indeed!

Dan. Ha! ha! ha!—'gad, I know it is so.

Puff. As to the Puff oblique, or Puff by implication, it is too extensive, and branches into so many varieties, that it is impossible to be illustrated by an instance;—it is the last principal class of the Art of Puffing—an art which I hope you will now agree with me, is of the highest dignity.

Sneer. Sir, I am completely a convert both to the importance and ingenuity of your profession; and now, sir, there is but one thing which can possibly increase my respect for you, and that is,

your permitting me to be present this morning at the rehearsal of your new tragedy—

Puff. Hush, for Heaven's sake—*My tragedy!*—Egad, Dangle, I take this very ill; you know how apprehensive I am of being known to be the author.

Dan. 'Faith, I would not have told; but it's in the papers, and your name at length—in the Morning Chronicle.

Puff. Ah! those damn'd editors never can keep a secret! Well, Mr. Sneer, no doubt you will do me great honour—I shall be infinitely happy—highly flattered.

Dan. I believe it must be near the time—shall we go together?

Puff. No; it will not be yet this hour, for they are always late at that theatre: besides, I must meet you there, for I have some little matters to send to the papers, and a few paragraphs to scribble before I go. [*Looking at memorandums.*] Here is 'a Conscientious Baker, on the subject of the Army Bread,' and 'a Detester of visible Brick-work, in favour of the new-invented Stucco;' both in the style of Junius, and promised for to-morrow.—Here is an invention for the running our mail-coaches by steam, and lighting them by gas.—I have also a very ingenious design for a self-acting air-pump, to be fixed in the confined streets, which is to supersede the necessity of country excursions for the benefit of the health. Here are likewise many other valuable memorandums, most of which I have no doubt but I shall render equally practicable, and of the greatest importance to the nation. So, egad, I have not a moment to lose.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Theatre.*

Enter DANGLE, PUFF, and SNEER, as before the Curtain. Three chairs on.

Puff. No, no, sir; what Shakspeare says of actors may be better applied to the purpose of plays; they ought to be 'the abstract and brief chronicles of the times.' Therefore when history, and particularly the history of our own country, furnishes anything like a case in point, to the time in which an author writes, if he knows his own interest, he will take advantage of it; so, sir, I call my tragedy the 'Spanish Armada;' and have laid the scene before Tilbury Fort.

Sneer. A most happy thought, certainly!

Dan. Egad, it was; I told you so. But pray, now, I don't understand how you have contrived to introduce any love into it.

Puff. Love!—Oh, nothing so easy: for it is a received point among poets, that, where history gives you a good heroic outline for a play, you may fill up with a little love at your own discretion: in doing which, nine times out of ten, you only make up a deficiency in the private history of the times. Now I rather think I have done this with some success.

Sneer. No scandal about Queen Elizabeth, I hope?

Puff. O lud! no, no. I only suppose the governor of Tilbury Fort's daughter to be in love with the son of the Spanish admiral.

Sneer. Oh, is that all?

Dan. Excellent, 'faith! I see it at once. But won't this appear rather improbable?

Puff. To be sure it will—but what the plague! a play is not to show occurrences that happen every day, but things just so strange, that though they never did, they might happen.

Sneer. Certainly, nothing is unnatural, that is not physically impossible.

Puff. Very true—and for that matter, DonjFerrolo Whiskerandos—for that's the lover's name—might have been over here in the train of the Spanish ambassador; or Tilburina, for that is the lady's name, might have been in love with him, from having heard his character, or seen his picture; or from knowing that he was the last man in the world she ought to be in love with, or for any other good female reason. However, sir, the fact is, that though she is but a knight's daughter, egad! she is in love like any princess!

Dan. Poor young lady! I feel for her already!

Puff. O amazing!—her poor susceptible heart is swayed to and fro, by contending passions, like—

Enter Under Prompter.

Under P. Sir, the scene is set, and everything is ready to begin, if you please.

Puff. Egad, then we'll lose no time.

Under P. Though I believe, sir, you will find it very short, for all the performers have profited by the kind permission you granted them.

Puff. Hey! what!

Under P. You know, sir, you gave them leave to cut out or omit whatever they found heavy or unnecessary to the plot, and I must own they have taken very liberal advantage of your indulgence.

[*Exit.*]

Puff. Well, well. They are in general very good judges, and I know I am luxuriant. Gentlemen, be seated. [*SNEER AND DANGLE sit.*] Now, Mr. Wodarch [*To Leader of the Band*], please to play a few bars of something soft, just to prepare the audience for the curtain's rising.

[*The Band strike 'Bobbing Joan,' very forte.*]

Puff. [*Having stopped them with much difficulty.*] Now, really, gentlemen, this is unkind. I ask you to play a soothing air, and you strike up Bobbing Joan. [*To SNEER, &c.*] These gentlemen will have their joke at rehearsal, you see. [*To Orchestra.*] Come, gentlemen, oblige me. [*The Band play a few bars of soft music.*] Aye, that's right,—for we have the scenes, and dresses; egad, we'll go to it, as if it was the first night's performance; but you need not mind stopping between the acts. Soh! stand clear, gentlemen. Now you know there will be a cry of down!—down!—hats off!—silence! Then up curtain,—and let us see what our painters have done for us.

SCENE II.—*The Curtain rises, and discovers Tilbury Fort. Two Sentinels asleep on the ground.*

Dan. Tilbury Fort!—very fine, indeed!

Puff. Now, what do you think I open with?

Sneer. Faith, I can't guess—

Puff. A clock.

Sneer. A clock!

Puff. Hark!—[*Clock strikes four.*] I open with a clock striking, to beget an awful attention in the audience—it also marks the time, which is four o'clock in the morning, and saves a description of

the rising sun, and a great deal about gilding the eastern hemisphere.

Dan. But, pray, are the sentinels to be asleep?

Puff. Fast as watchmen.

Sneer. Isn't that odd though, at such an alarming crisis?

Puff. To be sure it is:—but smaller things must give way to a striking scene at the opening; that's a rule.—And the case is, that two great men are coming to this very spot to begin the piece; now, it is not to be supposed they would open their lips, if these fellows were watching them; so, egad, I must either have them sent off their posts, or set them asleep.

Sneer. O, that accounts for it!—But tell us, who are these coming?—

Puff. These? They are—Sir Walter Raleigh and Sir Christopher Hatton. You'll know Sir Christopher, by his turning out his toes,—famous, you know, for his dancing. I like to preserve all the little traits of character. Now attend.

Enter Sir CHRISTOPHER HATTON and Sir WALTER RALEIGH.

'Sir C. True, gallant Raleigh!'

Dan. What, had they been talking before?

Puff. O yes; all the way as they came along. I beg pardon, gentlemen [*To the Actors*], but these are particular friends of mine. Mr. Sneer and Mr. Dangle, Mr. Keeley and Mr. Meadows, both very promising gentlemen in their profession, I assure you. [*The Actors take off their hats, and bow very low.*] I know it's against the rule to introduce strangers at a rehearsal, but as they are particular friends of mine, I thought you would excuse. Don't mind interrupting these fellows whenever anything strikes you. [*To SNEER and DANGLE.*

'Sir C. True, gallant Raleigh!'

'But O, thou champion of thy country's fame,

'There is a question which I yet must ask;

'A question, which I never ask'd before.

'What mean these mighty armaments?

'This general muster? and this throng of chiefs?'

Sneer. Pray, Mr. Puff, how came Sir Christopher Hatton never to ask that question before?

Puff. What, before the play began? How the plague could he?

Dan. That's true, 'efaith!

Puff. But you will hear what he thinks of the matter.

'Sir C. Alas, my noble friend, when I behold—'

Puff. [*Interrupts him.*] My good friend, you entirely forget what I told you the last rehearsal,—that there was a particular trait in Sir Christopher's character—that he was famous, in Queen Elizabeth's time, for his dancing—pray, turn your toes out. [*With his foot, he pushes Sir C.'s feet out, until they are nearly square.*] That will do—now, sir, proceed.

'Sir C. Alas, my noble friend, when I behold

'Yon tented plains in martial symmetry

'Array'd—when I count o'er you glittering lines

'Of crested warriors—

'When briefly all I hear or see bears stamp

'Of martial preparation, and stern defence,

'I cannot but surmise—Forgive, my friend,

'If the conjecture's rash'—

Puff. [*Interrupting.*] A little more freedom,—if you please. Remember that Sir Christopher and Sir Walter were on the most familiar footing. Now, as thus—

[*Quotes the line flippantly.*

ACT. DRAMA.—NO. V.

'Sir C. [*Imitates his manner.*] I cannot but surmise. Forgive, my friend,

'If the conjecture's rash—I cannot but

'Surmise—the state some danger apprehends!'

Sneer. A very cautious conjecture that.

Puff. Yes, that's his character; not to give an opinion, but on secure grounds.—Now then.

'Sir W. O, most accomplished Christopher.'

Puff. Keep up the Christopher! 'O most accomplished Christopher.' He calls him by his Christian name, to show that they are on the most familiar terms.

'Sir W. O, most accomplished Christopher, I find

'Thy fears are just.

'Sir C. But where, whence, when, what, which, and whose,

'The danger is—methinks, I fain would learn.

'Sir W. You know, my friend, scarce two revolving suns'—

Puff. [*Stopping him.*] Suit the word to the action, and the action to the word.

'You know, my friend, scarce two revolving suns.'

[*Passes his hands one over the other, with a circular motion.*]

'Sir W. [*Using the same action.*] You know, my friend, scarce two revolving suns,

'And three revolving moons,'—

Puff. No, no: send your moons the other way, or you'll bring about an eclipse!

[*Repeats the same lines again the second time, turning his hands the contrary way.*]

'Sir W. [*Using PUFF's action.*] You know, my friend, scarce two revolving suns,

'And three revolving moons, have closed their course,

'Since haughty Philip, in despite of peace,

'With hostile hand hath struck at England's trade.

'Sir C. I know it well.

'Sir W. Philip, you know, is proud Iberia's king!

'Sir C. He is.

'Sir W. You know, beside, his boasted armament,

'The fam'd Armada, by the Pope baptized,

'With purpose to invade these realms——'

'Sir C. Is sail'd:

'Our last advices so report.

'Sir W. While the Spanish admiral's chief hope,

'His darling son, by chance a prisoner has been taken,

'And in this fort of Tilbury'—

Puff. [*Mocking his tone.*] 'Tilbury!' Don't speak of Tilbury Fort as if it was a gin-shop! Keep up its consequence. 'And in this fort of Tilbury!'

[*Sir WALTER repeats the line after PUFF's manner.*

'Sir C. Is now confin'd.

'Sir W. You also know'—

Dan. Mr. Puff, as he knows all this, why does Sir Walter go on telling him?

Puff. But the audience are not supposed to know anything of the matter, are they?

Sneer. True, but I think you manage ill: for there certainly appears no reason why Sir Walter should be so communicative.

Puff. Foregod now, that is one of the most ungrateful observations I ever heard; for the less inducement he has to tell all this, the more I think you ought to be obliged to him; for, I am sure, you'd know nothing of the matter without it.

Dan. That's very true, upon my word.

Puff. But you will find he was not going on.

'Sir C. Enough, enough,—'tis plain,—and I no more

'Am in amazement lost!'

Puff. Here, now you see, Sir Christopher did not in fact ask any one question for his own information.

Sneer. No, indeed: his has been a most disinterested curiosity!

Dan. Really, I find, we are very much obliged to them both.

Puff. To be sure you are. Now then for the commander-in-chief, the Earl of Leicester! who, you know, was no favourite but of the Queen's. We left off—'in amazement lost!'

'Sir C. Am in amazement lost.

'But see where noble Leicester comes! supreme in honours and command.'

Sneer. But who are these with him?

Puff. O! very valiant knights; one is the governor of the fort, the other the master of the horse. And now, I think you shall hear some better language: I was obliged to be plain and intelligible in the first scene, because there was so much matter of fact in it; but now, efaith, you have trope, figure, and metaphor, as plenty as noun-substantives.

Enter Earl of LEICESTER, Governor, and Master of the Horse.

'Lei. How's this, my friends! is't thus your new-fledg'd zeal

'And plumed valour moulds in roosted sloth?

'Why dimly glimmers that heroic flame,

'Whose redd'ning blaze, by patriot spirit fed,

'Should be the beacon of a kindling realm?

'Can the quick current of a patriot heart

'Thus stagnate in a cold and weedy converse,

'Or freeze in tideless inactivity?

'No! rather let the fountain of your valour

'Spring through each stream of enterprize,

'Each petty channel of conducive daring,

'Till the full torrent of your foaming wrath

'O'erwhelm the flats of sunk hostility!'

Puff. [Runs up and embraces him.] Allow me to introduce Mr. Horrebrow to you—Mr. Dangle and Mr. Sneer. [Returns.

'Sir W. No more! the fresh'ning breath of thy rebuke

'Hath fill'd the swelling canvass of our souls!

'And thus, though fate should cut the cable of

[All take hands.

'Our topmost hopes, in friendship's closing line

'We'll grapple with despair, and if we fall,

'We'll fall in Glory's wake! [They part hands.

'Lei. [Slowly.] There spoke Old England's genius!'

Puff. No, no, sir; Old England's genius never spoke in that way. She must be a devilish queer genius if she did. No, sir, keep it up. [Quotes with heroic bombast.] 'There spoke Old England's genius.'

'Lei. [With PUFF's manner.] There spoke Old England's genius!

'Then, are we all resolv'd?

'All. We are—all resolv'd.

'Lei. To conquer—or be free.

'All. To conquer—or be free.

'Lei. All?

'All. All.'

Dan. Nem. con. egad!

Puff. O yes, where they do agree on the stage, their unanimity is wonderful.

'Lei. Then, let's embrace,—[They embrace.]—and now'— [Kneels.

Sneer. What the plague, is he going to pray?

Puff. Yes, hush! In great emergencies, there is nothing like a prayer!

'Lei. O mighty Mars!'

Puff. Stop, my dear sir. You do not expect to find Mars there. No, sir, whenever you address the gods, always look into the upper gallery.

'Lei. [Looking up to the gallery.] O mighty Mars!'

Dan. But why should he pray to Mars?

Puff. Hush!

'Lei. O mighty Mars, if in thy homage bred,

'Each point of discipline I've still observ'd;

'Nor but by due promotion, and the right

'Of service, to the rank of Major-general

'Have ris'n;'

Puff. Keep up the Major-general! [Repeats the line with force.] 'To the rank of Major-general have ris'n!' Tip them the Major-general, pray.

'Lei. [After PUFF's manner.] To the rank of Major-general

'Have ris'n; assist thy votary now!

'Gov. [Kneels.] Yet do not rise—hear me!

'Mast. of H. [Kneels.] And me!

'Sir W. [Kneels.] And me!

'Sir C. [Kneels.] And me!'

Puff. [Kneels.] And me! Now, mind your hits; pray altogether.

'All. Behold thy votaries submissive beg,

'That thou wilt deign to grant them all they ask;'

Puff. No, no, gentlemen, the emphasis is upon the word *all*. Thus:

'Behold thy votaries submissive beg,

'That thou wilt deign to grant them *all* they ask;'

Now, gentlemen.

'All. Behold thy votaries submissive beg,

'That thou wilt deign to grant them *all* they ask;

'Assist them to accomplish all their ends,

'And sanctify whatever means they use

'To gain them!'

Sneer. A very orthodox quintetto!

Puff. Vastly well, gentlemen, indeed, for persons who are not much in the habit of praying. Is that well managed or not? I believe you haven't such a prayer as that on the stage.

Sneer. Not exactly.

Lei. [To PUFF.] But, sir, you haven't settled how we are to get off here.

Puff. You could not go off kneeling, could you?

Lei. O no, sir, impossible!

Puff. It would have a good effect, efaith, if you could! "exeunt praying!" Yes, and would vary the established mode of springing off with a glance at the pit.

Sneer. O never mind, so as you get them off, I'll answer for it, the audience won't care how.

Puff. Well, then, repeat the last line standing, and go off the old way.

'All. And sanctify whatever means we use to gain them.' [Exeunt.

Dan. Bravo! a fine exit.

Sneer. Stay a moment.

The Sentinels get up.

'1st Sen. All this shall to Lord Burleigh's ear.

'2d Sen. 'Tis meet it should.' [*Exeunt Sentinels.*
Dan. Hey!—why, I thought those fellows had been asleep?

Puff. Only a pretence; there's the art of it; they were spies of Lord Burleigh's. But take care, my dear Dangle, the morning gun is going to fire.

Dan. Well, that will have a fine effect.

Puff. I think so, and helps to realize the scene. [*Cannon, three times from battery.*] What the plague!—three morning guns!—there never is but one! *Aye*, this is always the way at the theatre—give these fellows a good thing, and they never know when to have done with it. You have no more cannon to fire?

Prompt. [*From within.*] No, sir.

Puff. Now, then, for soft music.

Sneer. Pray what's that for?

Puff. It shows that Tilburina is coming; nothing introduces you a heroine like soft music.—Here she comes.

Dan. And her confidant, I suppose?

Puff. To be sure: here they are—inconsolable—to the minuet in Ariadne!

[*Soft music in Orchestra.*]

Enter TILBURINA and Confidant.

'*Til.* Now flowers unfold their beauties to the sun,
 'And blushing, kiss the beam he sends to wake them.

'The strip'd carnation, and the guarded rose,
 'The vulgar wall-flow'r, and smart gilly-flower,
 'The polyanthus mean—the dapper daisy,
 'Sweet William, and sweet marjorum,—and all
 'The tribe of single and of double pinks!
 'Now, too, the feather'd warblers tune their notes
 'Around, and charm the list'ning grove—The lark!
 'The linnet! chaffinch! bullfinch! goldfinch!
 'greenfinch!

'—But O to me, no joy can they afford!
 'Nor rose, nor wall-flow'r, nor smart gilly-flower,
 'Nor polyanthus mean, nor dapper daisy,
 'Nor William sweet, nor marjorum—nor lark,
 'Linnet, nor all the finches of the grove!'

Puff. [*Holding his handkerchief to his eyes.*] Your white handkerchief, madam—there, if you please.

Til. I thought, sir, I was't to use that 'till "heart-rending woe."

Puff. O yes, madam—at 'the finches of the grove,' if you please.

'*Til.* —Nor lark,

'Linnet, nor all the finches of the grove!' [*Weeps.*

Puff. Vastly well, madam!

Dan. Vastly well, indeed!

'*Til.* For, O too sure, heart-rending woe is now
 'The lot of wretched Tilburina!'

Dan. O! 'tis too much.

Sneer. Oh!—it is, indeed.

'*Con.* Be comforted, sweet lady—for whoknows,
 'But Heav'n has yet some milk-white day in store.

'*Til.* Alas, my youthful—gentle Nora,
 'Thy tender youth as yet hath never mourn'd
 'Love's fatal dart.

'*Con.* But see where your stern father comes;
 'It is not meet that he should find you thus.'

Puff. Hey, what the plague! what a cut is here!
 —why, what is become of the description of her first meeting with Don Whiskerandos? his gallant behaviour in the sea-fight, and the simile of the canary-bird?

Til. Indeed, sir, you'll find they will not be miss'd.

Puff. Very well.—Very well!

Til. The cue, ma'am, if you please.

'*Con.* It is not meet that he should find you thus.

'*Til.* Thou counsel'st right, but 'tis no easy task
 'For barefac'd grief to wear a mask of joy.

Enter Governor.

'*Gov.* How's this—in tears?—O—'

Puff. There's a round O! for you.

Sneer. A capital O!

'*Gov.* Tilburina, shame!

'Is this a time for maudling tenderness,
 'And Cupid's baby woes?—hast thou not heard

'That haughty Spain's Pope-consecrated fleet

'Advances to our shores, while England's fate,

'Like a clipp'd guinea, trembles in the scale!

'*Til.* [*Seizing Governor's hand.*] Then, is the crisis of my fate at hand!

'I see the fleet's approach—I see—'

Puff. Now, pray, gentlemen, mind. This is one of the most useful figures we tragedy-writers have, by which a hero or heroine, in consideration of their being often obliged to overlook things that are on the stage, is allowed to hear and see a number of things that are not.

Sneer. Yes; a kind of poetical second-sight!

Puff. Yes.—Now then, madam.

'*Til.* —I see their decks

'Are clear'd!—I see the signal made!

'The line is form'd!—a cable's-length asunder!

'I see the frigates station'd in the rear;

'And now, I hear the thunder of the guns!

'I hear the victor's shouts—I also hear

'The vanquish'd groan—and now 'tis smoke—and now

'I see the loose sails shiver in the wind!

'I see—I see—what soon you'll see—'

[*Swoons in the Governor's arms.*

Puff. [*In rapture, taking TILBURINA's hand.*] Mrs. Gibbs, allow me to introduce you to Mr. Dangle and Mr. Sneer. This is Mrs. Gibbs, one of the very best actresses on the stage, I assure you, gentlemen.

'*Gov.* Hold, daughter! peace! this love hath turn'd thy brain:

'The Spanish fleet thou can'st not see—because,

'—It is not yet in sight!'

Dan. Egad, though, the Governor seems to make no allowance for this poetical figure you talk of.

Puff. No; a plain matter-of-fact man; that's his character.

'*Til.* But will you then refuse his offer?

'*Gov.* I must—I will—I can—I ought—I do.

'*Til.* His liberty is all he asks.'

Puff. His liberty is all he asks.

Sneer. All who asks, Mr. Puff? Who is—he?

Puff. Egad, sir, I can't tell. Here has been such cutting and slashing, I don't know where they have got to, myself.

Til. Indeed, sir, you will find it connect very well.

'*Til.* A retreat in Spain!

'*Gov.* Outlawry here!

'*Til.* Your daughter's prayer!

'*Gov.* Your father's oath!

'*Til.* My lover!

'*Gov.* My country!

'*Til.* Tilburina!

'*Gov.* England!

'*Til.* A title!
'*Gov.* Honour!
'*Til.* A pension!
'*Gov.* Conscience!
'*Til.* A thousand pounds!
'*Gov.* [*Starts.*] Hah! thou hast touch'd me nearly!

'*Til.* Canst thou—
'Reject the suppliant, and the daughter too?
'*Gov.* No more; I would not hear thee plead in vain;

'The father softens—but the governor
'Is resolv'd!' [*Exit.*]
Puff. My dear sir, give that a little more force, if you please—but the governor's resolv'd!

'*Gov.* [*Imitating PUFF's manner.*] The father softens—but the governor

'Is resolv'd!' [*Exit quickly.*]
'*Til.* 'Tis well,—hence then, fond hopes,—fond passion, hence;

'Duty, behold I am all overthine—
'*Whis.* [*Without.*] Where is my love—my—behind!

Puff. My what!—What's that, Mr. Pension?

Enter WHISKERANDOS.

Have the goodness to let me hear that line again?

'*Whis.* Where is my love—my behind?'

Puff. No, no, sir.—"Where is my love—my—behind the scenes"—spoken behind the scenes.

Whis. Oh, I beg pardon, sir, but I assure you it is written so in my part. [*Exit.*]

Enter WHISKERANDOS.

'*Whis.* Where is my love—my—beauteous enemy.

'My conquering Tilburina! How! is't thus
'We meet? Why are thy looks averse! What means

'That falling tear—that frown of boding woe?
'Hah! now indeed I am a prisoner!
'Yes, now I feel the galling weight of these
'Disgraceful chains—which, cruel Tilburina!
'Thy doating captive gloried in before.
'But thou art false, and Whiskerandos is undone!
'*Til.* O no; how little dost thou know thy Tilburina.

'*Whis.* Art thou, then, true? Begone cares, doubts, and fears,
'I make you all a present to the winds;
'And if the winds reject you—try the waves.'

Puff. The wind, you know, is the established receiver of all stolen sighs, and cast-off griefs, and apprehensions.

'*Til.* Yet must we part?—Stern duty seals our doom:

'Though here I call yon conscious clouds to witness,

'Could I pursue the bias of my soul,
'All friends, all rights of parents, I'd disclaim,
'And thou, my Whiskerandos, should'st be father
'And mother, brother, cousin, uncle, aunt,
'And friend to me!

'*Whis.* O matchless excellence!—And must we part?

'Well, if—we must—we must—and in that case
'The less is said the better.'

Puff. Hey-dey!—here's a cut!—What! are all the mutual protestations out?

Til. Now, pray, sir, don't interrupt us just here; you ruin our feelings.

Puff. Your feelings!—but zounds, my feelings, ma'am!

'*Whis.* One last embrace.

'*Til.* Now,—farewell, for ever!

'*Whis.* For ever!

'*Til.* Aye, for ever!'

[*Going.*]
Puff. S'death and fury!—Gadslife! Sir! Madam, I really can't suffer this—if you go out without the parting look, you might as well dance out. Here!

'For ever! Aye, for ever.'

[*Holding forth his arms, as to embrace.*] Give them the last puff of your tragedy bellows!

'*Whis.* [*With arms extended.*] For ever! Oh!

'*Til.* Aye, for ever, Oh!'

[*They rush into each other's arms, then reluctantly part, and exeunt WHISKERANDOS and TILBURINA.*]

Con. But pray, sir, how am I to get off here?

Puff. You, pshaw! what the devil signifies how you get off!

[*Pushes the Confidant off.*]

[*Drop-scene lowers; SNEER and DANGLE rise.*]

Dan. O, charming!

Puff. Hey!—'tis pretty well, I believe.—You see, I don't attempt to strike out anything new—but I take it I improve on the established modes.

Enter Under Prompter.

Under P. Sir, the carpenter says it is impossible you can go to the Park scene yet.

Puff. The Park scene! No—I mean the description scene here, in the wood.

Under P. Sir, the performers have cut it out.

Puff. Cut it out!

Under P. Yes, sir.

Puff. What! the whole account of Queen Elizabeth?

Under P. Yes, sir.

Puff. And the description of her horse and side-saddle.

Under P. Yes, sir.

Puff. So, so, this is very fine, indeed! Mr. Prompter, how the plague could you suffer this?

Prompter. [*From within.*] Sir, indeed, the pruning knife—

Puff. The pruning knife—zounds! the axe! Why, here has been such lopping and topping, I shan't have the bare trunk of my play left presently.—Very well, sir—the performers must do as they please; but, upon my soul, I'll print it every word.

Sneer. That I would, indeed.

Puff. Very well—sir—then we must go on. [*Exit Under Prompter.*] Well, now, if the scene is ready—we'll go on.

[*The drop-scene rises, and discovers a wood scene. A carpet spread on the stage, and a chair in the centre.*]

So, now for my mysterious yeoman.

Enter a Beefeater.

'*Beef.* Perdition catch my soul, but I do love thee!

Sneer. Haven't I heard that line before?

Puff. No, I fancy not.—Where, pray?

Dan. Yes, I think there is something like it in "Othello."

Puff. Gad! now you put me in mind on't, I believe there is—but that's of no consequence—all that can be said is, that two people happened to hit on the same thought—and Shakspeare made use of it first, that's all.

Sneer. Very true.

Puff. Now, sir, your soliloquy—but speak more

to the pit, if you please—the soliloquy always to the pit—that's a rule.

'Beef. Tho' hopeless love finds comfort in despair,

'It never can endure a rival's bliss!

'But soft.'

Puff. Put your finger to your head when you say that—and don't gallop off—steal cautiously off.

'Beef. But soft—I am observed.'

[Exit Beefeater stealthily.]

Dan. That's a very short soliloquy.

Puff. Yes—but it would have been a great deal longer if he had not been observed.

Sneer. A most sentimental Beefeater that, Mr. Puff.

Puff. Hark ye—I would not have you to be too sure that he is a Beefeater.

Sneer. What, a hero in disguise?

Puff. No matter—I only give you a hint.—But now for my principal character—here he comes—Lord Burleigh in person! Pray, gentlemen, step this way—softly—I only hope the Lord High Treasurer is perfect—if he is but perfect!

Enter BURLEIGH, goes slowly to the chair and sits.

Sneer. Mr. Puff!

Puff. Hush! vastly well, sir! vastly well! a most interesting gravity!

Dan. What, isn't he to speak at all?

Puff. Egad, I thought you'd ask me that.—Yes, it is a very likely thing, that a minister in his situation, with the whole affairs of the nation on his head, should have time to talk! But hush! or you'll put him out.

Sneer. Put him out! how the plague can that be, if he's not going to say anything?

Puff. There's a reason! Why, his part is to think: and how the plague do you imagine he can think, if you keep talking?

Dan. That's very true, upon my word!

[BURLEIGH comes forward, shakes his head.]

Puff. Shake your head more—more—damn it, man, shake your head as if there was something in it. [BURLEIGH shakes his head extravagantly, and exit.]

Sneer. He is very perfect, indeed. Now, pray what did he mean by that?

Puff. You don't take it?

Sneer. No; I don't, upon my soul.

Puff. Why, by that shake of the head he gave you to understand, that even though they had more justice in their cause, and wisdom in their measures, yet, if there was not a greater spirit shown on the part of the people, the country would at last fall a sacrifice to the hostile ambition of the Spanish monarchy.

Sneer. The devil!—Did he mean all that by shaking his head?

Puff. Every word of it—if he shook his head as I taught him.

Sneer. O here are some of our old acquaintance.

Enter HATTON and RALEIGH.

'Sir C. My niece, and your niece too?

'By Heav'n! there's witchcraft in't. He could not else

'Have gain'd their hearts. But see where they approach;

'Some horrid purpose low'ring on their brows!

'Sir W. Let us withdraw and mark them.'

[They retire.]

Enter the two Nieces.

'1st Nie. Ellena here!

'But see the proud destroyer of my peace.

'Revenge is all the good I've left. [Aside.]

'2nd Nie. He comes, the false disturber of my quiet.

'Now vengeance do thy worst.' [Aside.]

Enter WHISKERANDOS.

'Whis. O hateful liberty—if thus in vain

'I seek my Tilburina!

'Both Nie. And ever shalt!

[Sir CHRISTOPHER and Sir WALTER come forward.]

'Sir C. and Sir W. Hold! we will avenge you.

'Whis. Hold you—or see your nieces bleed!

[The two Nieces draw their two daggers to strike WHISKERANDOS; the two Uncles, at the instant, with their two swords drawn, catch their two Nieces' arms, and turn the points of their swords to WHISKERANDOS, who immediately draws two daggers, and holds them to the two Nieces' bosoms.]

Puff. There's situation for you! there's an heroic group! You see, the ladies can't stab Whiskerandos—he durst not strike them for fear of their uncles—the uncles durst not kill him because of their nieces. I have them all at a dead lock! for every one of them is afraid to let go first.

Sneer. Why, then, they must stand there for ever.

Puff. So they would, if I had'n't a very fine contrivance for't. Now, mind—Beef!

Enter Beefeater, with his Halberd.

'Beef. In the Queen's name, I charge you all to drop

'Your swords and daggers!'

[They drop their swords and daggers.]

Sneer. That is a contrivance, indeed.

Puff. Aye—in the Queen's name.

'Sir C. Come, niece!

'Sir W. Come, niece!

[Exeunt with the two Nieces.]

'Whis. What's he, who bids us thus renounce our guard?

'Beef. Thou must do more! renounce thy love!

'Whis. Thou liest, base Beefeater!

'Beef. Ha! Hell! the lie!

'By Heav'n, thou'st rous'd the lion in my heart!

'Off, yeoman's habit! base disguise! off! off!

[Discovers himself, by throwing off his upper dress, and appearing in a very fine shape dress.]

'Am I a Beefeater now?

'Or beams my crest as terrible as when

'In Biscay's Bay I took thy captive sloop.

'Whis. I thank thee, fortune! that hast thus bestow'd

'A weapon to chastise this insolent.

[Takes up one of the swords.]

'Beef. I take thy challenge, Spaniard, and I thank

'Thee, fortune, too! [Takes up the other sword.]

'Whis. Vengeance and Tilburina!

'Beef. Exactly so.

[They fight, and, after the usual number of wounds given, WHISKERANDOS falls.]

'Whis. O cursed parry! The last thrust in tierce

'Was fatal! Captain, thou hast fenced well!

'And Whiskerandos quits this bustling scene

'For all eter—

'Beef. —nity, he would have added, but stern death—

Puff. O, my dear sir, you are too slow: no mind me. Sir, shall I trouble you to die again?

Whis. Certainly, sir? 'And Whiskerandos quits this bustling scene

For all eter— [Rolls himself up in the carpet.

'Beef. —nity, he would have added'—

Puff. No, sir, that's not it: once more, if you please, and I'll kill you myself.

Whis. [Unrolling himself.] I wish, sir, you would practice this without me: I can't stay dying here all night. [Exit.

Puff. Very well, we'll go over it by and by. I must humour these gentlemen!

'Beef. Farewell, brave Spaniard! and when next'—

Puff. Dear sir, you needn't speak that speech, as the body has walked off.

Beef. That's true, sir; then I'll join the fleet.

Puff. If you please. [Exit Beefeater.] Now enter Tilburina!

Sneer. Egad, the business comes on quick here.

Puff. Yes, sir, now she comes in stark mad, in white satin.

Sneer. Why in white satin?

Puff. O Lord, sir, when a heroine goes mad, she always goes into white satin—don't she, Dangle?

Dan. Always—it's a rule.

Puff. Yes, here it is, [Looking at the book.] 'Enter 'Tilburina, stark mad, in white satin, and her Confidant, stark mad, in white linen.'

Enter TILBURINA and Confidant, mad, according to custom.

Sneer. But what the deuce! is the Confidant to be mad too?

Puff. To be sure she is: the Confidant is always to do whatever her mistress does; weep when she weeps, smile when she smiles, go mad when she goes mad. Now, madam Confidant—but keep your madness in the back-ground, if you please.

'Til. The wind whistles—the moon rises— [screams]—see

'They have kill'd my squirrel in his cage!—

[Kneels.

'Is this a grasshopper!—Ha! no, it is my

'Whiskerandos.—You shall not keep him—

'I know you have him in your breeches pocket—

'An oyster may be crossed in love!—Who says

'A whale's a bird?—Ha! did you call my love?—

'He's here!—He's there!—He's everywhere!—

'Ah me! he's no where.' [Exit.

[The Confidant imitates TILBURINA, and exit.

Puff. There! do you ever desire to see anybody madder than that?

Sneer. Never, while I live! And pray what becomes of her?

Puff. She is gone to throw herself into the sea, to be sure—and that brings us at once to the scene of action, and so to my catastrophe—my sea-fight, I mean.

Sneer. What, you bring that in at last?

Puff. Yes, yes; you know my play is called the Spanish Armada, otherwise, egad, I have no occasion for the battle at all. Now then for my magnificence! my battle! my noise! and my procession! You are all ready?

Prompt. [Within.] Yes, sir.

Puff. Very well. Now, then, change the scene, and then for our grand display.

[The scene changes to a view of the Spanish Armada in close action with the British fleet.

Music plays "Britons strike home," Spanish fleet destroyed by fireships, &c. English fleet advances,—Music plays "Rule Britannia." During this scene, PUFF directs and applauds everything: then]

Well, pretty well—but not quite perfect; so, ladies and gentlemen, if you please, we'll rehearse this piece again on the first opportunity.

[Curtain drops.

THE RIVALS:

A COMEDY.

BY RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN,

Author of "The School for Scandal," &c.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

SIR ANTHONY ABSOLUTE.
SIR LUCIUS O'TRIGGER.
FAULKLAND.
CAPTAIN ABSOLUTE.
ACRES.
FAG.
DAVID.
Coachman.

MRS. MALAPROP.
LYDIA LANGUISH.
JULIA.
LUCY.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Street in Bath.*

Coachman and FAG meeting.

Fag. What! Thomas!—Sure, 'tis he!—What, Thomas, Thomas!

Coach. Hey? odds life!—Mr. Fag, give us your hand, my old fellow-servant!

Fag. Excuse my glove, Thomas; I'm devilish glad to see you, my lad! why, my prince of charioteers, you look as hearty! but who the deuce thought of seeing you in Bath?

Coach. Sure, master, madam, Julia, Harry, Mrs. Kate, and the postilion, be all come.

Fag. Indeed!

Coach. Ay: master thought another fit of the gout was coming to make him a visit, so he'd a mind to gi't the slip—an whip! we were all off at an hour's warning.

Fag. Ay, ay; hasty in everything, or it would not be Sir Anthony Absolute.

Coach. But tell us, Mr. Fag, how does young master? Odds! Sir Anthony will stare to see the captain here!

Fag. I do not serve Captain Absolute now.

Coach. Why, sure!

Fag. At present, I am employed by Ensign Beverley.

Coach. I doubt, Mr. Fag, you ha'n't chang'd for the better.

Fag. I have not chang'd, Thomas.

Coach. No! why, didn't you say you had left young master?

Fag. No.—Well, honest Thomas, I must puzzle you no further;—briefly then—Captain Absolute and Ensign Beverley are one and the same person.

Coach. The devil they are: do tell us, Mr. Fag, the meaning on't.

Fag. Why, then, the cause of all this is love—love, Thomas, who has been a masquerader ever since the days of Jupiter.

Coach. But, pray, why does your master pass only for ensign?—now, if he had shammed general, indeed—

Fag. Ah, Thomas, there lays the mystery o' the matter!—Hark ye, Thomas, my master is in love with a lady of a very singular taste—a lady who likes him better as a half-pay ensign, than if she knew he was son and heir to Sir Anthony Absolute, a baronet, of three thousand a year.

Coach. That is an odd taste, indeed!—But has she got the stuff, Mr. Fag? is she rich, eh?

Fag. Rich! why, I believe she owns half the stocks:—Z—s, Thomas, she could pay the national debt as easily as I could my washerwoman! She has a lap-dog that eats out of gold—she feeds her parrot with small pearls, and all her thread-papers are made of bank-notes!

Coach. Bravo, faith—Odd! I warrant she has a set of thousands at least; but does she draw kindly with the captain?

Fag. As fond as pigeons.

Coach. May one hear her name?

Fag. Miss Lydia Languish:—but there is an old tough aunt in the way, though, by the by, she has never seen my master—for he got acquainted with miss while on a visit to Gloucestershire.

Coach. Well, I wish they were once harnessed together in matrimony. But pray, Mr. Fag, what kind of a place is this Bath? I ha' heard a great deal of it;—here's a mort o' merry-making, eh?

Fag. Pretty well, Thomas, pretty well—'tis a good lounge—but damn the place, I'm tired of it: their regular hours stupify me—not a fiddle or a card after eleven! however, Mr. Faulkland's gentleman and I keep it up a little in private parties; I'll introduce you there, Thomas, you'll like him much. But, Thomas, you must polish a little—indeed you must:—Here, now, this wig; what the

devil do you do with a wig, Thomas? none of the London whips, of any degree of ton, wear wigs now.

Coach. More's the pity, more's the pity, I say, Mr. Fag—Odds life! when I heard how the lawyers and doctors had took to their own hair, I thought how 'twould go next. Odd rabbit it! when the fashion had got foot on the bar, I guessed 'twould mount to the box! but 'tis all out of character, believe me, Mr. Fag: and look ye, I'll never give up mine, the lawyers and doctors may do as they will.

Fag. Well, Thomas, we'll not quarrel about that. But hold, mark—mark, Thomas.

Coach. Zooks, 'tis the captain! Is that the lady with him?

Fag. No, no, that is madam Lucy, my master's mistress's maid: they lodge at that house—but I must after him, to tell him the news.

Coach. Odd, he's giving her money! —Well, Mr. Fag—

Fag. Good bye, Thomas; I have an appointment in Gyde's porch, this evening, at eight; meet me there, and we'll make a little party.—But Thomas—Thomas—damn the wig!

[*Exit* THOMAS and FAG.]

SCENE II.—*A Dressing-room in Mrs. Malaprop's Lodgings.*

LYDIA LANGUISH sitting on a sofa, with a book in her hand; LUCY, as just returned from a message.

Lucy. Indeed, ma'am, I traversed half the town in search of it: I don't believe there's a circulating library in Bath I ha'n't been at.

Lyd. And could not you get "The Reward of Constasy?"

Lucy. No, indeed, ma'am.

Lyd. Nor "The Fatal Connexion?"

Lucy. No, indeed, ma'am.

Lyd. Nor "The Mistakes of the Heart?"

Lucy. Ma'am, as ill luck would have it, Mr. Bull said, Miss Sukey Saunter had just fetched it away.

Lyd. Heigho! Did you inquire for "The Delicate Distress?"

Lucy. Or, "The Memoirs of Lady Woodford?"—Yes, indeed, ma'am, I asked everywhere for it; and I might have brought it from Mr. Frederick's, but Lady Slattern Lounger, who had just sent it home, had so soiled and dog's-eared it, it wa'n't fit for a Christian to read.

Lyd. Heigho! Yes, I always know when Lady Slattern has been before me; she has a most observing thumb, and, I believe, cherishes her nails for the convenience of making marginal notes. Well, child, what have you brought me?

Lucy. Oh, here, ma'am! [*Taking books from under her cloak, and from her pockets.*] This is "The Man of Feeling," and this "Peregrine Pickle."—Here are "The Tears of Sensibility," and "Humphrey Clinker."

Lyd. Hold! here's some one coming—quick, see who it is—[*Exit* LUCY.]—Surely I heard my cousin Julia's voice!

Re-enter LUCY.

Lucy. Lud, ma'am! here is Miss Neville!

Lyd. Is it possible!

Enter JULIA.

Lyd. My dearest Julia, how delighted I am!—

[*They embrace.*] How unexpected was this happiness!

Jul. True, Lydia, and our pleasure is the greater; but what has been the matter? you were denied to me at first.

Lyd. Ah, Julia, I have a thousand things to tell you! but first inform me what has conjured you to Bath?—Is Sir Anthony here?

Jul. He is; we are arrived within this hour, and I suppose he will be here to wait on Mrs. Malaprop as soon as he is dressed.

Lyd. Then before we are interrupted, let me impart to you some of my distress; I know your gentle nature will sympathize with me, though your prudence may condemn me: my letters have informed you of my whole connexion with Beverley; but I have lost him, Julia;—my aunt has discovered our intercourse, by a note she intercepted, and has confined me ever since: Yet, would you believe it? she has fallen absolutely in love with a tall Irish baronet, she met one night, since we have been here, at Lady Macshuffie's rout.

Jul. You jest, Lydia.

Lyd. No, upon my word!—She really carries on a kind of correspondence with him, under a feigned name, though, till she chooses to be known to him; but it is a Delia, or a Celia, I assure you.

Jul. Then, surely, she is now more indulgent to her niece?

Lyd. Quite the contrary. Since she has discovered her own frailty, she is become ten times more suspicious of mine. Then I must inform you of another plague; that odious Acres is to be in Bath to-day, so that, I protest, I shall be teased out of all spirits!

Jul. Come, come, Lydia, hope for the best. Sir Anthony shall use his interest with Mrs. Malaprop.

Lyd. But you have not heard the worst. Unfortunately I had quarrelled with my poor Beverley, just before my aunt made the discovery, and I have not seen him since to make it up.

Jul. What was his offence?

Lyd. Nothing at all; but I don't know how it was, as often as we had been together, we had never had a quarrel; and, somehow, I was afraid he would never give me an opportunity; so, last Thursday, I wrote a letter to myself, to inform myself that Beverley was, at that time, paying his addresses to another woman. I signed it, "Your unknown friend," showed it to Beverley, charged him with his falsehood, put myself in a violent passion, and vow'd I'd never see him more.

Jul. And you let him depart so, and have not seen him since?

Lyd. 'Twas the next day my aunt found the matter out; I intended only to have teased him three days and a half, and now I've lost him for ever.

Jul. If he is as deserving and sincere as you have represented him to me, he will never give you up so.—Yet consider, Lydia, you tell me he is but an ensign: and you have thirty thousand pounds!

Lyd. But, you know, I lose most of my fortune, if I marry, without my aunt's consent, till of age; and that is what I have determined to do ever since I knew the penalty; nor could I love the man who would wish to wait a day for the alternative.

Jul. Nay, this is caprice!

Lydia. What, does Julia tax me with caprice? I thought her lover Faulkland had injured her to it.

Julia. I do not love even his faults.

Lydia. But you have sent to him, I suppose?

Julia. Not yet, upon my word! nor has he the least idea of my being in Bath:—Sir Anthony's resolution was so sudden I could not inform him of it.

Lydia. Well, Julia, you are your own mistress, though under the protection of Sir Anthony; yet have you, for this long year, been a slave to the caprice, the whim, the jealousy of this ungrateful Faulkland, who will ever delay assuming the right of a husband, while you suffer him to be equally imperious as a lover.

Julia. Nay, you are wrong entirely. We were contracted before my father's death: that, and some consequent embarrassments, have delayed what I know to be my Faulkland's most ardent wish. He is too generous to trifle on such a point; and, for his character, you wrong him there too. No, Lydia, he is too proud, too noble, to be jealous; if he is captious, 'tis without dissembling; if fretful, without rudeness. Unused to the fopperies of love, he is negligent of the little duties expected from a lover; but, being unhacknied in the passion, his affection is ardent and sincere; and as it engrosses his whole soul, he expects every look and emotion of his mistress to move in unison with his. Yet, though his pride calls for this full return, his humility makes him undervalue those qualities in him, which would entitle him to it; and not feeling why he should be loved to the degree he wishes, he still suspects that he is not loved enough. This, I must own, has cost me many unhappy hours; but I have learned to think myself his debtor for those imperfections which arise from the ardour of his attachment.

Lydia. Well, I cannot blame you for defending him; but, tell me candidly, Julia, had he never saved your life, do you think you should have been attached to him as you are? Believe me, the rude blast that overset your boat was a prosperous gale of love to him.

Julia. Gratitude may have strengthened my attachment to Mr. Faulkland, but I loved him before he had preserved me;—yet, surely, that alone were an obligation sufficient—

Lydia. Obligation! why, a water-spaniel would have done as much! Well, I should never think of giving my heart to a man because he could swim!—What's here?

Enter Lucy, in a hurry.

Lucy. O, ma'am, here is Sir Anthony Absolute, just come home with your aunt!

Lydia. They'll not come here:—Lucy, do you watch. [Exit Lucy.]

Julia. Yet I must go; Sir Anthony does not know I am here, and if we meet, he'll detain me, to show me the town. I'll take another opportunity of paying my respects to Mrs. Malaprop, when she shall treat me, as long as she chooses, with her select words, so ingeniously misapplied, without being mispronounced.

Enter Lucy.

Lucy. O lud, ma'am! they are both coming up stairs.

Lydia. Well, I'll not detain you. Adieu, my dear Julia! I'm sure you are in haste to send to Faulk-

land. There—through my room you'll find another staircase.

Julia. Adieu!

[Exit.]

Lydia. Here, my dear Lucy, hide these books. Quick, quick. Fling "Peregrine Pickle" under the toilet—throw "Roderick Random" into the closet—put "The Innocent Adultery" in'o "The Whole Duty of Man"—thrust "Lord Aimworth" under the sofa—cram "Ovid" behind the bolster—there—put "The Man of Feeling" into your pocket. Now for them!

[Exit Lucy.]

Enter Mrs. MALAPROP and Sir ANTHONY ABSOLUTE.

Mrs. M. There, Sir Anthony, there stands the deliberate simpleton, who wants to disgrace her family, and lavish herself on a fellow not worth a shilling.

Lydia. Madam, I thought you once—

Mrs. M. You thought, miss! I don't know any business you have to think at all; thought does not become a young woman. But the point we would request of you is, that you would promise to forget this fellow—to illiterate him, I say, from your memory.

Lydia. Ah! madam! our memories are independent of our wills. It is not so easy to forget.

Mrs. M. But I say it is, miss! there is nothing on earth so easy as to forget, if a person chooses to set about it. I'm sure I have as much forgot your poor dear uncle, as if he had never existed; and I thought it my duty so to do; and let me tell you, Lydia, these violent memories don't become a young woman.

Lydia. What crime, madam, have I committed, to be treated thus?

Mrs. M. Now don't attempt to extirpate yourself from the matter; you know I have proof controvertible of it. But, tell me, will you promise me to do as you're bid? Will you take a husband of your friends' choosing?

Lydia. Madam, I must tell you plainly, that, had I no preference for any one else, the choice you have made would be my aversion.

Mrs. M. What business have you, miss, with preference and aversion? They don't become a young woman; and you ought to know, that, as both always wear off, 'tis safest, in matrimony, to begin with a little aversion. I am sure I hated your poor dear uncle, before marriage, as if he'd been a black-a-moor; and yet, miss, you are sensible what a wife I made; and, when it pleased Heaven to release me from him, 'tis unknown what tears I shed! But, suppose we were going to give you another choice, will you promise us to give up this Beverley?

Lydia. Could I belie my thoughts so far as to give that promise, my actions would certainly as far belie my words.

Mrs. M. Take yourself to your room. You are fit company for nothing but your own ill humours.

Lydia. Willingly, ma'am; I cannot change for the worse. [Exit.]

Mrs. M. There's a little intricate hussy for you!

Sir Anth. It is not to be wondered at, ma'am; all that is the natural consequence of teaching girls to read. In my way hither, Mrs. Malaprop, I observed your niece's maid coming forth from a circulating library: she had a book in each hand—they were half-bound volumes, with marble covers: from that moment, I guessed how full of duty I should see her mistress!

Mrs. M. Those are vile places, indeed!

Sir Anth. Madam, a circulating library in a town is, as an evergreen tree of diabolical knowledge!—It blossoms through the year! And, depend on it, Mrs. Malaprop, that they who are so fond of handling the leaves, will long for the fruit at last.

Mrs. M. Fie, fie, Sir Anthony; you surely speak laconically.

Sir Anth. Why, Mrs. Malaprop, in moderation, now, what would you have a woman know?

Mrs. M. Observe me, Sir Anthony—I would by no means wish a daughter of mine to be a progeny of learning; I don't think so much learning becomes a young woman:—for instance—I would never let her meddle with Greek, or Hebrew, or algebra, or simony, or fluxions, or paradoxes, or such inflammatory branches of learning; nor will it be necessary for her to handle any of your mathematical, astronomical, diabolical instruments; but, Sir Anthony, I would send her, at nine years old, to a boarding-school, in order to learn a little ingenuity and artifice. Then, sir, she should have a supercilious knowledge in accounts; and, as she grew up, I would have her instructed in geometry, that she might know something of the contagious countries: above all, she should be taught orthodoxy. This, Sir Anthony, is what I would have a woman know; and I don't think there is a superstitious article in it.

Sir Anth. Well, well, Mrs. Malaprop, I will dispute the point no further with you: though I must confess, that you are a truly moderate and polite arguer, for almost every third word you say is on my side of the question. But, to the more important point in debate—you say you have no objection to my proposal?

Mrs. M. None, I assure you. I am under no positive engagement with Mr. Acres; and as Lydia is so obstinate against him, perhaps your son may have better success.

Sir Anth. Well, madam, I will write for the boy directly. He knows not a syllable of this yet, though I have for some time had the proposal in my head. He is at present with his regiment.

Mrs. M. We have never seen your son, Sir Anthony; but I hope no objection on his side.

Sir Anth. Objection!—Let him object if he dare!—No, no, Mrs. Malaprop; Jack knows, that the least demur puts me in a frenzy directly. My process was always very simple—in his younger days, 'twas, "Jack, do this,"—if he demurred, I knocked him down; and, if he grumbled at that, I always sent him out of the room.

Mrs. M. Ay, and the properest way, o' my conscience!—Nothing is so conciliating to young people as severity. Well, Sir Anthony, I shall give Mr. Acres his discharge, and prepare Lydia to receive your son's invocations; and I hope you will represent her to the captain as an object not altogether illegible.

Sir Anth. Madam, I will handle the subject prudently. I must leave you; and, let me beg you, Mrs. Malaprop, to enforce this matter roundly to the girl—take my advice, keep a tight hand—if she rejects this proposal, clap her under lock and key; and, if you were just to let the servants forget to bring her dinner for three or four days, you can't conceive how she'd come about. [Exit.]

Mrs. M. Well, at any rate, I shall be glad to get her from under my intuition—she has somehow discovered my partiality for Sir Lucius O'Trigger. Sure, Lucy can't have betray'd me!—No, the girl

is such a simpleton, I should have made her confess it. Lucy! Lucy! [Calls.] Had she been one of your artificial ones, I should never have trusted her.

Enter Lucy.

Lucy. Did you call, ma'am?

Mrs. M. Yes, girl. Did you see Sir Lucius while you was out?

Lucy. No, indeed, ma'am, not a glimpse of him.

Mrs. M. You are sure, Lucy, that you never mentioned—

Lucy. O gemini! I'd sooner cut my tongue out!

Mrs. M. Well, don't let your simplicity be imposed on.

Lucy. No, ma'am.

Mrs. M. So, come to me presently, and I'll give you another letter to Sir Lucius—but mind, Lucy, if ever you betray what you are intrusted with (unless it be other people's secrets to me), you forfeit my malevolence for ever; and your being a simpleton shall be no excuse for your locality. [Exit.]

Lucy. Ha! ha! ha! So, my dear simplicity, let me give you a little respite: [Altering her manner]—let girls in my station be as fond as they please of being expert and knowing in their trust, commend me to a mask of silliness, and a pair of sharp eyes for my own interest under it!—Let me see to what account have I turned my simplicity lately: [Looks at a paper] "For abetting Miss Lydia Languish in a design of running away with an ensign! in money, sundry times, twelve pound twelve—gowns, five; hats, ruffles, caps, &c. &c. numberless. From the said ensign, within this last month, six guineas and a half. Item, from Mrs. Malaprop, for betraying the young people to her"—when I found matters were likely to be discovered—"two guineas and a French shawl. Item, from Mr. Acres, for carrying divers letters"—which I never delivered—"two guineas and a pair of buckles. Item, from Sir Lucius O'Trigger, three crowns, two gold pocket pieces, and a silver snuff-box!"—Well done, simplicity! yet I was forced to make my Hibernian believe, that he was corresponding, not with the aunt, but with the niece; for, though not over rich, I found he had too much pride and delicacy to sacrifice the feelings of a gentleman to the necessities of his fortune. [Exit.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—Captain Absolute's Lodgings.

Enter Captain ABSOLUTE and FAG.

Fag. Sir, while I was there, Sir Anthony came in; I told him you had sent me to inquire after his health, and to know if he was at leisure to see you.

Capt. A. And what did he say on hearing I was at Bath?

Fag. Sir, in my life, I never saw an elderly gentleman more astonished!

Capt. A. Well, sir, and what did you say?

Fag. O, I lied, sir—I forget the precise lie, but you may depend on't he got no truth from me. Yet, with submission, for fear of blunders in fu-

ture, I should be glad to fix what has brought us to Bath, in order that we may lie a little consistently. Sir Anthony's servants were curious, sir, very curious, indeed.

Capt. A. You have said nothing to them?

Fag. O, not a word, sir—not a word. Mr. Thomas, indeed, the coachman (whom I take to be the discreetest of whips)—

Capt. A. 'Sdeath!—you rascal! you have not trusted him?

Fag. Oh, no, sir,—no—no—not a syllable, upon my veracity!—He was, indeed, a little inquisitive; but I was sly, sir—devilish sly!—My master (said I), honest Thomas (you know, sir, one says honest to one's inferiors) is come to Bath to recruit—yes, sir—I said to recruit—and whether for men, money, or constitution, you know, sir, is nothing to him, nor any one else.

Capt. A. Well—recruit will do—let it be so—

Fag. Oh, sir, recruit will do surprisingly:—indeed, to give the thing an air, I told Thomas, that your honour had already enlisted five disbanded chairmen, seven minority waiters, and thirteen billiard-markers.

Capt. A. You blockhead, never say more than is necessary.

Fag. I beg pardon, sir—I beg pardon. But, with submission, a lie is nothing unless well supported. Sir, whenever I draw on my invention for a good current lie, I always forge endorsements as well as the bill.

Capt. A. Well, take care you don't hurt your credit by offering too much security. Is Mr. Faulkland returned?

Fag. He is above, sir, changing his dress.

Capt. A. Can you tell whether he has been informed of Sir Anthony's and Miss Melville's arrival?

Fag. I fancy not, sir; he has seen no one since he came in, but his gentleman, who was with him at Bristol. I think, sir, I hear Mr. Faulkland coming down—

Capt. A. Go, tell him I am here.

Fag. Yes, sir. [*Going.*] I beg pardon, sir, but should Sir Anthony call, you will do me the favour to remember that we are recruiting, if you please.

Capt. A. Well, well.

Fag. And in tenderness to my character, if your honour could bring in the chairmen and waiters, I shall esteem it as an obligation; for, though I never scruple a lie to serve my master, yet it hurts one's conscience to be found out. [*Exit.*]

Capt. A. Now for my whimsical friend:—If he does not know that his mistress is here, I'll tease him a little before I tell him—

Enter Fag.

Fag. Mr. Faulkland, sir.

[*Exit.*]

Re-enter Fag., introduces Mr. FAULKLAND, and exit.

Capt. A. Faulkland, you're welcome to Bath again: you are punctual in your return.

Faulk. Yes; I had nothing to detain me when I had finished the business I went on. Well, what news since I left you? How stand matters between you and Lydia?

Capt. A. 'Faith, much as they were.

Faulk. Nay, then, you trifle too long—if you are sure of her, propose to the aunt, in your own character, and write to Sir Anthony for his consent.

Capt. A. Softly, softly, for though I am convinced my little Lydia would elope with me as Ensign Beverley, yet am I by no means certain

that she would take me with the impediment of our friends' consent, a regular humdrum wedding, and the reversion of a good fortune on my side. Well, but Faulkland, you'll dine with us to-day at the hotel?

Faulk. Indeed, I cannot; I am not in spirits to be of such a party.

Capt. A. By heavens! I shall forswear your company. You are the most teasing, captious, incorrigible lover!—Do love like a man.

Faulk. Ah! Jack, your heart and soul are not like mine, fixed immutably on one only object. You throw for a large stake, but, losing, you could stake and throw again; but I have set my sum of happiness on this cast, and not to succeed were to be stripped of all.

Capt. A. But, for Heaven's sake! what grounds for apprehension can your whimsical brain conjure up at present?

Faulk. What grounds for apprehension, did you say? Heavens! are there not a thousand? I fear for her spirits—her health—her life—O! Jack, when delicate and feeling souls are separated, there is not a feature in the sky, not a movement of the elements, not an aspiration of the breeze, but hints some cause for a lover's apprehension!

Capt. A. Ay, but we may choose whether we will take the hint or not. So then, Faulkland, if you were convinced that Julia were well, and in spirits, you would be entirely content?

Faulk. I should be happy beyond measure—I am anxious only for that.

Capt. A. Then cure your anxiety at once—Miss Melville is in perfect health, and is at this moment in Bath.

Faulk. Nay, Jack—don't trifle with me.

Capt. A. She is arrived here with my father, within this hour.

Faulk. Can you be serious?

Capt. A. I thought you knew Sir Anthony better than to be surprised at a sudden whim of this kind.—Seriously then, it is as I tell you, upon my honour.

Faulk. My dear Jack—now nothing on earth can give me a moment's uneasiness.

Enter Fag.

Fag. Sir, Mr. Acres, just arrived, is below.

Capt. A. Stay, Faulkland, this Acres lives within a mile of Sir Anthony, and he shall tell you how your mistress has been ever since you left her. [*Exit Fag.*]

Faulk. What, is he much acquainted in the family?

Capt. A. Oh, very intimate; he is likewise a rival of mine—that is, of my other self's, for he does not think his friend, Captain Absolute, ever saw the lady in question; and it is ridiculous enough to hear him complain to me of one Beverley, a conceited, skulking rival, who—

Faulk. Hush!—He's here!

Enter Acres.

Acres. Hah! my dear friend, noble captain, and honest Jack, how dost thou? Just arrived, 'faith, as you see.—Sir, your humble servant. Warm work on the roads, Jack—odds whips and wheels! I've travelled like a comet, with a tail of dust all the way as long as the Mall.

Capt. A. Ah! Bob, you are indeed an eccentric planet, but we know your attraction hither; give me leave to introduce Mr. Faulkland to you; Mr. Faulkland, Mr. Acres.

Acres. Sir, I am most heartily glad to see you : sir, I solicit your connexions.—Hey, Jack—what this is Mr. Faulkland, who—

Capt. A. Ay, Bob, Miss Melville's Mr. Faulkland.

Acres. Ah ! Mr. Faulkland, you are indeed a happy man !

Faulk. I have not seen Miss Melville yet, sir ; I hope she enjoyed full health and spirits in Devonshire !

Acres. Never knew her better in my life, sir ; never better. Odds blushes and blooms ! she has been as healthy as the German Spa.

Faulk. Indeed ! I did hear that she had been a little indisposed.

Acres. False, false, sir ; only said to vex you : quite the reverse, I assure you.

Faulk. There, Jack, you see she has the advantage of me ; I had almost fretted myself ill.

Capt. A. Now are you angry with your mistress for not having been sick.

Faulk. No, no, you misunderstand me : yet surely a little trifling indisposition is not an unnatural consequence of absence from those we love. Now, confess—isn't there something unkind in this violent, robust, unfeeling health ?

Capt. A. Oh, it was very unkind of her to be well in your absence, to be sure !

Acres. Good apartments, Jack.

Faulk. Well, sir, but you were saying that Miss Melville has been so exceedingly well—what then, she has been merry and gay, I suppose ?—always in spirits, hey ?

Acres. Merry ! odds crickets ! she has been the belle and spirit of the company wherever she has been—so lively and entertaining ! so full of wit and humour !

Faulk. By my soul ! there is an innate levity in woman that nothing can overcome !—What ! happy, and I away !

Capt. A. Just now, you were only apprehensive for your mistress's spirits.

Faulk. Why, Jack, have I been the joy and spirit of the company ?

Capt. A. No, indeed, you have not.

Faulk. Have I been lively and entertaining ?

Capt. A. Oh, upon my word, I acquit you.

Faulk. Have I been full of wit and humour ?

Capt. A. No, 'faith, to do you justice, you have been confoundedly stupid, indeed.

Acres. What's the matter with the gentleman ?

Capt. A. He is only expressing his great satisfaction at hearing that Julia has been so well and happy—that's all—hey, Faulkland ?

Faulk. Yes, yes, she has a happy disposition !

Acres. That she has, indeed—then she is so accomplished—so sweet a voice—so expert at her harpsichord—such a mistress of flat and sharp ; squallant, rumbly, and quiverant !—there was this time month—odds a minims and crochets ! how she did chirrup at Mrs. Piano's concert ! [*Sings.*] *My heart's my own, my will is free.* That's very like her.

Faulk. Fool ! fool that I am ! to fix all my happiness on such a trifle ! 'Sdeath ! to make herself the pipe and ballad-monger of a circle ! to soothe her light heart with catches and glees ! What can you say to this, sir ?

Capt. A. Why, that I should be glad to hear my mistress had been so merry, sir.

Faulk. Nay, nay, nay—I'm not sorry that she has been happy ; no, I am glad of that—but she has been dancing too, I doubt not.

Acres. What does the gentleman say about dancing ?

Capt. A. He says the lady we speak of dances as well as sings.

Acres. Ay, truly does she—there was at our last race-ball—

Faulk. Hell and the devil ! There ! there—I told you so ! I told you so ! oh ! she thrives in my absence ! Dancing !

Capt. A. For Heaven's sake, Faulkland, don't expose yourself so ! Suppose she has danced, what then ? does not the ceremony of society often oblige—

Faulk. Well, well, I'll contain myself—perhaps, as you say—for form's sake. I say Mr.—Mr.—What's his d—d name ?

Capt. A. Acres, Acres.

Faulk. O ay, Mr. Acres, you were praising Miss Melville's manner of dancing a minuet—hey ?

Acres. Oh, I dare insure her for that—but what I was going to speak of, was her country dancing : odds swimings ! she has such an air with her !

Faulk. Now, disappointment on her ! defend this, Absolute ! why don't you defend this ? country dances ! jigs and reels ! am I to blame now ? A minuet I could have forgiven—I should not have minded that—I say, I should not have regarded a minuet—but country dances ! Z—ds, had she made one in a cotillion—I believe I could have forgiven even that—but to be monkey-led for a night ! to run the gauntlet through a string of amorous palming puppies ! to show paces, like a managed filly ! Oh, Jack, there never can be but one man in the world whom a truly modest and delicate woman ought to pair with in a country dance ; and, even then, the rest of the couples should be her great uncles and aunts !

Capt. A. Ay, to be sure ! grandfathers and grandmothers !

Faulk. If there be but one vicious mind in the set, it will spread like a contagion—the action of their pulse beats to the lascivious movement of the jig—their quivering, warm-breathed sighs impregnate the air—the atmosphere becomes electrical to love, and each amorous spark darts through every link of the chain !—I must leave you—I own I am somewhat flurried—and that confounded looby has perceived it. [*Going.*]

Capt. A. Nay, but stay, Faulkland, and thank Mr. Acres for his good news.

Faulk. D—n his news !

[*Exit.*]

Capt. A. Ha ! ha ! ha ! poor Faulkland ! Five minutes since—"nothing on earth could give him a moment's uneasiness !"

Acres. The gentleman wasn't angry at my praising his mistress, was he ?

Capt. A. A little jealous, I believe, Bob.

Acres. You don't say so ? Ha ! ha ! jealous of me ?—that's a good joke !

Capt. A. There's nothing strange in that, Bob ; let me tell you, that sprightly grace and insinuating manner of yours will do some mischief among the girls here.

Acres. Ah ! you joke—ha ! ha ! mischief—ha ! ha ! but you know I am not my own property ! my dear Lydia has forestalled me. She could never abide me in the country, because I used to dress so badly—but, odds frogs and tambours ! I sha'n't take matters so here—now ancient madam has no voice in it—I'll make my old clothes know who's master—I shall straightway cashier the hunting-

frock, and render my leather breeches incapable—My hair has been in training some time.

Capt. A. Indeed!

Acres. Ah—and tho' the side-curls are a little restive, my hind part takes it very kindly.

Capt. A. Oh, you'll polish, I doubt not.

Acres. Absolutely I propose so—then if I can find out this Ensign Beverley, odds triggers and flints! I'll make him know the difference o't.

Capt. A. Spoke like a man—but pray, Bob, I observe you have got an odd kind of a new method of swearing—

Acres. Ha! ha! you have taken notice of it—'tis genteel, isn't it?—I did'n't invent it myself though; but a commander in our militia, a great scholar, I assure you, says that there is no meaning in the common oaths, and that nothing but their antiquity makes them respectable; because, he says, the ancients would never stick to an oath or two, but would say, by Jove! or by Bacchus! or by Mars! or by Venus! or by Pallas! according to the sentiment;—so that to swear with propriety, says my little major, the "oath should be an echo to the sense;" and this we call the oath referential, or sentimental swearing—ha! ha! ha! 'tis genteel, isn't it?

Capt. A. Very genteel, and very new, indeed—and I dare say will supplant all other figures of imprecation.

Acres. Ay, ay, the best terms will grow obsolete—Damns have had their day.

Enter FAG.

Fag. Sir, there is a gentleman below desires to see you—Shall I show him into the parlour?

Capt. A. Ay—you may.

Acres. Well, I must be gone—

Capt. A. Stay: who is it, *Fag*?

Fag. Your father, sir.

Capt. A. You puppy, why didn't you show him up directly? *[Exit FAG.]*

Acres. You have business with Sir Anthony—I expect a message from Mrs. Malaprop, at my lodgings; I have sent also to my dear friend, Sir Lucius O'Trigger.—Adieu, Jack, we must meet at night, when you shall give me a dozen bumpers to little Lydia. *[Exit.]*

Capt. A. That I will, with all my heart. Now for a parental lecture—I hope he has heard nothing of the business that has brought me here—I wish the gout had held him fast in Devonshire, with all my soul!

Enter Sir ANTHONY.

Sir, I am delighted to see you here, and looking so well!—your sudden arrival at Bath made me apprehensive for your health.

Sir Anth. Very apprehensive, I dare say, Jack.—What, you are recruiting here, hey?

Capt. A. Yes, sir. I am on duty.

Sir Anth. Well, Jack, I am glad to see you, though I did not expect it; for I was going to write to you on a little matter of business.—Jack, I have been considering that I grow old and infirm, and shall probably not trouble you long.

Capt. A. Pardon me, sir, I never saw you look more strong and hearty, and I pray fervently that you may continue so.

Sir Anth. I hope your prayers may be heard with all my heart. Well then, Jack, I have been considering that I am so strong and hearty, I may continue to plague you a long time.—Now, Jack, I

am sensible that the income of your commission, and what I have hitherto allowed you, is but a small pittance for a lad of your spirit.

Capt. A. Sir, you are very good.

Sir Anth. And it is my wish, while yet I live, to have my boy make some figure in the world.—I have resolved, therefore, to fix you at once in a noble independence.

Capt. A. Sir, your kindness overpowers me.—Yet, sir, I presume you would not wish me to quit the army?

Sir Anth. Oh! that shall be as your wife chooses.

Capt. A. My wife, sir?

Sir Anth. Ay, ay, settle that between you—settle that between you.

Capt. A. A wife, sir, did you say?

Sir Anth. Ay, a wife—why, did I not mention that before?

Capt. A. Not a word of her, sir.

Sir Anth. Odd so!—I musn't forget her though—Yes, Jack, the independence I was talking of is by a marriage—the fortune is saddled with a wife; but I suppose that makes no difference?

Capt. A. Sir! sir! you amaze me!

Sir Anth. Why, what the devil's the matter with the fool? Just now you were all gratitude and duty.

Capt. A. I was, sir.—You talked to me of independence and a fortune, but not a word of a wife.

Sir Anth. Why, what difference does that make?—Odds life, sir! if you have the estate, you must take it with the live stock on it, as it stands.

Capt. A. Pray, sir, who is the lady?

Sir Anth. What's that to you, sir?—Come, give me your promise to love and to marry her directly.

Capt. A. Sure, sir, this is not very reasonable; to summon my affections for a lady I know nothing of.

Sir Anth. I am sure, sir, 'tis more unreasonable in you to object to a lady you know nothing of.

Capt. A. You must excuse me, sir, if I tell you, once for all, that in this point I cannot obey you.

Sir Anth. Hark ye, Jack;—I have heard you for some time with patience—I have been cool—quite cool; but take care—you know I am compliance itself, when I am not thwarted; no one more easily led, when I have my own way;—but don't put me in a frenzy.

Capt. A. Sir, I must repeat it—in this I cannot obey you.

Sir Anth. Now d—n me! if ever I call you Jack again while I live!

Capt. A. Nay, sir, but hear me.

Sir Anth. Sir, I won't hear a word—not a word; not one word! so give me your promise by a nod. And I'll tell you what, Jack—I mean, you dog—if you don't, by—

Capt. A. What, sir, promise to link myself to some mass of ugliness!

Sir Anth. Z—ds, sirrah! the lady shall be as ugly as I choose: she shall have a hump on each shoulder: she shall be as crooked as the crescent; her one eye shall roll like the bull's in Cox's Museum. She shall have a skin like a mummy, and the beard of a Jew. She shall be all this, sirrah! yet I'll make you ogle her all day, and sit up all night to write sonnets on her beauty.

Capt. A. This is reason and moderation, indeed!

Sir Anth. None of your sneering, puppy! no grinning, jackanapes.

Capt. A. Indeed, sir, I never was in a worse humour for mirth in my life.

Sir Anth. 'Tis false, sir; I know you are laughing in your sleeve; I know you'll grin when I am gone, sirrah!

Capt. A. Sir, I hope I know my duty better.

Sir Anth. None of your passion, sir! none of your violence, if you please—it won't do with me, I promise you.

Capt. A. Indeed, sir, I was never cooler in my fe.

Sir Anth. 'Tis a confounded lie!—I know you are in a passion in your heart; I know you are, you hypocritical young dog—but it won't do.

Capt. A. Nay, sir, upon my word—

Sir Anth. So you will fly out! can't you be cool, like me? What the devil good can passion do? Passion is of no service, you impudent, insolent, over-bearing reprobate!—There, you sneer again!—don't provoke me! but you rely upon the mildness of my temper—you do, you dog! you play upon the meekness of my disposition! Yet, take care—the patience of a saint may be overcome at last!—but mark! I give you six hours and a half to consider of this: if you then agree, without any condition, to do everything on earth that I choose, why—confound you! I may in time forgive you,—if not, z—ds! don't enter the same hemisphere with me; don't dare to breathe the same air, or use the same light with me; but get an atmosphere and a sun of your own! I'll strip you of your commission; I'll lodge a five-and-threepence in the hands of trustees, and you shall live on the interest. I'll disown you, I'll disinherit you, I'll unget you! and d—n me! if ever I call you Jack again! [Exit.]

Capt. A. Mild, gentle, considerate father! I kiss your hands.

Enter FAG.

Fag. Assuredly, sir, your father is wroth to a degree; he comes down stairs eight or ten steps at a time, muttering, growling, and thumping the banisters all the way; I, and the cook's dog, stand bowing at the door—rap! he gives me a stroke on the head with his cane; bids me carry that to my master; then kicking the poor turnspit into the area, d—ns us all for a puppy triumvirate!—Upon my credit, sir, were I in your place, and found my father such very bad company, I should certainly drop his acquaintance.

Capt. A. Cease your impertinence, sir—did you come in for nothing more? Stand out of the way.

[Pushes him aside, and exit.]

Fag. So! Sir Anthony trims my master: he is afraid to reply to his father, then vents his spleen on poor Fag! When one is vexed by one person, to revenge one's self on another, who happens to come in the way, shows the worst of tempers, the basest—

Enter Errand Boy.

Boy. Mr. Fag! Mr. Fag! your master calls you.

Fag. Well! you little, dirty puppy, you needn't bawl so—the meanest disposition, the—

Boy. Quick! quick! Mr. Fag.

Fag. Quick, quick! you impudent jackanapes! am I to be commanded by you too, you little, impertinent, insolent, kitchen-bred— [Kicks him off.]

SCENE II.—The North Parade.

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. So. I shall have another rival to add to

my mistress's list—Captain Absolute; however, I shall not enter his name till my purse has received due notice in form. Sir Lucius is generally more punctual, when he expects to hear from his dear Dalia, as he calls her:—I wonder he's not here!

Enter Sir LUCIUS O'TRIGGER.

Sir L. Hah! my little ambassadress; upon my conscience I have been looking for you; I have been on the South Parade this half hour.

Lucy. [Speaking simply.] O gemini; and I have been waiting for your worship here on the North.

Sir L. 'Faith! may be, that was the reason we did not meet; and it is very comical too, how you could go out, and I not see you—for I was only taking a nap at the Parade Coffee-house, and I chose the window, on purpose that I might not miss you.

Lucy. My stars! Now I'd wager a sixpence I went by while you were asleep.

Sir L. Sure enough it must have been so; and I never dreamt it was so late, till I waked. Well, but my little girl, have you got nothing for me?

Lucy. Yes, but I have—I've got a letter for you in my pocket.

Sir L. 'Faith! I guessed you weren't come empty-handed; well, let me see what the dear creature says.

Lucy. There, Sir Lucius. [Gives him a letter.]

Sir L. [Reads.] "Sir,—There is often a sudden incentive impulse in love, that has a greater induction than years of domestic combination: such was the commotion I felt at the first superfluous view of Sir Lucius O'Trigger." Very pretty upon my word! "Female punctuation forbids me to say more! yet, let me add, that it will give me joy infallible to find Sir Lucius worthy the last criterion of my affections.

"Yours, while meretricious,

"DALIA."

Upon my conscience! Lucy, your lady is a great mistress of language! 'Faith! she's quite the queen of the dictionary; for the devil a word dare refuse coming at her call, though one would think it was quite out of hearing.

Lucy. Ay, sir, a lady of her experience.

Sir L. Experience! what, at seventeen?

Lucy. O, true, sir—but then she reads so—my stars! how she will read off hand!

Sir L. 'Faith she must be very deep read, to write this way, though she is rather an arbitrary writer, too; for here are a great many poor words pressed into the service of this note, that would get their *habeas corpus* from any court in Christendom. However, when affection guides the pen, he must be a brute who finds fault with the style.

Lucy. Ah! Sir Lucius, if you were to hear how she talks of you!

Sir L. Oh, tell her, I'll make her the best husband in the world, and Lady O'Trigger into the bargain! But we must get the old gentlewoman's consent, and do everything fairly.

Lucy. Nay, Sir Lucius, I thought you wa'n't rich enough to be so nice.

Sir L. Upon my word, young woman, you have hit it: I am so poor, that I can't afford to do a dirty action. If I did not want money, I'd steal your mistress and her fortune with a great deal of pleasure. However, my pretty girl, [Giving her money] here's a little something to buy you a ribband; and meet me in the evening, and I will give

you an answer to this. So, hussy, take a kiss beforehand, to put you in mind. [Kisses her.]

Lucy. O lud! Sir Lucius—I never see such a gentleman! My lady won't like you if you are so impudent.

Sir L. 'Faith she will, Lucy—that same—ho! what's the name of it!—modesty!—is a quality in a lover more praised by the women than liked: so, if your mistress asks you whether Sir Lucius ever gave you a kiss, tell her fifty, my dear.

Lucy. What, would you have me tell her a lie?

Sir L. Ah, then, you baggage! I'll make it a truth presently.

Lucy. For shame now; here is some one coming.

Sir L. O 'faith, I'll quiet your conscience!

[Sees Fag.—Exit, singing.]

Enter Fag.

Fag. So, so, ma'am; I humbly beg pardon.

Lucy. O lud! now, Mr. Fag—you flurry one so.

Fag. Come, come, Lucy, here's no one by—so a little less simplicity, with a grain or two more sincerity, if you please. You play false with us, madam. I saw you give the baronet a letter. My master shall know this; and if he don't call him out—I will.

Lucy. Ha! ha! ha! you gentlemen's gentlemen are so hasty! That letter was from Mrs. Malaprop, simpleton. She is taken with Sir Lucius's address.

Fag. How! what taste some people have! Why, I suppose I have walked by her window an hundred times. But what says our young lady!—any message to my master!

Lucy. Sad news, Mr. Fag! A worse rival than Acra! Sir Anthony Absolute has proposed his son.

Fag. What, Captain Absolute?

Lucy. Even so.—I overheard it all.

Fag. Ha! ha! ha! very good, 'faith! Good by, Lucy: I must away with this news.

Lucy. Well, you may laugh, but it is true, I assure you. [Going.] But, Mr. Fag, tell your master not to be cast down by this.

Fag. Oh, he'll be so disconsolate!

Lucy. And charge him not to think of quarrelling with young Absolute.

Fag. Never fear—never fear.

Lucy. Be sure, bid him keep up his spirits.

Fag. We will—we will. [Exeunt.]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—The North Parade.

Enter Captain ABSOLUTE.

Capt. A. 'Tis just as Fag told me, indeed! Whimsical enough, 'faith! My father wants to force me to marry the very girl I am plotting to run away with! He must not know of my connexion with her yet awhile. He has too summary a method of proceeding in these matters; however, I'll read my recantation instantly. My conversion is something sudden, indeed; but I can assure him, it is very sincere. So, so, here he comes: he looks plaguy gruff. [Steps aside.]

Enter Sir ANTHONY.

Sir Anth. No—I'll die sooner than forgive him!

Die, did I say! I'll live these fifty years to plague him. At our last meeting, his impudence had almost put me out of temper—an obstinate—passionate—self-willed boy! Whom can he take after? This is my return for getting him before all his brothers and sisters! for putting him at twelve years old into a marching regiment, and allowing him fifty pounds a year, besides his pay, ever since! But I have done with him—he's anybody's son for me—I never will see him more—never—never—never.

Capt. A. Now for a penitential face!

[Comes forward.]

Sir Anth. Fellow, get out of my way!

Capt. A. Sir, you see a penitent before you.

Sir Anth. I see an impudent scoundrel before me.

Capt. A. A sincere penitent. I am come, sir, to acknowledge my error, and to submit entirely to your will.

Sir Anth. What's that?

Capt. A. I have been revolving, and reflecting, and considering on your past goodness, and kindness, and condescension to me.

Sir Anth. Well, sir?

Capt. A. I have been likewise weighing, and balancing, what you were pleased to mention, concerning duty, and obedience, and authority.

Sir Anth. Why, now you talk sense, absolute sense! I never heard anything more sensible in my life. Confound you! you shall be Jack again.

Capt. A. I am happy in the appellation.

Sir Anth. Why then, Jack, my dear Jack, I will now inform you who the lady really is. Nothing but your passion and violence, you silly fellow, prevented me telling you at first. Prepare, Jack, for wonder and rapture—prepare. What think you of Miss Lydia Languish?

Capt. A. Languish! What the Languishes of Worcestershire?

Sir Anth. Worcestershire! No. Did you never meet Mrs. Malaprop and her niece, Miss Languish, who came into our country just before you were last ordered to your regiment?

Capt. A. Malaprop! Languish! I don't remember ever to have heard the names before. Yet stay, I think I do recollect something—Languish—Languish—She squints, don't she? A little red-haired girl?

Sir Anth. Squints! A red-haired girl! Z—ds! no!

Capt. A. Then I must have forgot! it can't be the same person.

Sir Anth. Jack! Jack! what think you of blooming, love-breathing seventeen?

Capt. A. As to that, sir, I am quite indifferent; if I can please you in the matter, 'tis all I desire.

Sir Anth. Nay, but Jack, such eyes! such eyes! so innocently wild! so bashfully irresolute! Not a glance but speaks and kindles some thought of love! Then, Jack, her cheeks! her cheeks! Jack! so deeply blushing at the insinuations of her tell-tale eyes! Then, Jack, her lips! O, Jack, lips, smiling at their own discretion! and, if not smiling, more sweetly pouting—more lovely in sullenness! Then, Jack, her neck! O, Jack! Jack!

Capt. A. And which is to be mine, sir, the niece or the aunt?

Sir Anth. Why, you unfeeling, insensible puppy, I despise you. When I was of your age, such a description would have made me fly like a rocket! the aunt, indeed! Odds life! when I ran away

with your mother, I would not have touched anything old or ugly to gain an empire.

Capt. A. Not to please your father, sir?

Sir Anth. To please my father—Z—ds! not to please—O, my father—Odso!—yes, yes; if my father, indeed, had desired—that's quite another matter.—Though he wasn't the indulgent father that I am, Jack.

Capt. A. I dare say not, sir?

Sir Anth. But, Jack, you are not sorry to find your mistress is so beautiful?

Capt. A. Sir, I repeat it, if I please you in this affair, 'tis all I desire. Not that I think a woman the worse for being handsome; but, sir, if you please to recollect you before hinted something about a hump or two, one eye, and a few more graces of that kind—now, without being very nice, I own I should rather choose a wife of mine to have the usual number of limbs, and a limited quantity of back; and, though one eye may be very agreeable, yet, as the prejudice has always run in favour of two, I would not wish to affect a singularity in that article.

Sir Anth. What a phlegmatic sot it is! Why, sirrah, you are an anchorite! A vile, insensible stock! You a soldier! you're a walking block, fit only to dust the company's regimentals on! Odds life, I have a great mind to marry the girl myself!

Capt. A. I am entirely at your disposal, sir; if you should think of addressing Miss Languish yourself, I suppose you would have me marry the aunt; or if you should change your mind, and take the old lady, 'tis the same to me, I'll marry the niece.

Sir Anth. Upon my word, Jack, thou art either a very great hypocrite, or—but, come, I know your indifference on such a subject must be all a lie—I'm sure it must—come now, d—n your demure face; come, confess, Jack, you have been lying—ha'n't you? You have been playing the hypocrite, hey? I'll never forgive you, if you ha'n't been lying and playing the hypocrite.

Capt. A. I'm sorry, sir, that the respect and duty which I bear to you should be so mistaken.

Sir Anth. Hang your respect and duty! But, come along with me. I'll write a note to Mrs. Malaprop, and you shall visit the lady directly. Her eyes shall be the Promethean torch to you—come along, I'll never forgive you, if you don't come back stark mad with rapture and impatience—if you don't, 'egad, I'll marry the girl myself.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—Julia's Dressing-room.

Enter FAULKLAND.

Faulk. They told me Julia would return directly: I wonder she is not yet come!—How mean does this captious, unsatisfied temper of mine appear to my cooler judgment! What tender, honest joy sparkled in her eyes when we met! How delicate was the warmth of her expressions!—I was ashamed to appear less happy, though I had come resolved to wear a face of coolness and upbraiding. Sir Anthony's presence prevented my proposed expostulations: yet I must be satisfied that she has not been so very happy in my absence. She is coming—yes, I know the nimbleness of her tread, when she thinks her impatient Faulkland counts the moments of her stay.

Enter JULIA.

Jul. I had not hoped to see you again so soon.

Faulk. Could I, Julia, be contented with my first welcome, restrained, as we were, by the presence of a third person?

Jul. Oh, Faulkland! when your kindness can make me thus happy, let me not think that I have discovered something of coolness in your first salutation.

Faulk. 'Twas but your fancy, Julia. I was rejoiced to see you—to see you in such health: sure I had no cause for coldness.

Jul. Nay, then, I see you have taken something ill; you must not conceal from me what it is.

Faulk. Well, then, shall I own to you, that my joy at hearing of your health and arrival here, by your neighbour Acres, was somewhat damped, by his dwelling much on the high spirits you had enjoyed in Devonshire: on your mirth—your singing—dancing—and I know not what: for such is my temper, Julia, that I should regard every mirthful moment in your absence, as a treason to constancy. The mutual tear, that steals down the cheek of parting lovers, is a compact, that no smile shall live there till they meet again.

Jul. Must I never cease to tax my Faulkland with this teasing, minute caprice! Can the idle reports of a silly boor weigh in your breast against my tried affection?

Faulk. They have no weight with me, Julia: no, no, I am happy, if you have been so—yet only say that you did not sing with mirth—say that you thought of Faulkland in the dance.

Jul. I never can be happy in your absence. If I wear a countenance of content, it is to show that my mind holds no doubt of my Faulkland's truth. Believe me, Faulkland, I mean not to upbraid you, when I say, that I have often dressed sorrow in smiles, lest my friends should guess whose unkindness had caused my tears.

Faulk. You were ever all goodness to me! Oh, I am a brute, when I but admit a doubt of your true constancy!

Jul. If ever without such cause from you, as I will not suppose possible, you find my affections veering but a point, may I become a proverbial scoff for levity and base ingratitude!

Faulk. Ah, Julia! that last word is grating to me! I would I had no title to your gratitude! Search your heart, Julia: perhaps what you have mistaken for love, is but a warm effusion of a too thankful heart!

Jul. For what quality must I love you?

Faulk. For no quality: to regard me for any quality of mind or understanding, were only to esteem me! And for person—I have often wished myself deformed, to be convinced that I owed no obligation there for any part of your affection.

Jul. Where nature has bestowed a show of nice attention in the features of a man, he should laugh at it as misplaced. I have seen men, who in this vain article, perhaps, might rank above you; but my heart has never asked my eyes if it were so or not.

Faulk. Now, this is not well from you, Julia. I despise person in a man, yet, if you love me as I wish, though I were an Æthiop, you'd think none so fair.

Jul. I s-e-e you are determined to be unkind.—The contract, which my poor father bound us in, gives you more than a lover's privilege.

Faulk. Again, Julia, you raise ideas that feed and justify my doubts. How shall I be sure, had you remained unbound in thought or promise, that I should still have been the object of your persevering love?

Jul. Then try me now—Let us be free as strangers as to what is past: my heart will not feel more liberty.

Faulk. There, now! so hasty, Julia! so anxious to be free! If your love for me were fixed and ardent, you would not loose your hold, even though I wished it!

Jul. Oh, you torture me to the heart! I cannot bear it!

Faulk. I do not mean to distress you: if I loved you less, I should never give you an uneasy moment. I would not boast, yet let me say, that I have neither age, person, nor character, to found dislike on; my fortune such, as few ladies could be charged with indiscretion in the match. O, Julia! when love receives such countenance from prudence, nice minds will be suspicious of its birth.

Jul. I know not whither your insinuations would tend; but as they seem pressing to insult me, I will spare you the regret of having done so—I have given no cause for this! [*Exit, crying.*]

Faulk. In tears! stay, Julia—stay, but for a moment—The door is fastened! Julia! my soul! but for one moment!—I hear her sobbing! 'Sdeath! what a brute am I to use her thus!—yet stay—Ay, she is coming now: how little resolution there is in woman! how a few soft words can turn them! [*Sits down, and sings.*] No, Z—ds! she's not coming, nor don't intend it, I suppose! This is not steadiness, but obstinacy! Yet I deserve it. What, after so long an absence, to quarrel with her tenderness! 'twas barbarous and unmanly!—I should be ashamed to see her now.—I'll wait till her just resentment is abated, and when I distress her so again, may I lose her for ever. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—Mrs. Malaprop's Lodgings.

Enter Mrs. MALAPROP, with a letter in her hand, Captain ABSOLUTE following.

Mrs. M. Your being Sir Anthony's son, captain, would itself be a sufficient accommodation; but from the ingenuity of your appearance, I am convinced you deserve the character here given of you.

Capt. A. Permit me to say, madam, that as I have never yet had the pleasure of seeing Miss Languish, my principal inducement in this affair, at present, is the honour of being allied to Mrs. Malaprop, of whose intellectual accomplishments, elegant manners, and unaffected learning, no tongue is silent.

Mrs. M. Sir, you do me infinite honour! I beg, captain, you'll be seated.—[*Both sit.*]—Ah! few gentlemen, now-a-days, know how to value the ineffectual qualities in a woman! few think how a little knowledge becomes a gentlewoman! Men have no sense, now, but for the worthless flower of beauty.

Capt. A. It is but too true, indeed, ma'am; yet I fear our ladies should share the blame; they think our admiration of beauty so great, that knowledge, in them, would be superfluous. Thus, like garden trees, they seldom show fruit, till time has robbed them of the more specious blossoms: few, like Mrs. Malaprop, and the orange-tree, are rich in both at once.

Mrs. M. Sir, you overpower me with good breed-

ing—He is the very pine-apple of politeness! You are not ignorant, captain, that this giddy girl has, somehow, contrived to fix her affections on a beggarly, strolling, eves-dropping ensign, whom none of us have seen, and nobody knows anything of.

Capt. A. Oh, I have heard the silly affair before. I'm not at all prejudiced against her on that account. But it must be very distressing, indeed, to you, ma'am.

Mrs. M. Oh, it gives me the hydrostatics to such a degree!—I thought she had persisted from corresponding with him; but behold, this very day, I have interceded another letter from the fellow—I believe I have it in my pocket.

Capt. A. O, the devil! my last note! [*Aside.*]

Mrs. M. Ay, here it is.

Capt. A. Ay, my note, indeed! O, the little traitress, Lucy! [*Aside.*]

Mrs. M. There, perhaps you may know the writing. [*Gives him the letter.*]

Capt. A. I think I have seen the hand before—yes, I certainly must have seen this hand before.

Mrs. M. Nay, but read it, captain.

Capt. A. [*Reads.*] "My soul's idol, my adored Lydia!"—Very tender, indeed.

Mrs. M. Tender! ay, and profane too, o' my conscience!

Capt. A. "I am excessively alarmed at the intelligence you send me, the more so as my new rival"

Mrs. M. That's you, sir.

Capt. A. "Has universally the character of being an accomplished gentleman, and a man of honour." Well, that's handsome enough.

Mrs. M. Oh, the fellow has some design in writing so.

Capt. A. That he had, I'll answer for him, ma'am.

Mrs. M. But go on, sir—you'll see presently.

Capt. A. "As for the old weather-beaten shepherd, who guards you"—Who can he mean by that?

Mrs. M. Me, sir—me—he means me there—what do you think now?—but go on a little further.

Capt. A. Impudent scoundrel!—"it shall go hard but I will elude her vigilance; as I am told that the same ridiculous vanity, which makes her dress up her coarse features, and deck her dull chat with hard words which she don't understand"

Mrs. M. There, sir, an attack upon my language!—what do you think of that?—an aspersion upon my parts of speech! was ever such a brute! Sure if I reprehend anything in this world, it is the use of my oracular tongue, and a nice derangement of epitaphs.

Capt. A. He deserves to be hanged and quartered! let me see—"same ridiculous vanity!"

Mrs. M. You need not read it again, sir!

Capt. A. I beg pardon, ma'am—"does also lay her open to the grossest deceptions from flattery and pretended admiration"—an impudent scoundrel—"so that I have a scheme to see you shortly, with the old harridan's consent, and even to make her a go-between in our interviews."—Was ever such assurance!

Mrs. M. Did you ever hear anything like it! [*They rise.*] He'll elude my vigilance, will he?—yes, yes!—ha! ha! he's very likely to enter these doors!—we'll try who can plot best!

Capt. A. So we will, ma'am—so we will.—Ha! ha! ha! a conceited puppy! ha! ha! ha!—Well,

but Mrs. Malaprop, as the girl seems so infatuated by this fellow, suppose you were to wink at her corresponding with him for a little time—let her even plot an elopement with him—then do you connive at her escape—while I, just in the nick, will have the fellow laid by the heels, and fairly contrive to carry her off in his stead.

Mrs. M. I am delighted with the scheme; never was anything better perpetrated.

Capt. A. But, pray, could I not see the lady for a few minutes now?—I should like to try her temper a little.

Mrs. M. Why, I don't know; I doubt she is not prepared for a visit of this kind. There is a decorum in these matters.

Capt. A. O Lord, she won't mind me!—only tell her, Beverley—

Mrs. M. Sir!

Capt. A. Gently, good tongue!

[Aside.]

Mrs. M. What did you say of Beverley?

Capt. A. Oh, I was going to propose that you should tell her, by way of jest, that it was Beverley who was below—she'd come down fast enough then—ha! ha! ha!

Mrs. M. 'Twould be a trick she well deserves; besides, you know the fellow tells her he'll get my consent to see her—ha! ha! Let him, if he can, I say again. Lydia, come down here! [Calling.] He'll make me a go-between in their interviews!—ha! ha! ha! Come down, I say, Lydia! I don't wonder at your laughing—ha! ha! ha! his impudence is truly ridiculous.

Capt. A. 'Tis very ridiculous, upon my soul, ma'am!—ha! ha! ha!

Mrs. M. The little hussy won't hear. Well, I'll go and tell her at once who it is—she shall know that Captain Absolute is come to wait on her. And I'll make her behave as becomes a young woman.

Capt. A. As you please, ma'am.

Mrs. M. For the present, captain, your servant—Ah, you've not done laughing yet, I see—elude my vigilance! yes, yes—Ha! ha! ha! [Exit.]

Capt. A. Ha! ha! ha! one would think, now, that I might throw off all disguise at once, and seize my prize with security; but such is Lydia's caprice, that, to undeceive, were probably to lose her. I'll see whether she knows me.

[Walks aside, surveying the pictures.]

Enter LYDIA.

Lyd. What a scene am I now to go through! surely nothing can be more dreadful than to be obliged to listen to the loathsome addresses of a stranger to one's heart. I have heard of girls persecuted, as I am, who have appealed in behalf of their favoured lover to the generosity of his rival: suppose I were to try it—there stands the hated rival—an officer, too! but, oh, how unlike my Beverley! I wonder he don't begin—truly, he seems a very negligent wooer!—quite at his ease, upon my word! I'll speak first—Mr. Absolute!

Capt. A. Ma'am.

[Turns round.]

Lyd. O heavens! Beverley!

Capt. A. Hush! hush, my life! softly! be not surprised!

Lyd. I am so astonished! and so terrified! and so overjoyed! For Heaven's sake, how came you here?

Capt. A. Briefly. I have deceived your aunt. I was informed that my new rival was to visit here this evening, and, contriving to have him kept

away, have passed myself on her for Captain Absolute.

Lyd. Oh, charming!—and she really takes you for young Absolute?

Capt. A. Oh, she's convinced of it.

Lyd. Ha! ha! ha! I can't forbear laughing, to think how her sagacity is over-reached.

Capt. A. But we trifle with our precious moments—such another opportunity may not occur; then let me now conjure my kind, my condescending angel, to fix the time when I may rescue her from undeserved persecution, and, with a licensed warmth, plead for my reward.

Lyd. Will you then, Beverley, consent to forfeit that portion of my paltry wealth—that burden of the wings of love?

Capt. A. Oh, come to me—rich only thus—in loveliness! Bring no portion to me but thy love; 'twill be generous in you, Lydia; for well you know, it is the only dower your poor Beverley can repay.

Lyd. How persuasive are his words! how charming will poverty be with him!

[Aside.]

Capt. A. By heavens, I would flog all goods of fortune from me with a prodigal hand, to enjoy the scene where I might clasp my Lydia to my bosom, and say, the world affords no smile to me but here. [Embracing her.] If she holds out now, the devil is in it.

[Aside.]

Lyd. Now could I fly with him to the Antipodes—but my persecution is not yet come to a crisis.

[Aside.]

Enter MRS. MALAPROP, listening.

Mrs. M. I am impatient to know how the little hussy deports herself.

[Aside.]

Capt. A. So pensive, Lydia!—is then your warmth abated?

Mrs. M. Warmth abated?—so?—she has been in a passion, I suppose.

[Aside.]

Lyd. No; nor ever can while I have life.

Mrs. M. An ill-temper'd little devil!—She'll be in a passion all her life, will she?

[Aside.]

Lyd. Let her choice be Captain Absolute, but Beverley is mine.

Mrs. M. I am astonished at her assurance!—to his face—this is his face!

[Aside.]

Capt. A. Thus, then, let me enforce my suit.

[Kneeling.]

Mrs. M. Ay—poor young man!—down on his knees, entreating for pity!—I can contain no longer. [Aside.]—Why, thou vixen!—I have overheard you.

Capt. A. Oh, confound her vigilance!

[Aside.]

Mrs. M. Captain Absolute—I know not how to apologize for her shocking rudeness.

Capt. A. So, all's safe I find. [Aside.]—I have hopes, madam, that time will bring the young lady—

Mrs. M. O, there's nothing to be hoped for from her! she's as headstrong as an allegory on the banks of the Nile.

Lyd. Nay, madam, what do you charge me with now?

Mrs. M. Why, thou unblushing rebel—didn't you tell this gentleman to his face, that you loved another better?—didn't you say you never would be his?

Lyd. No, madam, I did not.

Mrs. M. Good heavens, what assurance!—Lydia, you ought to know that lying don't become a young woman! Didn't you boast that Beverley—

that stroller, Beverley—possessed your heart? Tell me that, I say.

Lyd. 'Tis true, ma'am, and none but Beverley—
Mrs. M. Hold!—hold, assurance!—you shall not be so rude.

Capt. A. Nay, pray, Mrs. Malaprop, don't stop the young lady's speech:—she's very welcome to talk thus—it does not hurt me in the least, I assure you.

Mrs. M. You are too good, captain—too amiably patient:—but come with me, miss—let us see you again soon, captain—remember what we have fixed.

Capt. A. I shall, ma'am.

Mrs. M. Come, take a graceful leave of the gentleman.

Lyd. May every blessing wait on my Beverley, my loved Bev— [*Mrs. M. prevents her speaking.*]

Mrs. M. Hussy!—Come along—come along.

[*Exeunt Capt. Absolute, kissing his hand to*
LYDIA—Mrs. MALAPROP and LYDIA.]

SCENE IV.—Acres' Lodgings.

ACRES and DAVID discovered; ACRES just dressed.

Acres. Indeed, David—dress does make a difference, David.

Dav. 'Tis all in all, I think—difference? why, an' you were to go now to Clod Hall, I am certain the old lady wouldn't know you: master Butler wouldn't believe his own eyes, and Mrs. Pickle would cry, "Lard preserve me!" our dairy-maid would come giggling to the door, and I warrant Dolly Tester, your honour's favourite, would blush like my waistcoat. Oons! I'll hold a gallon, there an't a dog in the house but would bark, and I question whether Phillis would wag a hair of her tail?

Acres. Ay, David, there's nothing like polishing.

Dav. So I says of your honour's boots; but the boy never heeds me!

Acres. But David, has Mr. de la Grace been here? I must rub up my balancing, and chasing, and boring.

Dav. I'll call again, sir.

Acres. Do; and see if there are any letters for me at the Post-office.

Dav. I will. By the mass, I can't help looking at your head! if I hadn't been at the cooking, I wish I may die if I should have known the dish again myself.

[*Exit.*]

[*ACRES comes forward with a dancing step.*]

Acres. Sink, slide—coupee—Confound the first inventors of cotillions, say I!—they are as bad as algebra to us country gentlemen—I can walk a minuet easy enough, when I am forced—and I have been accounted a good stick in a country dance. Odds jigs and tabors!—I never valued your cross-over to couple—figure in—right and left—and I'd foot it with e'er a captain in the country!—but these outlandish heathen allemandes and cotillions are quite beyond me!—I shall never prosper at them, that's sure—mine are true-born English legs—they don't understand their cursed French lingo!—their *pas* this, and *pas* that, and *pas* t'other! damn me! my feet don't like to be called paws!

Enter Servant.

Serv. Here is Sir Lucius O'Trigger to wait on you, sir.

Acres. Show him in.

[*Exit Servant.*]

Enter Sir LUCIUS.

Sir L. Mr. Acres. I am delighted to see you.

Acres. My dear Sir Lucius, I kiss your hands.

Sir L. Pray, my friend, what has brought you so suddenly to Bath?

Acres. 'Faith, I have followed Cupid's jack-a-lantern, and find myself in a quagmire at last!—In short, I have been very ill-used, Sir Lucius. I don't choose to mention names, but look on me as a very ill-used gentleman.

Sir L. Pray, what is the cause?—I ask no names.

Acres. Mark me, Sir Lucius; I fall as deep as need be in love with a young lady—her friends take my part—I follow her to Bath—send word of my arrival; and receive answer, that the lady is to be otherwise disposed of. This, Sir Lucius, I call being ill-used.

Sir L. Very ill, upon my conscience!—Pray, can you divine the cause of it?

Acres. Why, there's the matter: she has another lover, one Beverley, who, I am told, is now in Bath.—Odds slanders and lies, he must be at the bottom of it.

Sir L. A rival in the case, is there? and you think he has supplanted you unfairly?

Acres. Unfairly! to be sure he has. He never could have done it fairly.

Sir L. Then sure you know what is to be done?

Acres. Not I, upon my soul!

Sir L. We wear no swords here, but you understand me?

Acres. What! fight him!

Sir L. Ay, to be sure: what can I mean else?

Acres. But he has given me no provocation.

Sir L. Now, I think he has given you the greatest provocation in the world. Can a man commit a more heinous offence against another, than to fall in love with the same woman? Oh, by my soul, it is the most unpardonable breach of friendship.

Acres. Breach of friendship! Ay, ay; but I have no acquaintance with this man. I never saw him in all my life.

Sir L. That's no argument at all—he has the less right then to take such a liberty.

Acres. 'Gad, that's true—I grow full of anger, Sir Lucius!—I fire apace; odds hilts and blades! I find a man may have a deal of valour in him, and not know it!—But couldn't I contrive to have a little right on my side?

Sir L. What the devil signifies right when your honour is concerned? do you think Achilles, or my little Alexander the Great, ever inquired where the right lay? No, by my soul, they drew their broad swords, and left the lazy sons of peace to settle the justice of it.

Acres. Your words are a grenadier's march to my heart! I believe courage must be catching!—I certainly do feel a kind of valour arising, as it were—a kind of courage, as I may say—Odds flints, pans, and triggers! I'll challenge him directly.

Sir L. Ah! my little friend! if we had Blunderbuss Hall here—I could show you a range of ancestry, in the O'Trigger line, that would furnish the New Room, every one of whom had killed his man!—For though the mansion-house and dirty acres have slipped through my fingers, I thank Heaven, our honour and the family pictures are as fresh as ever.

Acres. Oh, Sir Lucius, I have had ancestors too!

— every man of them colonel or captain in the militia!—odds balls and barrels! say no more—I'm braced for it. The thunder of your words has soured the milk of human kindness in my breast!—Z—ds! as the mag in the play says, "I could do such deeds!"

Sir L. Come, come, there must be no passion at all in the case—these things should always be done civilly.

Acres. I must be in a passion, *Sir Lucius*—I must be in a rage—Dear *Sir Lucius*, let me be in a rage, if you love me. Come, here's pen and paper. [*Sits.*] I would the ink were red!—Indite, I say, indite!—How shall I begin? Odds bullets and blades! I'll write a good bold hand, however.

Sir L. Pray compose yourself. [*Sits down.*]

Acres. Come—now, shall I begin with an oath? Do, *Sir Lucius*, let me begin with a damme?

Sir L. Pho! pho! do the thing decently, and like a Christian. Begin now—"Sir,"—

Acres. That's too civil by half.

Sir L. "To prevent the confusion that might arise!"—

Acres. Well—

Sir L. "From our both addressing the same lady!"—

Acres. Ay—"both undressing the same lady!"—there's the reason—"same lady!"—Well—

Sir L. "I shall expect the honour of your company!"—

Acres. Z—ds! I'm not asking him to dinner!—

Sir L. Pray, be easy.

Acres. Well, then, "honour of your company."—Does company begin with a C or a K?

Sir L. "To settle our pretensions!"—

Acres. Well.

Sir L. Let me see—ay, King's Mead-fields will do—"in King's Mead-fields."

Acres. So, that's done. Well, I'll fold it up presently; my own crest, a hand and dagger, shall be the seal.

Sir L. You see, now, this little explanation will put a stop at once to all confusion or misunderstanding that might arise between you.

Acres. Ay, we fight to prevent any misunderstanding.

Sir L. Now, I'll leave you to fix your own time. Take my advice, and you'll decide it this evening, if you can; then, let the worst come of it, 'twill be off your mind to-morrow.

Acres. Very true.

Sir L. So I shall see nothing more of you, unless it be by letter, till the evening—I would do myself the honour to carry your mes-age; but, to tell you a secret, I believe I shall have just such another affair on my own hands. There is a gay captain here who put a jest on me lately at the expense of my country, and I only want to fall in with the gentleman to call him out.

Acres. By my valour, I should like to see you fight first! Odds life, I should like to see you kill him, if it was only to get a little lesson!

Sir L. I shall be very proud of instructing you. Well, for the present—but remember now, when you meet your antagonist, do everything in a mild and agreeable manner. Let your courage be as keen, but at the same time as polished as your sword. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—Acres' Lodgings.

ACRES and DAVID discovered.

Dav. Then, by the mass, sir, I would do no such thing! ne'er a *Sir Lucius O'Trigger* in the kingdom should make me fight when I wasn't so minded. Oons! what will the old lady say when she hears o't?

Acres. But my honour, David, my honour! I must be very careful of my honour.

Dav. Ay, by the mass, and I would be very careful of it, and I think in return my honour couldn't do less than to be very careful of me.

Acres. Odds blades! David, no gentleman will ever risk the loss of his honour!

Dav. I say, then, it would be but civil in honour never to risk the loss of a gentleman.—Look ye, master, this honour seems to me to be a marvellous false friend; ay, truly, a very courtier-like servant. Put the case; I was a gentleman (which, thank Heaven, no one can say of me); well—my honour makes me quarrel with another gentleman of my acquaintance. So—we fight.—(Pleasant enough that.) Boh! I kill him—(the more's my luck.) Now, pray, who gets the profit of it?—why, my honour. But, put the case that he kills me! by the mass! I go to the worms, and my honour whips over to my enemy.

Acres. No, David, in that case!—Odds crowns and laurels! your honour follows you to the grave!

Dav. Now, that's just the place where I could make a shift to do without it.

Acres. Z—ds! David, you are a coward!—It doesn't become my valour to listen to you.—What, shall I disgrace my ancestors!—Think of that, David—think what it would be to disgrace my ancestors!

Dav. Under favour, the surest way of not disgracing them, is to keep as long as you can out of their company. Look ye, now, master, to go to them in such haste—with an ounce of lead in your brains—I should think it might as well be let alone. Our ancestors are very good kind of folks; but they are the last people I should choose to have a visiting acquaintance with.

Acres. But, David, now, you don't think there is such very, very—great danger, hey?—Odds life! people often fight without any mischief done!

Dav. By the mass, I think 'tis ten to one against you! Oons! here to meet some lion-headed fellow, I warrant, with his d—d double-barrell'd swords and cut-and-thrust pistols!—Lord bless us! it makes me tremble to think on't—those be such desperate bloody-minded weapons! well, I never could abide them!—from a child I never could fancy them!—I suppose there an't been so merciless a beast in the world as your loaded pistol!

Acres. Z—ds! I won't be afraid—odds fire and fury! you shan't make me afraid.—Here is the challenge, and I have sent for my dear friend, Jack Absolute, to carry it for me.

Dav. Ay, i' the name of mischief, let him be the messenger.—For my part, I wouldn't lend a hand to it, for the best horse in your stable. By the mass! it don't look like another letter!—it is, as I may say, a designing and malicious-looking letter! and I warrant smells of gunpowder. Like a soldier's pouch! Oons! I wouldn't swear it mayn't go off!

Acres. Out, you poltroon!—you ha'n't the valour of a grasshopper.

Dav. Well, I say no more—'twill be sad news, to be sure, at Clod-Hall!—but I ha' done.—How Phillis will howl when she hears of it!—ay, poor bitch, she little thinks what shooting her master's going after!—and I warrant old Crop, who has carried your honour, field and road, these ten years, will curse the hour he was born!—*[Whimpering.]*

Acres. It won't do, David—I am determined to fight, so get along, you coward, while I'm in the mind.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Captain Absolute, sir.

Acres. O! show him up.

[Exit Servant.]

David. Well, Heaven send we be all alive this time to-morrow.

Acres. What's that?—Don't provoke me, David!

Dav. Good bye, master.

[Sobbing.]

Acres. Get along, you cowardly, dastardly, croaking raven.

[Exit David.]

Enter Captain Absolute.

Capt. A. What's the matter, Bob?

Acres. A vile, sheep-hearted blockhead!—If I hadn't the valour of St. George, and the dragon to boot—

Capt. A. But what did you want with me, Bob?

Acres. Oh!—there—*[Gives him the challenge.]*

Capt. A. *[To Ensign BEVERLEY.]* So—what's going on now? *[Aside.]* Well, what's this!

Acres. A challenge!

Capt. A. Indeed!—Why, you won't fight him, will you, Bob?

Acres. 'Egad, but I will, Jack.—Sir Lucius has brought me to it. He has left me full of rage, and I'll fight this evening, that so much good passion mayn't be wasted.

Capt. A. But what have I to do with this?

Acres. Why, as I think you know something of this fellow, I want you to find him out for me, and give him this mortal defiance.

Capt. A. Well, give it me, and trust me he gets it.

Acres. Thank you, my dear friend, my dear Jack; but it is giving you a great deal of trouble.

Capt. A. Not in the least—I beg you won't mention it. No trouble in the world, I assure you.

Acres. You are very kind.—What it is to have a friend!—you couldn't be my second—could you, Jack?

Capt. A. Why, no, Bob—not in this affair—it would not be quite so proper.

Acres. Well, then, I must get my friend, Sir Lucius. I shall have your good wishes, however, Jack?

Capt. A. Whenever he meets you, believe me.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir Anthony Absolute is below, inquiring for the captain.

Capt. A. I'll come instantly. *[Exit Servant.]*

Well, my little hero, success attend you. [Going.]
Acres. Stay, stay, Jack. If Beverley should ask you what kind of a man your friend Acres is, do tell him I am a devil of a fellow—will you, Jack?

Capt. A. To be sure I shall. I'll say you are a determined dog—hey, Bob?

Acres. Ay, do, do—and if that frightens him, egad, perhaps he mayn't come. So tell him I generally kill a man a week; will you, Jack?

Capt. A. I will; I will; I'll say you are call'd in the country, "Fighting Bob."

Acres. Right, right—'tis all to prevent mischief; for I don't want to take his life, if I clear my honour.

Capt. A. No!—that's very kind of you.

Acres. Why, you don't wish me to kill him, do you, Jack?

Capt. A. No, upon my soul, I do not. But a devil of a fellow, hey?

[Going.]

Acres. True, true.—But, stay—stay, Jack—you may add, that you never saw me in such a rage before—a most devouring rage.

Capt. A. I will, I will.

Acres. Remember, Jack—a determined dog.

Capt. A. Ay, ay, "Fighting Bob." *[Exit.]*

SCENE II.—Mrs. Malaprop's Lodgings.

Enter Mrs. MALAPROP and LYDIA.

Mrs. M. Why, thou perverse one!—tell me what you can object to in him?—Isn't he a handsome man?—tell me that. A genteel man? A prett figure of a man?

Lyd. She little thinks whom she is praising. *[Aside.]* So is Beverley, ma'am.

Mrs. M. No caparisons, miss, if you please. Caparisons don't become a young woman. No! Captain Absolute is indeed a fine gentleman.

Lyd. Ay, the Captain Absolute you have seen. *[Aside.]*

Mrs. M. Then he's so well bred;—so full of alacrity and adulation!—He has so much to say for himself, in such good language, too. His physiognomy so grammatical; then his presence so noble! I protest, when I saw him, I thought of what Hamlet says in the play:—"Hesperian curls—the front of Job himself! an eye, like March, to threaten at command!—a station, like Harry Mercury, new!"—Something about kissing—on a bill—however, the similitude struck me directly.

Lyd. How enraged she'll be presently, when she discovers her mistake! *[Aside.]*

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir Anthony and Captain Absolute are below, ma'am.

Mrs. M. Show them up here. *[Exit Servant.]*
Now, Lydia, I insist on your behaving as becomes a young woman. Show your good breeding, at least, though you have forgot your duty.

Lyd. Madam, I have told you my resolution—I shall not only give him no encouragement, but I won't even speak to, or look at him.

[Flings herself into a chair, with her face from the door.]

Enter Sir ANTHONY and Captain Absolute.

Sir Anth. Here we are, Mrs. Malaprop; come to mitigate the frowns of unrelenting beauty,—and difficulty enough I had to bring this fellow. I don't know what's the matter, but if I had not held him by force, he'd have given me the slip.

Mrs. M. You have infinite trouble, Sir Anthony, in the affair. I am ashamed for the cause! Lydia, Lydia, rise, I beseech you!—pay your respects! *[Aside to her.]*

Sir Anth. I hope, madam, that Miss Languish has reflected on the worth of this gentleman, and the regard due to her aunt's choice, and my alliance. Now, Jack, speak to her. *[Aside to him.]*

Capt. A. What the devil shall I do? *[Aside.]*

You see, sir, she won't even look at me whilst you are here, I knew she wouldn't!—I told you so—Let me entreat you, sir, to leave us together!

[Capt. A. seems to expostulate with his father.]

Sir Anth. I say, sir, I won't stir a foot yet.

Mrs. M. I am sorry to say, Sir Anthony, that my affluence over my niece is very small. Turn round, Lydia, I blush for you!

[Aside to her.]

Sir Anth. May I not flatter myself, that Miss Languish will assign what cause of dislike she can have to my son?—why don't you begin, Jack?

Speak, you puppy—speak!

[Aside to him.]

Mrs. M. It is impossible, Sir Anthony, she can have any. She will not say she has. Answer, hussy! why don't you answer?

[Aside to her.]

Sir Anth. Then, madam, I trust that a childish and hasty predilection will be no bar to Jack's happiness. Z—ds! sirrah! why don't you speak?

[Aside to him.]

Capt. A. Hem! hem! Madam—hem! [Capt. A. Absolute attempts to speak, then returns to Sir Anth.] 'Faith! sir, I am so confounded!—and so—so confounded! I told you I should be so, sir,—I knew it. The—the tremour of my passion entirely takes away my presence of mind.

Sir Anth. But it don't take away your voice, fool, does it? Go up, and speak to her directly! [Capt. Absolute makes signs to Mrs. MALAPROP to leave them together.] What the devil are you at? unlock your jaws, sirrah, or—

[Aside to him.]

Capt. A. [Draws near LYDIA.] Now, Heaven send she may be too sullen to look round! I must disguise my voice. [Aside. Speaks in a low tone.] Will not Miss Languish lend an ear to the mild accents of true love? Will not—

Sir Anth. What the devil ails the fellow? Why don't you speak out?—not stand croaking like a frog in a quinsy!

Capt. A. The—the excess of my awe, and my—my modesty, quite choke me!

Sir Anth. Ah! your modesty again! I'll tell you what, Jack: if you don't speak out directly and glibly too, I shall be in such a rage! Mrs. Malaprop, I wish the lady would favour us with something more than a side-front.

[Mrs. MALAPROP seems to chide LYDIA.]
Capt. A. So! all will out, I see! [Goes up to LYDIA, speaks softly.] Be not surprised, my Lydia, suppress all surprise at present.

Lyd. [Aside.] Heavens! 'tis Beverley's voice! [Looks round by degrees, then starts up.] Is this possible?—my Beverley! how can this be?—my Beverley!

Capt. A. Ah! 'tis all over! [Aside.]

Sir Anth. Beverley!—the devil—Beverley! What can the girl mean? This is my son, Jack Absolute.

Mrs. M. For shame, hussy! for shame! your head runs so on that fellow, that you have him always in your eyes! beg Captain Absolute's pardon directly.

Lyd. I see no Captain Absolute, but my loved Beverley!

Sir Anth. Z—ds, the girl's mad! her brain's turned by reading!

Mrs. M. O my conscience, I believe so!—what do you mean by Beverley, hussy?—you saw Captain Absolute before to-day, there he is—your husband that shall be.

Lyd. With all my soul, ma'am; when I refuse my Beverley—

Sir Anth. Oh! she's as mad as Bedlam!—or

has this fellow been playing us a rogue's trick! Come here, sirrah, who the devil are you?

Capt. A. 'Faith, sir, I am not quite clear myself; but I'll endeavour to recollect.

Sir Anth. Are you my son, or not?—answer for your mother, you dog, if you won't for me.

Capt. A. Ye powers of impudence, befriend me!

[Aside.]—Sir Anthony, most assuredly I am your wife's son; and that I sincerely believe myself to be yours also, I hope my duty has always shown. Mrs. Malaprop, I am your most respectful admirer, and shall be proud to add affectionate nephew; I need not tell my Lydia that she sees her faithful Beverley, who knowing the singular generosity of her temper, assumed that name, and a station, which has proved a test of the most disinterested love, which he now hopes to enjoy in a more elevated character.

Lyd. So!—there will be no elopement after all!

[Sullenly.]

Sir Anth. Upon my soul, Jack, thou art a very impudent fellow! To do you justice, I think I never saw a piece of more consummate assurance!

Capt. A. Oh, you flatter me, sir; you compliment; 'tis my modesty, you know, sir; modesty, that has stood in my way.

Sir Anth. Well, I am glad you are not the dull, insensible varlet you pretended to be, however! I'm glad you have made a fool of your father, you dog, I am. So this was your penitence, your duty, and obedience; I thought it was d—n'd sudden. You never heard their names before, not you! What the Languishes of Worcestershire, hey? if you could please me in this affair, 'twas all you desired! Ah! you dissembling villain! What! [Pointing to LYDIA.] she squints, don't she? a little red-haired girl! hey? Why, you hypocritical young rascal—I wonder you an't ashamed to hold up your head!

Capt. A. 'Tis with difficulty, sir—I am confused—very much confused, as you must perceive.

Mrs. M. O lud! Sir Anthony!—a new light breaks in upon me! hey! how! what! captain, did you write the letters then? What!—am I to thank you for the elegant compilation of an "old weather-beaten she-dragon," hey? O mercy—was it you that reflected on my parts of speech?

Capt. A. Dear sir! my modesty will be overpowered at last, if you don't assist me. I shall certainly not be able to stand it.

Sir Anth. Come, come, Mrs. Malaprop, we must forget and forgive; odds life! matters have taken so clever a turn all of a sudden, that I could find in my heart to be so good-humoured! and so gallant!—hey! Mrs. Malaprop! Come, we must leave them together; Mrs. Malaprop, they long to fly into each other's arms, I warrant! Jack—isn't the cheek as I said, hey?—and the eye—you rogue!—and the lip, hey! Come, Mrs. Malaprop, we'll not disturb their tenderness—theirs is the time of life for happiness! Youth's the season made for joy. [Sings.] Hey! Odd's life! I'm in such spirits—I don't know what I could not do! Permit me, ma'am—[Gives his hand to Mrs. MALAPROP.] [Sings.]—Tol de rol—'gad I should like to have a little fooling myself—Tol de rol! de rol!

[Exit, singing, and handing Mrs. MALAPROP off, LYDIA sits sullenly in her chair.]

Capt. A. So much thought bodes me no good, [Aside.] So grave, Lydia!

Lyd. Sir!

Capt. A. So! 'egad! I thought as much! That d—n'd monosyllable has froze me! [Aside.] What,

Lydia, now that we are as happy in our friends' consent as in our mutual vows.

Lyd. Friends' consent, indeed! [*Peevishly.*]

Capt. A. Come, come, we must lay aside some of our romance; a little wealth and comfort may be endured after all. And for your fortune, the lawyers shall make such settlements as—

Lyd. Lawyers! I hate lawyers!

Capt. A. Nay then we will not wait for their lingering forms, but instantly procure the license, and—

Lyd. The license! I hate licenses!

Capt. A. Oh, my love, be not so unkind—thus let me entreat— [*Kneeling*]

Lyd. Pshaw! what signifies kneeling, when you know I must have you!

Capt. A. [*Rising.*] Nay, madam, there shall be no constraint upon your inclinations, I promise you. If I have lost your heart, I resign the rest. Gad, I must try what a little spirit will do.

[*Aside.*]

Lyd. [*Rising.*] Then, sir, let me tell you, the interest you had there was acquired by a mean, unmanly imposition, and deserves the punishment of fraud.—What, you have been treating me like a child!—humouring my romance; and, laughing, I suppose, at your success!

Capt. A. You wrong me, Lydia, you wrong me—only hear—

Lyd. So, while I fondly imagined we were deceiving my relations, and flattered myself that I should outwit and incense them all—behold, my hopes are to be crushed at once, by my aunt's consent and approbation—and I am myself the only dupe at last! [*Walking about in a heat.*]—But here, sir, here is the picture—Beverley's picture! [*Taking a miniature from her bosom*] which I have worn, night and day, in spite of threats and entreaties!—There, sir [*Flinging it to him*]—and be assured, I throw the original from my heart as easily.

Capt. A. Nay, nay, ma'am, we will not differ as to that—here—[*Taking out a picture*]—here is Miss Lydia Languish. What a difference!—ay, there is the heavenly assenting smile, that first gave soul and spirit to my hopes!—those are the lips which sealed a vow, as yet scarce dry in Cupid's calendar!—and there the half-resentful blush, that would have checked the ardour of my thanks. Well, all that's past; all over, indeed! There, madam, in beauty, that copy is not equal to you, but, in my mind, its merit over the original, in being still the same, is such—that—I'll put it in my pocket.

[*Puts it up again.*]

Lyd. [*Softening.*] 'Tis your own doing, sir—I, I suppose you are perfectly satisfied.

Capt. A. Oh, most certainly: sure now, this is much better than being in love! ha! ha! ha!—there's some spirit in this! What signifies breaking some scores of solemn promises; all that's of no consequence, you know. To be sure people will say, that miss didn't know her own mind—but never mind that: or, perhaps, they may be ill-natured enough to hint, that the gentleman grew tired of the lady, and forsook her—but don't let that fret you.

Lyd. There's no bearing his insolence!

[*Bursts into tears.*]

Enter Mrs. MALAPROP and Sir ANTHONY.

Mrs. M. [*Entering.*] Come, we must interrupt your billing and cooing awhile.

Lyd. This is worse than your treachery and deceit, you base ingrate! [*Subbing.*]

Sir Anth. What the devil's the matter now! Z—ds! Mrs. Malaprop, this is the oddest billing and cooing I ever heard! but what the deuce is the meaning of it? I'm quite astonished!

Capt. A. Ask the lady, sir.

Mrs. M. Oh, mercy! I'm quite analys'd, for my part! Why, Lydia, what is the reason of this?

Lyd. Ask the gentleman, ma'am.

Sir Anth. Z—ds! I shall be in a frenzy! Why, Jack, you are not come out to be any one else, are you?

Mrs. M. Ay, sir, there's no more trick, is there?—you are not, like Cerberus, three gentlemen at once, are you?

Capt. A. You'll not let me speak—I say the lady can account for this much better than I can.

Lyd. Ma'am, you once commanded me never to think of Beverley again; there is the man—I now obey you: for, from this moment, I renounce him for ever.

[*Exit.*]

Mrs. M. O mercy and miracles! what a turn here is! Why sure, captain, you haven't behaved disrespectfully to my niece?

Sir Anth. Ha! ha! ha!—ha! ha! ha!—now I see it—Ha! ha! ha!—now I see it—you have been too lively, Jack.

Capt. A. Nay, sir, upon my word—

Sir Anth. Come, no lying, Jack—I'm sure 'twas so. Come, no excuses, Jack; why, your father, your rogue, was so before you; the blood of the Absolutes was always impatient.

Capt. A. By all that's good, sir—

Sir Anth. Z—ds! say no more, I tell you—Mrs. Malaprop shall make your peace. You must make his peace, Mrs. Malaprop; you must tell her, 'tis Jack's way—tell her, 'tis all our ways—it runs in the blood of our family! Come away, Jack, ha! ha! ha! Mrs. Malaprop—a young villain!

[*Pushes him out.*]

Mrs. M. Oh, Sir Anthony! O, fie, captain!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—The North Parade.

Enter Sir LUCIUS O'TRIGGER.

Sir L. I wonder where this Captain Absolute hides himself. Upon my conscience these officers are always in one's way in love affairs; I remember I might have married Lady Dorothy Carmine, if it had not been for a little rogue of a major, who ran away with her before she could get a sight of me! And I wonder too what it is the ladies can see in them to be so fond of them—unless it be a touch of the old serpent in them, that makes the little creatures be caught, like vipers, with a bit of red cloth. Hah, isn't this the captain coming?—'faith, it is! There is a probability of succeeding about that fellow, that is mighty provoking! who the devil is he talking to? [*Retires.*]

Enter Captain ABSOLUTE.

Capt. A. To what fine purposes have I been plotting! a noble reward for all my schemes, upon my soul! A little gipsy! I did not think her romance could have made her so d—n'd absurd either. 'Sdeath, I never was in a worse humour in my life! I could cut my own throat, or any other person's, with the greatest pleasure in the world!

Sir L. O, 'faith! I'm in the luck of it. I never

would have found him in a sweeter temper for my purpose—to be sure I'm just come in the nick! now to enter into conversation with him, and so quarrel genteelly.—[*Aside. Advances to Capt. Ansolute.*] With regard to that matter, captain, I must beg leave to differ in opinion with you.

Capt. A. Upon my word, then, you must be a very subtle disputant; because, sir, I happened just then to be giving no opinion at all.

Sir L. That's no reason; for give me leave to tell you, a man may think an untruth as well as speak one.

Capt. A. Very true, sir; but if a man never utters his thoughts, I should think they might stand a chance of escaping controversy.

Sir L. Then, sir, you differ in opinion with me, which amounts to the same thing.

Capt. A. Hark ye, Sir Lucius, if I had not before known you to be a gentleman, upon my soul, I should not have discovered it at this interview; for, what you can drive at, unless you mean to quarrel with me, I cannot conceive!

Sir L. I humbly thank you, sir, for the quickness of your apprehension—[*Bowing*]; you have named the very thing I would be at.

Capt. A. Very well, sir—I shall certainly not baulk your inclinations—but I should be glad if you would be pleased to explain your motives.

Sir L. Pray, sir, be easy—the quarrel is a very pretty quarrel, as it stands—we should only spoil it by trying to explain it. However, your memory is very short—or you could not have forgot an affront you passed on me within this week. So, no more, but name your time and place.

Capt. A. Well, sir, since you are so bent on it, he sooner the better; let it be this evening—here by the Spring Gardens. We shall scarcely be interrupted.

Sir L. Faith! that same interruption, in affairs of this nature, shows very great ill-breeding. I don't know what's the reason, but in England, if a thing of this kind gets wind, people make such a pother, that a gentleman can never fight in peace and quietness. However, if it's the same to you, captain, I should take it as a particular kindness, if you'd let us meet in King's Mead-fields, as a little business will call me there about six o'clock, and I may despatch both matters at once.

Capt. A. 'Tis the same to me, exactly. A little after six, then, we will discuss this matter more seriously.

Sir L. If you please, sir; there will be very pretty small-sword light, though it won't do for a long shot. So that matter's settled; and my mind's at ease. [Exit.]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—Julia's Dressing-room.

Enter JULIA.

Jul. How this message has alarmed me! what dreadful accident can be meant? why such charge to be alone? O Faulkland! how many unhappy moments, how many tears, you have cost me!

Enter FAULKLAND.

What means this? why this caution, Faulkland?

Faulk. Alas, Julia! I am come to take a long farewell!

Jul. Heav'n's! what do you mean?

Faulk. You see before you a wretch whose life is forfeited:—Nay, start not; the infirmity of my temper has drawn all this misery on me: I left you fretful and passionate—an untoward accident drew me into a quarrel—the event is, that I must fly this kingdom instantly!—Oh, Julia, had I been so fortunate as to have called you mine entirely, before this mischance had fallen on me, I should not so deeply dread my banishment!

Jul. My soul is oppressed with sorrow at the nature of your misfortune: had these adverse circumstances arisen from a less fatal cause, I should have felt strong comfort in the thought, that I could now chase from your bosom every doubt of the warm sincerity of my love. My heart has long known no other guardian: I now intrust my person to your honour—we will fly together: when safe from pursuit, my father's will may be fulfilled, and I receive a legal claim to be the partner of your sorrows, and your tenderest comforter.

Faulk. O Julia! I am bankrupt in gratitude!—Would you not wish some hours to weigh the advantages you forego, and what little compensation poor Faulkland can make you, beside his solitary love?

Jul. I ask not a moment—No, Faulkland, I have loved you for yourself; and if I now, more than ever, prize the solemn engagement which so long has pledged us to each other, it is because it leaves no room for hard aspersions on my fame, and puts the seal of duty to an act of love. But let us not linger—perhaps this delay—

Faulk. 'Twill be better I should not venture out again till dark: yet I am grieved to think what numberless distresses will press heavy on your gentle disposition!

Jul. Perhaps your fortune may be forfeited by this unhappy act? I know not whether 'tis so, but sure that alone can never make us unhappy.—The little I have will be sufficient to support us, and exile never should be splendid.

Faulk. Ay, but in such an abject state of life my wounded pride, perhaps, may increase the natural fretfulness of my temper, till I become a rude morose companion, beyond your patience to endure.

Jul. If your thoughts should assume so unhappy a bent, you will the more want some mild and affectionate spirit to watch over and console you; one who, by bearing your infirmities with gentleness and resignation, may teach you so to bear the evils of your fortune.

Faulk. Julia, I have proved you to the quick! and with this useless device, I throw away all my doubts. How shall I plead to be forgiven this last unworthy effect of my restless, unsatisfied disposition?

Jul. Has no such disaster happened as you related?

Faulk. I am ashamed to own that it was all pretended. Let me to-morrow, in the face of Heaven, receive my future guide and mistress, and expiate my past folly, by years of tender adoration.

Jul. Hold, Faulkland! that you are free from a crime, which I before feared to name, Heaven knows how sincerely I rejoice! These are tears of thankfulness for that! But, that your cruel doubts should have urged you to an imposition that has wrung my heart, gives me now a pang more keen than I can express!

Faulk. By heavens! Julia—

Jul. Yet hear me!—My father loved you, Faulkland! and you preserved the life that tender parent gave me. in his presence I pledged my hand—joyfully pledged it, where before I had given my heart. When, soon after, I lost that parent, it seemed to me that Providence had, in Faulkland, shown me whether to transfer, without a pause, my gratified duty as well as my affection: hence I have been content to bear from you, what pride and delicacy would have forbid me from another. I will not upbraid you by repeating how you have trifled with my sincerity.

Faulk. I confess it all! yet, hear—

Jul. After such a year of trial, I might have flattered myself that I should not have been insulted with a new probation of my sincerity, as cruel as unnecessary! I now see that it is not in your nature to be content, or confident in love. With this conviction I never will be yours.

Faulk. Nay, but Julia, by my soul and honour!—If, after this—

Jul. But one word more. As my faith has once been given to you, I will never barter it with another. I shall pray for your happiness with the truest sincerity; and the dearest blessing I can ask of Heaven to send you, will be to charm you from that unhappy temper which alone has prevented the performance of our solemn engagement. All I request of you is, that you will yourself reflect on this infirmity; and, when you number up the many delights it has deprived you of, let it not be your least regret, that it lost you the love of one who would have followed you in beggary through the world. *[Exit.]*

Faulk. She's gone!—for ever!—There was an awful resolution in her manner that rivetted me to my place. O, fool!—dolt!—barbarian! Cursed as I am, with more imperfections than my fellow wretches, kind fortune sent a heaven-gifted cherub to my aid, and, like a ruffian, I have driven her from my side! I must now hasten to my appointment. Well, my mind is turned for such a scene! I shall wish only to become a principal in it, and reverse the tale my cursed folly put me upon forging here. O love! tormentor! fiend! whose influence, like the moon's, acting on dull souls, makes idiots of them, but meeting subtler spirits, betrays their course, and urges sensibility to madness! *[Exit.]*

Enter Maid and LYDIA.

Maid. My mistress, ma'am, I know, was here just now; perhaps she is only in the next room. *[Exit.]*

Lyd. Heigho! Though he has used me so, this fellow runs strangely in my head. I believe one lecture from my grave cousin will make me recall him.

Enter JULIA.

Oh, Julia, I am come to you with such an appetite for consolation! Lud, child! what's the matter with you! You have been crying!—I'll be hanged if that Faulkland has not been tormenting you!

Jul. You mistake the cause of my uneasiness: something has hurried me a little. Nothing that you can guess at.

Lyd. Ah! whatever vexations you may have, I can assure you mine surpass them. You know who Beverley proves to be?

Jul. I will now own to you, Lydia, that Mr. Faulkland had before informed me of the whole affair.

Lyd. So, then, I see I have been deceived by every one! but I don't care, I'll never have him.

Jul. Nay, Lydia—

Lyd. Why, is it not provoking, when I thought we were coming to the prettiest distress imaginable, to find myself made a mere Smithfield bargain of at last?—There had I planned one of the most sentimental elopements! so becoming a disguise! so amiable a ladder of ropes! conscious moon—four horses—Scotch parson—with such surprise to Mrs. Malaprop! and such paragraphs in the newspapers!—Oh, I shall die with disappointment!

Jul. I don't wonder at it.

Lyd. Now—sad reverse!—what have I to expect, but, after a deal of flimsy preparation, with a bishop's license, and my aunt's blessing, to go simpering up to the altar! or, perhaps, be cried three times in a country church, and have an unmannerly fat clerk ask the consent of every butcher in the parish to join John Absolute and Lydia Languish, spinster.—Oh, that I should live to hear myself called spinster!

Jul. Melancholy, indeed!

Lyd. How mortifying, to remember the dear, delicious shifts I used to be put to, to gain half a minute's conversation with this fellow! How often have I stole forth in the coldest night in January, and found him in the garden, stuck like a dripping statue!—There would he kneel to me in the snow, and sneeze and cough so pathetically!—he shivering with cold, and I with apprehension!—and, while the freezing blast numbed our joints, how warmly would he press me to pity his flame, and glow with mutual ardour!—Ah, Julia, that was something like being in love!

Jul. If I were in spirits, Lydia, I could chide you only by laughing heartily at you; but it suits more the situation of my mind at present earnestly to entreat you, not to let a man, who loves you with sincerity, suffer that unhappiness from your caprice, which I know too well caprice can inflict.

[Mrs. MALAPROP speaks within.]

Lyd. Oh, lud! what has brought my aunt here!

Enter Mrs. MALAPROP and DAVID.

Mrs. M. So! so! here's fine work! here's fine suicide, paracide, and simulation, going on in the fields! and Sir Anthony not to be found to prevent the antistrophe!

Jul. For Heav'n's sake, madam, what is the matter?

Mrs. M. That gentleman can tell you, 'twas he enveloped the affair to me.

Lyd. Oh, patience!—Do, ma'am, for Heaven's sake, tell us what is the matter!

Mrs. M. Why, murder's the matter! slaughter's the matter! killing's the matter! But he can tell you the perpendiculars. *[Pointing to DAVID.]*

Jul. Do speak, my friend. *[To DAVID.]*

Dav. Lookye, my lady—by the mass, there's mischief going on. Folks don't use meet for amusement with fire-arms, fire-locks, fire-engines, fire-screens, fire-office, and the devil knows what other crackers beside!—This, my lady, I say, has an angry favour.

Jul. But who's engaged?

Dav. My poor master—under favour for mentioning him first. You know me, my lady—I am David—and my master of course is, or was, Squire Acres—and Captain Absolute. Then comes Squire Faulkland.

Jul. Do, ma'am, let us instantly endeavour to prevent mischief.

Mrs. M. Oh, fie! it would be very inelegant in us—we should only participate things.

Lyd. Do, my dear aunt, let us hasten to prevent them.

Dav. Ah, do, Mrs. Aunt, save a few lives!—they are desperately given, believe me. Above all, there is that blood-thirsty Philistine, Sir Lucius O'Trigger.

Mrs. M. Sir Lucius O'Trigger!—Oh, mercy! have they drawn poor little dear Sir Lucius into the scrape! [*Aside.*]—Why, how you stand, girl! you have no more feeling than one of the Derbyshire putrefactions!

Lyd. What are we to do, madam?

Mrs. M. Why, fly with the utmost felicity, to be sure, to prevent mischief.—Come, girls, this gentleman will exhort us. Come, sir, you're our envoy, lead the way, and we'll precede. You're sure you know the spot.

Dav. Oh, never fear! and one good thing is, we shall find it out by the report of the pistols.

All the Ladies. The pistols! Oh, let us fly.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*King's Mead-Fields.*

Enter Sir LUCIUS and ACRES, with pistols.

Acres. By my valour, then, Sir Lucius, forty yards is a good distance. Odds levels and aims! I say it is a good distance.

Sir L. It is for muskets, or small field-pieces; upon my conscience, Mr. Acres, you must leave these things to me. Stay now, I'll show you. [*Measures paces along the stage.*] There, now, that is a very pretty distance—a pretty gentleman's distance.

Acres. Z—ds! we might as well fight in a sentry-box! I tell you, Sir Lucius, the farther he is off the cooler I shall take my aim.

Sir L. Faith, then, I suppose you would aim at him best of all if he was out of sight!

Acres. No, Sir Lucius, but I should think forty, or eight-and-thirty yards—

Sir L. Pho! pho! nonsense! three or four feet between the mouths of your pistols is as good as a mile.

Acres. Odds bullets, no! by my valour, there is no merit in killing him so near! Do, my dear Sir Lucius, let me bring him down at a long shot: a long shot, Sir Lucius, if you love me.

Sir L. Well, the gentleman's friend and I must settle that. But tell me now, Mr. Acres, in case of an accident, is there any little will or commission I could execute for you?

Acres. I am much obliged to you, Sir Lucius, but I don't understand—

Sir L. Why, you may think there's no being shot at without a little risk; and, if an unlucky bullet should carry a quietus with it, I say, it will be no time then to be bothering you about family matters.

Acres. A quietus!

Sir L. For instance, now, if that should be the case, would you choose to be pickled and sent home? or would it be the same thing to you to lie here in the Abbey? I'm told there is very snug lying in the Abbey.

Acres. Pickled!—Snug lying in the Abbey!—Odds tremors! Sir Lucius, don't talk so!

Sir L. I suppose, Mr. Acres, you never were engaged in an affair of this kind before?

Acres. No, Sir Lucius, never before.

Sir L. Ah, that's a pity; there's nothing like being used to a thing. Pray, now, how would you receive the gentleman's shot?

Acres. Odds files! I've practised that—there, Sir Lucius, there—[*Put himself into an attitude*]—a side-front, hey! Odd, I'll make myself small enough; I'll stand edgeways.

Sir L. Now, you're quite out; for if you stand so when I take my aim— [*Levelling at him.*]

Acres. Z—ds, Sir Lucius, are you sure it is not cocked?

Sir L. Never fear.

Acres. But—but—you don't know—it may go off, of its own head!

Sir L. Pho! be easy. Well, now, if I hit you in the body, my bullet has a double chance; for if it misses a vital part on your right side, 'twill be very hard if it don't succeed on the left.

Acres. A vital part!

Sir L. But there—fix yourself so—[*Placing him*]—let him see the broadside of your full front—there—now a ball or two may pass clean through your body, and never do you any harm at all.

Acres. Clean through me! a ball or two clean through me!

Sir L. Ay, may they; and it is much the gentlest attitude into the bargain.

Acres. Lookye, Sir Lucius; I'd just as lieve be shot in an awkward posture as a genteel one; so, by my valour! I will stand edgeways.

Sir L. [*Looking at his watch.*] Sure they don't mean to disappoint us—hah!—no faith—I think I see them coming.

Acres. Hey!—what!—coming!

Sir L. Ay, who are those coming yonder, getting over the stile?

Acres. There are two of them, indeed!—well, let them come—hey, Sir Lucius!—we—we—we—we—won't run!

Sir L. Run!

Acres. No, I say—we won't run, by my valour! Sir L. What the devil's the matter with you?

Acres. Nothing, nothing, my dear friend—my dear Sir Lucius—but I—I—I don't feel quite so bold somehow as I did.

Sir L. O fie! consider your honour.

Acres. Ay, true—my honour—do, Sir Lucius, edge in a word or two, every now and then, about my honour.

Sir L. Well, here they're coming. [*Looking.*]

Acres. Sir Lucius, if I wasn't with you I should almost think I was afraid—if my valour should leave me! valour will come and go.

Sir L. Then pray keep it fast while you have it.

Acres. Sir Lucius—I doubt it is going—yes, my valour is certainly going! it is sneaking off!—I feel it oozing out, as it were, at the palms of my hands!

Sir L. Your honour—your honour—Here they are.

Acres. Oh, that I was safe at Clod Hall! or could be shot before I was aware!

Enter FAULKLAND and Captain ABSOLUTE.

Sir L. Gentlemen, your most obedient—hah!—what, Captain Absolute! So, I suppose, sir, you are come here, just like myself—to do a kind office, first for your friend, then to proceed to business on your own account?

Acres. What, Jack!—my dear Jack!—my dear friend!

Capt. A. Harkye, Bob, Beverley's at hand.

Sir L. Well, Mr. Acres—I don't blame your

saluting the gentleman civilly. So, Mr. Beverley, [To FAULKLAND] if you will choose your weapons, the captain and I will measure the ground.

Faulk. My weapons, sir!

Acres. Odds life! Sir Lucius, I'm not going to fight Mr. Faulkland; these are my particular friends!

Sir L. What, sir, did you not come here to fight Mr. Acres?

Faulk. Not I, upon my word, sir!

Sir L. Well, now, that's mighty provoking! But I hope, Mr. Faulkland, as there are three of us come on purpose for the game—you won't be so cantankerous as to spoil the party, by sitting out.

Capt. A. Oh pray, Faulkland, fight to oblige Sir Lucius.

Faulk. Nay, if Mr. Acres is so bent on the matter.

Acres. No, no, Mr. Faulkland; I'll bear my disappointment like a Christian. Lookye, Sir Lucius, there's no occasion at all for me to fight; and if it is the same to you, I'd as lieve let it alone.

Sir L. Observe me, Mr. Acres—I must not be trifled with. You have certainly challenged somebody, and you came here to fight him. Now if that gentleman is willing to represent him, I can't see, for my soul, why it isn't just the same thing.

Acres. Why, no, Sir Lucius, I tell you, 'tis one Beverley I've challenged—a fellow, you see, that dare not show his face! If he were here, I'd make him give up his pretensions directly!

Capt. A. Hold, Bob—let me set you right—there is no such man as Beverley in the case. The person who assumed that name is before you; and as his pretensions are the same in both characters, he is ready to support them in whatever way you please.

Sir L. Well, this is lucky. Now you have an opportunity—

Acres. What, quarrel with my dear friend, Jack Absolute!—not if he were fifty Beverleys! Z—ds! Sir Lucius, you would not have me so unnatural!

Sir L. Upon my conscience, Mr. Acres, your valour has oozed away with a vengeance!

Acres. Not in the least! odds backs and abettors! I'll be your second with all my heart—and if you should get a quietus, you may command me entirely. I'll get you snug lying in the Abbey here; or pickle you, and send you over to Blunde-buss Hall, or any thing of the kind, with the greatest pleasure.

Sir L. Pho! pho! you are little better than a coward.

Acres. Mind, gentlemen, he calls me a coward; coward was the word, by my valour!

Sir L. Well, sir?

Acres. Lookye, Sir Lucius, 'tisn't that I mind the word coward—Coward may be said in a j. ke—But if you had called me a poltroon, odds daggers and balls—

Sir L. Well, sir?

Acres. I should have thought you a very ill-bred man.

Sir L. Pho! you are beneath my notice.

Capt. A. Nay, Sir Lucius, you can't have a better second than my friend Acres. He is a most determined dog—called in the country, fighting Bob. He generally kills a man a week—don't you, Bob?

Sir L. Well, then, captain, 'tis we must begin—so come out, my little counsellor [*Draws his sword*], and ask the gentleman, whether he will resign

the lady without forcing you to proceed against him?

Capt. A. Come on then, sir, [*Draws*] since you won't let it be an amicable suit, here's my reply.

Enter Sir ANTHONY, DAVID, and the Ladies.

Dav. Knock 'em all down, sweet Sir Anthony; knock down my master in particular—and bind his hands over to their good behaviour.

Sir Anth. Put up, Jack, put up, or I shall be in a frenzy—how came you in a duel, sir?

Capt. A. 'Faith, sir, that gentleman can tell you better than I; 'twas he called on me, and you know, sir, I serve his majesty.

Sir Anth. Here's a pretty fellow! I catch him going to cut a man's throat, and he tells me he serves his majesty! Z—ds! sirrah, then how durst you draw the king's sword against one of his subjects?

Capt. A. Sir, I tell you, that gentleman called me out, without explaining his reasons.

Sir Anth. 'Gad, sir! how came you to call my son out, without explaining your reasons?

Sir L. Your son, sir, insulted me in a manner which my honour could not brook.

Sir Anth. Z—ds, Jack! how durst you insult the gentleman in a manner which his honour could not brook?

Mrs. M. Come, come, let's have no honour before ladies—Captain Absolute, come here—How could you intimate us so? Here's Lydia has been terrified to death for you.

Capt. A. For fear I should be killed, or escape, ma'am?

Mrs. M. Nay, no delusions to the past—Lydia is convinced: speak, child.

Sir L. With your leave, ma'am, I must put in a word here. I believe I could interpret the young lady's silence. Now mark—

Lyd. What is it you mean, sir?

Sir L. Come, come, Dalia, we must be serious now; this is no time for trifling.

Lyd. 'Tis true, sir; and your reproof bids me offer this gentleman my hand, and solicit the return of his affections.

Capt. A. Oh, my little angel, say you so? Si Lucius, I perceive there must be some mistake here. With regard to the affront which you affirm I have given you, I can only say that it could not have been intentional; and as you must be convinced, that I should not fear to support a real injury, you shall now see that I am not ashamed to atone for an inadvertency—I ask your pardon. But for this lady, while honoured with her approbation, I will support my claim against any man whatever.

Sir Anth. Well said, Jack; and I'll stand by you, my boy.

Acres. Mind, I give up all my claim—I make no pretensions to any thing in the world; and if I can't get a wife without fighting for her, by my valour! I'll live a bachelor.

Sir L. Captain, give me your hand—an affront handsomely acknowledged becomes an obligation; and as for the lady, if she chooses to deny her own hand-writing, here— [*Takes out letters*].

Mrs. M. Oh, he will dissolve my mystery! Sir Lucius, perhaps there is some mistake. Perhaps I can illuminate—

Sir L. Pray, old gentlewoman, don't interfere

where you have no business. Miss Languish, are you my Dalia, or not?

Lyd. Indeed, Sir Lucius, I am not!

[*LYDIA and ABSOLUTE walk aside.*]

Mrs. M. Sir Lucius O'Trigger—ungrateful as you are—I own the soft impeachment—pardon my camelion blushes, I am Delia.

Sir L. You Dalia!—pho! pho! be asy.

Mrs. M. Why, thou barbarous Vandyke—those letters are mine. When you are more sensible of my benignity, perhaps I may be brought to encourage your addresses.

Sir L. Mrs. Malaprop, I am extremely sensible of your condescension: and whether you or Lucy have put this trick upon me, I am equally beholden to you. And to show you I am not ungrateful, Captain Absolute, since you have taken that lady from me, I'll give you my Dalia into the bargain.

Capt. A. I am much obliged to you, Sir Lucius; but here's my friend, fighting Bob, unprovided for.

Sir L. Hah! little valour—here, will you make your fortune!

Acres. Odds wrinkles! No.—But give me your hand, Sir Lucius; forget and forgive: but if ever I give you a chance of pickling me again, say Bob Acres is a dunce, that's all.

Sir Anth. Come, Mrs. Malaprop, don't be cast down—you are in your bloom yet.

Mrs. M. O, Sir Anthony! men are all barbarians!

[*All retire but JULIA and FAULKLAND.*]

Jul. He seems dejected and unhappy—not sullen:—there was some foundation, however, for the tale he told me—O woman! how true should be your judgment, when your resolution is so weak!

Faulk. Julia!—how can I sue for what I so little deserve? I dare not presume—yet hope is the child of penitence.

Jul. Oh! Faulkland, you have not been more faulty in your unkind treatment of me, than I am now in wanting inclination to resent it. As my heart honestly bids me place my weakness to the account of love, I should be ungenerous not to admit the same plea for yours.

[*Sir ANTHONY comes forward between them.*]

Faulk. Now I shall be blest, indeed.

Sir Anth. What's going on here?—So you have

been quarrelling too, I warrant.—Come, Julia, I never interfered before; but let me have a hand in the matter at last.—All the faults I have ever seen in my friend Faulkland, seemed to proceed from what he calls the delicacy and warmth of his affection for you.—There, marry him directly, Julia; you'll find he'll mend surprisingly.

[*The rest of the characters come forward.*]

Sir L. Come now, I hope there is no dissatisfied person but what is content; for as I have been disappointed myself, it will be very hard if I have not the satisfaction of seeing other people succeed better.

Acres. You are right, Sir Lucius—So, Jack, I wish you joy.—Mr. Faulkland the same.—Ladies,—come now, to show you I'm neither vexed nor angry, odds tabors and pipes! I'll order the fiddles in half an hour to the New Rooms—and I insist on your all meeting me there.

Sir A. 'Gad! sir, I like your spirit; and at night we single lads will drink a health to the young couples, and a good husband to Mrs. Malaprop.

Faulk. Our partners are stolen from us, Jack—I hope to be congratulated by each other—yours for having checked in time the errors of an ill-directed imagination, which might have betrayed an innocent heart; and mine for having by her gentleness and candour reformed the unhappy temper of one, who by it made wretched whom he loved most, and tortured the heart he ought to have adored.

Capt. A. True, Faulkland, we have both tasted the bitters, as well as the sweets, of love—with this difference only, that you always prepared the bitter cup for yourself, while I—

Lyd. Was always obliged to me for it, hey, Mr. Modesty?—But come, no more of that—our happiness is now as unalloyed as general.

Jul. Then let us study to preserve it so; and while hope pictures to us a flattering scene of future bliss, let us deny its pencil those colours which are too bright to be lasting.—When hearts deserving happiness would unite their fortunes, virtue would crown them with an unfading garland of modest, hurtless flowers; but ill-judging passion will force the gaudier rose into the wreath, whose thorn offends them when its leaves are dropt!

A TRIP TO SCARBOROUGH.

A COMEDY.

BY RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN,

Author of "The School for Scandal," &c.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

LORD FOPPINGTON.
SIR TUNBELLY CLUMSY.
COLONEL TOWNLY
YOUNG FASHION.
LOVELESS.
PROBE.
LORY.
LA VAROLE.
Postilion, Servants, &c.

AMANDA.
BERINTHIA.
MISS HOYDEN.
Nurse.
MRS COUPLER.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Room in an Inn.

Enter YOUNG FASHION and LORY, Postilion following with a portmanteau.

Young F. Lory, pay the post-boy, and take the portmanteau.

Lory. Faith, sir, we had better let the post-boy take the portmanteau and pay himself.

Young F. Why, sure there's something left in it.

Lory. Not a rag, upon my honour, sir—we eat the last of your wardrobe at New Malton—and, if we had twenty miles farther to go, our next meal must have been of the cloak-bag.

Young F. Why, 'sdeath! it appears full.

Lory. Yes, sir; I made bold to stuff it with hay, to save appearances, and look like baggage.

Young F. What the devil shall I do?—harkee, boy, what's the chaise?

Pos. Thirteen shillings, please your honour.

Young F. Can you give me change for a guinea?

Pos. O yes, sir.

Lory. Soh, what will he do now?—Lord, sir, you had better let the boy be paid below.

Young F. Why, as you say, Lory, I believe it will be as well.

Lory. Yes, yes; I'll tell them to discharge you below, honest friend.

Pos. Please your honour, there are the turnpikes, too.

Young F. Ay, ay, the turnpikes, by all means.

Pos. And I hope your honour will order me something for myself.

Young F. To be sure; bid them give you a crown.

Lory. Yes, yes—my master doesn't care what you charge them—so get along, you—

Pos. And there's the ostler, your honour.

Lory. Psha! damn the ostler—would you impose upon the gentleman's generosity? [*Pushes him out.*] A rascal, to be so cursed ready with his change!

Young F. Why, faith! Lory, he had nearly pos'd me.

Lory. Well, sir, we are arrived at Scarborough, not worth a guinea. I hope you'll own yourself a happy man—you have outlived all your cares.

Young F. How so, sir!

Lory. Why, you have nothing left to take care of.

Young F. Yes, sirrah, I have myself and you to take care of still.

Lory. Sir, if you could prevail with somebody else to do that for you, I fancy we might both fare the better for it. But now, sir, for my Lord Foppington, your elder brother.

Young F. Damn my eldest brother.

Lory. With all my heart; but get him to redeem your annuity, however. Look you, sir, you must wheedle him, or you must starve.

Young F. Look you, sir, I will neither wheedle him nor starve.

Lory. Why, what will you do, then?

Young F. Cut his throat, or get some one to do it for me.

Lory. 'Gad so, sir, I'm glad to find I was not so well acquainted with the strength of your conscience as with the weakness of your purse.

Young F. Why, art thou so impenetrable a blockhead as to believe he'll help me to a farthing!

Lory. Not if you treat him *de haut en bas*, as you used to do.

Young F. Why, how wouldst thou have me treat him?

Lory. Like a trout—tickle him.

Young F. I can't flatter.

Lory. Can you starve?

Young F. Yes.

Lory. I can't—good by t'ye, sir.

Young F. Stay—thou'lt distract me. But who comes here—my old friend, Colonel Townly.

Enter Colonel Townly.

My dear colonel, I am rejoiced to meet you here.

Col. T. Dear Tom, this is an unexpected pleasure—what, are you come to Scarborough to be present at your brother's wedding?

Lory. Ah, sir, if it had been his funeral, we should have come with pleasure.

Col. T. What, honest Lory, are you with your master still?

Lory. Yes, sir, I have been starving with him ever since I saw your honour last.

Young F. Why, Lory is an attached rogue—there's no getting rid of him.

Lory. True, sir, as my master says, there's no seducing me from his service—till he's able to pay me my wages.

[Aside.]

Young F. Go, go, sir—and take care of the baggage.

Lory. Yes, sir—the baggage! O Lord! [Takes up the portmanteau.] I suppose, sir, I must charge the landlord to be very particular where he stows this?

Young F. Get along, you rascal. [Exit Lory with the portmanteau.] But, colonel, are you acquainted with my proposed sister-in-law?

Col. T. Only by character—her father, Sir Tunbelly Clumsy, lives within a quarter of a mile of this place, in a lonely old house, which nobody comes near. She never goes abroad, nor sees company at home; to prevent all misfortunes, she has her breeding within doors; the parson of the parish teaches her to play upon the dulcimer, the clerk to sing, her nurse to dress, and her father to dance;—in short, nobody has free admission there but our old acquaintance, Mother Coupler, who has procured your brother this match, and is, I believe, a distant relation of Sir Tunbelly's.

Young F. But is her fortune so considerable?

Col. T. Three thousand a year, and a good sum of money independent of her father, beside.

Young F. 'Sdeath! that my old acquaintance, Dame Coupler, could not have thought of me, as well as my brother, for such a prize.

Col. T. Egad, I wouldn't swear that you are too late—his lordship, I know, hasn't yet seen the lady—and, I believe, has quarrelled with his patroness.

Young F. My dear colonel, what an idea have you started?

Col. T. Pursue it if you can, and I promise you you shall have my assistance; for beside my natural contempt for his lordship, I have at present the enmity of a rival towards him.

Young F. What, has he been addressing your old flame, the widow Berinthia?

Col. T. Faith, Tom, I am at present most whimsically circumstanced. I came here a month ago to meet the lady you mention; but, she failing in her promise, I, partly from pique, and partly from idleness, have been diverting my chagrin by offering up incense to the beauties of Amanda, our friend Loveless's wife.

Young F. I never have seen her, but have heard her spoken of as a youthful wonder of beauty and prudence.

Col. T. She is so, indeed; and Loveless being too careless and insensible of the treasure he possesses—my lodging in the same house has given me a thousand opportunities of making my assiduities acceptable: so that in less than a fortnight, I began to bear my disappointment from the widow with the most Christian resignation.

Young F. And Berinthia has never appeared?

Col. T. Oh, there's the perplexity; for just as I began not to care whether I ever saw her again or not, last night she arrived.

Young F. And instantly resumed her empire?

Col. T. No, faith—we met—but, the lady not condescending to give me any serious reasons for having fool'd me for a month, I left her in a huff.

Young F. Well, well, I'll answer for it she'll soon resume her power, especially as friendship will prevent your pursuing the other too far—But my coxcomb of a brother is an admirer of Amanda, too, is he?

Col. T. Yes, and, I believe, is most heartily displeased by her—but come with me, and you shall see her and your old friend Loveless.

Young F. I must pay my respects to his lordship—perhaps you can direct me to his lodging.

Col. T. Come with me; I shall pass by it.

Young F. I wish you could pay this visit for me, or could tell me what I should say to him.

Col. T. Say nothing to him—apply yourself to his bag, his sword, his feather, his snuff-box; and when you are well with him, desire him to lend you a thousand pounds, and I'll engage you prosper.

Young F. 'Sdeath and furies! Why was that coxcomb thrust into the world before me? O fortune, fortune, thou art a jilt, by Gad! [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—A Dressing-room.

Enter Lord FOPPINGTON, in his dressing-gown, and LA VAROLE.

Lord F. Well, 'tis an unspeakable pleasure to be a man of quality—strike me dumb—even the boors of this northern spa have learned the respect due to a title. [Aside.] La Varole!

La Var. Mi lor—

Lord F. You ha'n't yet been at Muddymoat-hall, to announce my arrival, have you?

La Var. Not yet, mi lor.

Lord F. Then you need not go till Saturday. [Exit LA VAROLE.] As I am in no particular haste to view my intended sposa, I shall sacrifice a day or two more to the pursuit of my friend Loveless's wife.—Amanda is a charming creature—strike me ugly: and if I have any discernment in the world, she thinks no less of my Lord Foppington.

Re-enter LA VAROLE.

La Var. Mi lor, de shoemaker, de tailor, de hosier, de sempstress, de peru, be all ready, if your lordship please to dress.

Lord F. 'Tis well; admit them.

La Var. Hey, messieurs, entrez.

Enter Tailor, Shoemaker, &c., and stand.—Servants stand about the dressing-table.

Lord F. So, gentlemen, I hope you have all taken pains to show yourselves masters in your professions.

Tai. I think I may presume, sir—

La Var. My lor, you clown, you.

Tai. My lord, I ask your lordship's pardon, my

lord. I hope, my lord, your lordship will be pleased to own I have brought your lordship as accomplished a suit of clothes as ever per of England wore, my lord; will your lordship please to view 'em now?

Lord F. Ay; but let my people dispose the glasses so that I may see myself before and behind; for I love to see myself all round.

[*Servants place around him several large glasses.*]

Whilst he puts on his coat, enter YOUNG FASHION and LORY.

Young F. Hey-day! what the devil have we here?—Sure my gentleman's grown a favourite at court, he has got so many people at his levee.

[*Apart.*]

Lory. Sir, these people come in order to make him a favourite at court—they are to establish him with the ladies.

[*Apart.*]

Young F. Good heaven! to what an ebb of taste are women fallen, that it should be in the power of a laced coat to recommend a gallant to them!

[*Apart.*]

Lory. Sir, tailors and hair-dressers debauch all the women.

[*Apart.*]

Young F. Thou say'st true.—But now for my reception.

[*Apart.*]

Lord F. [*To Tailor.*] Death and eternal tortures! Sir—I say the coat is too wide here by a foot.

Tai. My lord, if it had been tighter, 'twould neither have looked nor buttoned.

Lord F. Rat the hooks and buttons, sir! Can any thing be worse than this? As Gad shall jedge me, it hangs on my shoulders like a chairman's sirtout.

Tai. 'Tis not for me to dispute your lordship's fancy.

Lory. There, sir, observe what respect does.

[*Apart.*]

Young F. Respect! D—n him for a coxcomb—but let's accost him. [*Apart.*] Brother, I'm your humble servant.

Lord F. O Lard, Tam, I did not expect you in England—brother, I'm glad to see you—but what has brought you to Scarborough, Tam?—Look you sir, [*to the Tailor*] I shall never be reconciled to this nauseous wrapping-gown; therefore pray get me another suit with all possible expedition; for this is my eternal aversion. [*Exit Tailor.*] Well, but Tam, you don't tell me what has driven you to Scarborough.—Mrs. Calico, are not you of my mind?

Sem. Directly, my lord.—I hope your lordship is pleased with your ruffles?

Lord F. [*Sits.*] In love with them, stab my vitals. Bring me my bill; you shall be paid to-morrow.

Sem. I humbly thank your lordship. [*Exit.*]

Lord F. Hark thee, shoemaker, these shoes a'n't ugly, but they don't fit me.

Shoe. My lord, I think they fit you very well.

Lord F. They hurt me just below the instep.

Shoe. [*Kneels, and feels his foot.*] No, my lord, they don't hurt you there.

Lord F. I tell thee, they pinch me execrably.

Shoe. [*Rising.*] Why, then, my lord, if those shoes pinch you, I'll be d—d.

Lord F. Why, wilt thou undertake to persuade me I cannot feel?

Shoe. Your lordship may please to feel what you think fit, but that shoe does not hurt you. I think I understand my trade.

Lord F. Now, by all that's good and powerful,

thou art an incompre-hensive coxcomb—but thou makest good shoes, and so I'll bear with thee.

Shoe. My lord, I have worked for half the people of quality in this town these twenty years, and 'tis very hard I shouldn't know when a shoe hurts and when it don't.

Lord F. Well, prithee begone about thy business. [*Exit Shoemaker.*] Mr. Mendlegs, a word with you. The calves of these stockings are thickened a little too much; they make my legs look like a porter's.

Men. My lord, methinks they look mighty well.

Lord F. Ay; but you are not so good a judge of those things as I am—I have studied them all my life—therefore, pray let the next be the thickness of a crown-piece less.

Men. Indeed, my lord, they are the same kind I had the honour to furnish your lordship with in town.

Lord F. Very possibly, Mr. Mendlegs: but that was in the beginning of the winter, and you should always remember, Mr. Hosier, that, if you make a nobleman's spring-legs as robust as his autumnal calves, you commit a monstrous impropriety, and make no allowance for the fatigues of the winter.

[*Rises—exit Hosier.*]

Jew. I hope, my lord, those buckle have had the unspeakable satisfaction of being honoured with your lordship's approbation?

Lord F. Why, they are of a pretty fancy; but don't you think them rather of the smallest?

Jew. My lord, they could not well be larger, to keep on your lordship's shoe.

Lord F. My good sir, you forget that these matters are not as they used to be; formerly, indeed, the buckle was a sort of machine, intended to keep on the shoe; but the case is now quite reversed, and the shoe is of no earthly use, but to keep on the buckle. Now give me my watches [*Servant fetches the watches*], my chapeau [*Servant brings a dress hat*], my handkerchief [*Servant pours some scented liquid on a handkerchief, and brings it*], my snuff-box [*Servant brings snuff-box*]: there, now the business of the morning is pretty well over.

[*Exit Jeweller.*]

Young F. Well, Lory, what don't think on't? a very friendly reception from a brother, after three years' absence!

[*Apart.*]

Lory. Why, sir, 'tis your own fault—here you have stood ever since you came in, and have not commended any one thing that belongs to him.

[*Apart.*]

Young F. [*Servants all go off*] Nor ever shall, while they belong to a coxcomb. [*Apart.*] Now your people of business are gone, brother, I hope I may obtain a quarter of an hour's audience of you.

Lord F. Faith, Tam, I must beg you'll excuse me at this time, for I have an engagement which I would not break for the salvation of mankind. Hey! the-e is my carriage at the door? You'll excuse me, brother.

Young F. Shall you be back to dinner?

Lord F. As Gad shall jedge me, I can't tell; for it is possible I may dine with some friends at Donner's.

Young F. Shall I meet you there? for I must needs talk with you.

Lord F. That I'm afraid mayn't be quite so proper; for those I commonly eat with are a people of nice conversation; and you know, Tam, your education has been a little at large—but there are

other ordinaries in town—very good beef ordinaries—I suppose, Tam, you can eat beef? However, dear Tam, I'm glad to see thee in England, stab my vitals! [Exit.]

Young F. Hell and furies! is this to be borne? Lory. Faith, sir, I could almost have given him a knock o' the pate myself.

Young F. 'Tis enough; I will now show you the excess of my passion, by being very calm. Come, Lory, lay your loggerhead to mine, and, in cold blood, let us contrive his destruction.

Lory. Here comes a head, sir, would contrive it better than both our loggerheads, if she would but join the confederacy.

Young F. By this light, Madame Coupler—she seems dissatisfied at something; let us observe her. [Theu retire.]

Enter Mrs. COUPLER.

Mrs. C. So! I am likely to be well rewarded for my services, truly; my suspicions, I find, were but too just.—What! I refuse to advance me a petty sum, when I am upon the point of making him master of a galleon! But let him look to the consequences, an ungrateful, narrow-minded coxcomb.

Young F. So he is, upon my soul, old lady; it must be my brother you speak of.

Mrs. C. Ha! stripling, how came you here? What'st hast spent all, eh? And art thou come to dun his lordship for assistance?

Young F. No; I want somebody's assistance to cut his lordship's throat, without the risk of being hanged for him.

Mrs. C. Egad! sirrah, I could help thee to do him almost as good a turn, without the danger of being burned in the hand for't.

Young F. How—how, old Mischief?

Mrs. C. Why, you must know I have done you the kindness to make up a match for your brother.

Young F. I'm very much beholden to you, truly!

Mrs. C. You may, before the wedding-day, yet: the lady is a great heiress, the match is concluded, the writings are drawn, and his lordship is come hither to put the finishing hand to the business.

Young F. I understand as much.

Mrs. C. Now, you must know, stripling, your brother's a knave.

Young F. Good.

Mrs. C. He has given me a bond of a thousand pounds for helping him to this fortune, and has promised me as much more, in ready money, upon the day of the marriage; which, I understand by a friend, he never designs to pay me; and his just now refusing to pay me a part is a proof of it. If, therefore, you will be a generous young rogue, and secure me five thousand pounds, I'll help you to the lady.

Young F. And how the devil wilt thou do that?

Mrs. C. Without the devil's aid, I warrant thee. Thy brother's face not one of the family ever saw: the whole business has been managed by me, and all his letters go through my hands. Sir Tumbelly Clumsey, my relation—for that's the old gentleman's name—is apprized of his lordship's being down here, and expects him to-morrow to receive his daughter's hand; but the peer, I find, means to bait here a few days longer,—to recover the fatigue of his journey, I suppose. Now you shall go to Muddymoor Hall in his place—I'll give you a letter of introduction: and, if you don't marry

the girl before sunset, you deserve to be hanged before morning.

Young F. Agreed, agreed; and for thy reward—

Mrs. C. Well, well;—though I warrant thou hast not a farthing of money in thy pocket now—one may see it in thy face.

Young F. Not a souse, by Jupiter.

Mrs. C. Must I advance, then? Well, be at my lodgings, next door, this evening, and I'll see what may be done—we'll sign and seal, and, when I have given thee some further instructions, thou shalt hoist sail and begone. [Exit.]

Young F. So, Lory, fortune, thou seest, at last takes care of merit: we are in a fair way to be great people.

Lory. Ay, sir, if the devil don't step between the cup and the lip, as he used to do.

Young F. Why, faith! he has played me many a damned trick to spoil my fortune; and, egad! I am almost afraid he's at work about it again now; but if I should tell thee how, thou'dst wonder at me.

Lory. Indeed, sir, I should not.

Young F. How dost know?

Lory. Because, sir, I have wondered at you so often, I can wonder at you no more.

Young F. No!—What would'st thou say, if a qualm of conscience should spoil my design?

Lory. I would eat my words, and wonder more than ever.

Young F. Why, faith! Lory, though I have played many a roguish trick, this is so full-grown a cheat, I find I must take pains to come up to't—I have scruples.

Lory. They are strong symptoms of death. If you find they increase, sir, pray nake up your will.

Young F. No, my conscience shan't starve me, neither; but thus far I'll listen to it. Before I execute this project, I'll try my br-ther to the bottom. If he has yet so much humanity about him as to assist me—though with a moderate aid—I'll drop my project at his feet, and show him how I can do for him much more than what I'd ask he'd do for me. This one conclusive trial of him I resolve to make:

Succeed or fail, still vict'ry is my lot:

If I subdue his heart, 'tis well—if not,

I will subdue my conscience to my plot.

[Exit.]

SCENE III.—A Drawing-room.

Enter LOVELESS and AMANDA.

Lov. How do you like these lodgings, my dear? For my part, I am so pleased with them, I shall hardly remove whilst we stay here, if you are satisfied.

Ama. I am satisfied with every thing that pleases you; else I had not come to Scarborough at all.

Lov. O! a little of the noise and folly of this place will sweeten the pleasures of our retreat; we shall find the charms of our retirement doubled when we return to it.

Ama. That pleasing prospect will be my chiefest entertainment, whilst, much against my will, I engage in those empty pleasures which 'tis so much the fashion to be fond of.

Lov. I own most of them are, indeed, but empty;

yet there are delights of which a private life is destitute, which may divert an honest man, and be a harmless entertainment to a virtuous woman: good music is one; and truly (with some small allowance) the plays, I think, may be esteemed another.

Ama. Plays, I must confess, have some small charms. What do you think of that you saw last night?

Lov. To say truth, I did not mind it much—my attention was for some time taken off to admire the workmanship of nature, in the face of a young lady who sat some distance from me; she was so exquisitely handsome.

Ama. So exquisitely handsome!

Lov. Why do you repeat my words, my dear?

Ama. Because you seem'd to speak them with such pleasure; I thought I might oblige you with their echo.

Lov. Then you are alarmed, Amanda?

Ama. It is my duty to be so when you are in danger.

Lov. You are too quick in apprehending for me. I viewed her with a world of admiration, but not one glance of love.

Ama. Take heed of trusting to such nice distinctions. But were your eyes the only things that were inquisitive? Had I been in your place, my tongue, I fancy, had been curious too. I should have asked her where she lived—yet still without design—who was she, pray?

Lov. Indeed I cannot tell.

Ama. You will not tell.

Lov. Upon my honour, then, I did not ask.

Ama. Nor do you know what company was with her?

Lov. I do not. But why are you so earnest?

Ama. I thought I had cause.

Lov. But you thought wrong, Amanda; for turn the case, and let it be your story: should you come home, and tell me you had seen a handsome man, should I grow jealous because you had eyes?

Ama. But, should I tell you he was exquisitely so, and that I had gazed on him with admiration, should you not think 'twere possible I might go one step further, and inquire his name?

Lov. She has reason on her side; I have talked too much; but I must turn off another way. [*Aside.*] Will you, then, make no difference, Amanda, between the language of our sex and yours? There is a modesty restrains your tongues, which makes you speak by halves when you commend; but roving flattery gives a loose to ours, which makes us still speak double what we think.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Madam, there is a lady at the door in a chair desires to know whether your ladyship sees company? Her name is Berinthia.

Ama. Oh, dear! 'tis a relation I have not seen these five years; pray her walk in. [*Exit Servant.*] Here's another beauty for you; she was, when I saw her last, reckoned extremely handsome.

Lov. Don't be jealous now; for I shall gaze upon her too.

Enter BERINTHIA.

Ha! by heavens, the very woman!

[*Aside.*]

Ber. Dear Amanda, I did not expect to meet you in Scarborough.

Ama. Sweet cousin, I'm overjoyed to see you.—

ACT, DRAMA—NO. IX.

Mr. Loveless, here's a relation and a friend of mine, I desire you'll be better acquainted with.

Lov. If my wife never desires a harder thing, madam, her request will be easily granted.

Re-enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, my Lord Foppington presents his humble service to you, and desires to know how you do. He's at the next door; and, if it be not inconvenient to you, he'll come and wait upon you.

Lov. Give my compliments to his lordship, and I shall be glad to see him. [*Exit Servant.*] If you are not acquainted with his lordship, madam, you will be entertained with his character.

Ama. Now it moves my pity more than my mirth to see a man, whom nature has made no fool, be so very industrious to pass for an ass.

Lov. No, there you are wrong, Amanda: you should never bestow your pity upon those who take pains for your contempt; pity those whom nature abuses, never those who abuse nature.

Enter Lord FOPPINGTON.

Lord F. Dear Loveless, I am your most humble servant.

Lov. My lord, I'm yours.

Lord F. Madam, your ladyship's very obedient slave.

Lov. My lord, this lady is a relation of my wife's.

Lord F. [*Kisses her hand.*] The beautifullest race of people upon earth, rat me. Dear Loveless, I am overjoyed that you think of continuing here. I am, stap my vitals. For Gad's sake, madam, how has your ladyship been able to subsist thus long, under the fatigue of a country life? [*To AMANDA.*]

Ama. My life has been very far from that, my lord,—it has been a very quiet one.

Lord F. Why, that's the fatigue I speak of, madam; for 'tis impossible to be quiet without thinking: now thinking is to me the greatest fatigue in the world.

Ama. Does not your lordship love reading, then?

Lord F. Oh, passionately, madam; but I never think of what I read. For example, madam, my life is a perpetual stream of pleasure, that glides through with such a variety of entertainments, I believe the wisest of our ancestors never had the least conception of any of 'em. I rise, madam, when in tawn, about twelve o'clock. I don't rise sooner, because it is the worst thing in the world for the complexion: nat that I pretend to be a beau; but a man must endeavour to look decent, lest he makes so odious a figure in the side-bax, the ladies should be compelled to turn their eyes upon the play. So, at twelve o'clock, I say, I rise. Now, if I find it is a good day, I resolve to take the exercise of riding; so drink my chocolate, and draw on my boots, by two. On my return, I dress; and, after dinner, lounge, perhaps, to the Opera.

Ber. Your lordship, I suppose, is fond of music?

Lord F. Oh, passionately! on Tuesdays and Saturdays; for then there is always the best company, and one is not expected to undergo the fatigue of listening.

Ama. Does your lordship think that the case at the Opera?

Lord F. Most certainly, madam. There is my Lady Tattle, my Lady Prate, my Lady Titter, my Lady Sneer, my Lady Giggle, and my Lady Gripe—

K

these have boxes in the front, and, while any favourite air is singing, are the prettiest company in the wauld, stap my vitals! Mayn't we hope for the honour to see you added to our society, madam?

Ama. Alas! my lord, I am the worst company in the world at a concert; I'm so apt to attend to the music.

Lord F. Why, madam, that is very pardonable in the country or at church, but a monstrous inattention in a polite assembly. But I am afraid I tire the company.

Lov. Not at all. Pray go on.

Lord F. Why, then, ladies, there only remains to add, that I generally conclude the evening at one or other of the clubs; nat that I ever play deep; indeed, I have been tied up for some time from losing above five thousand pounds at a sitting.

Lov. But isn't your lordship sometimes obliged to attend to the weighty affairs of the nation?

Lord F. Sir, as to weighty affairs, I leave them to weighty heads; I never intend mine shall be a burden to my body.

Ber. Nay, my lord, but you are a pillar of the state.

Lord F. An ornamental pillar, madam; for, sooner than undergo any part of the fatigue, rat me, but the whole building should fall plump to the ground.

Ama. But, my lord, a fine gentleman spends a great deal of his time in his intrigues; you have given us no account of them yet.

Lord F. Soh! She would inquire into my amours—that's jealousy, poor soul! I see she's in love with me. [*Aside.*] Oh Lord! madam, I like to have forgot a secret I must needs tell your ladyship.—Ned, you must not be so jealous now as to listen.

Lov. [*Leading BERINTIA up the stage.*] Not I, my lord,—I am too fashionable a husband to pry into the secrets of my wife.

Lord F. [*Squeezing AMANDA's hand.*] I am in love with you to desperation, strike me speechless!

[*Apert.*]

Ama. [*Strikes him on the ear.*] Then thus I return your passion, impudent fool!

Lord F. Gad's curse! madam, I am a peer of the realm.

Lov. [*Hastily returning.*] Hey! what the devil, do you affront my wife? Nay, then—

[*Draws.—They fight.*]

Ama. What has my folly done? Help! murder! help! Part them, for Heaven's sake!

Lord F. [*Falls back, and leans on his sword.*] Ah! quite through my body, stap my vitals!

Enter Servants.

Lov. [*Runs to Lord FOPPINGTON.*] I hope I ha'n't killed the fool, however. Bear him up—Call a surgeon, there.

Lord F. Ay, pray make haste.

[*They set him in a chair.*]

Lov. This mischief you may thank yourself for.

Lord F. I may so; love's the devil indeed, Ned.

Enter PROBE and Servant.

Serv. Here's Mr. Probe, sir, was just going by the door.

Lord F. He's the welcomest man alive.

Probe. Stand by, stand by, stand by; pray, gentlemen, stand by. Lord have mercy upon us, did

you never see a man run through the body before?—Pray stand by.

Lord F. Ah, Mr. Probe, I'm a dead man.

Probe. A dead man, and I by! I should laugh to see that, 'gad!

Lov. Pr'ythee, don't stand prating, but look upon his wound.

Probe. Why, what if I don't look upon his wound this hour, sir?

Lov. Why, then, he'll bleed to death, sir.

[*Ladies stand in the background.*]

Probe. Why then I'll fetch him to life again, sir.

Lov. 'Slife! he's run through the body, I tell thee!

Probe. I wish he was run through the heart, and I should get the more credit by his cure. Now, I hope, you are satisfied? Come, now let me come at him—now let me come at him. [*Viewing his wound.*] Oons! what a gash is here! Why, sir, a man may drive a coach and six horses into your body.

Lord F. Oh!

Probe. Why, what the devil, have you run the gentleman through with a scythe?—A little scratch between the skin and the ribs, that's all. [*Aside.*]

Lov. Let me see his wound.

Probe. Then you shall dress it, sir; for, if anybody looks upon it, I won't.

Lov. Why thou art the veriest coxcomb I ever saw.

Probe. I am not master of my trade for nothing.

Lord F. Surgeon!

Probe. Sir.

Lord F. Are there any hopes?

Probe. Hopes! I can't tell. What are you willing to give for a cure?

Lord F. Five hundred pounds with pleasure.

Probe. Why, then, perhaps there may be hopes; but we must avoid a further delay.—Here, help, help the gentleman into a chair, and carry him to my house presently—that's the properest place—to bubble him out of his money. [*Aside.*] Come, come—there, in with him.

Lord F. [*As he is borne away.*] Dear Loveless, adieu: if I die, I forgive thee; and, if I live, I hope thou wilt do as much by me. I am sorry you and I should quarrel, but I hope here's an end on't; for, if you are satisfied, I am.

Lov. I shall hardly think it worth my prosecuting any further; so you may be at rest, sir.

Lord F. Thou art a generous fellow, strike me dumb!—but thou hast an impertinent wife, stap my vitals!

[*Aside.*]

Probe. So—carry him off—carry him off—we shall have him prate himself into a fever by and by—carry him off. [*Exeunt with Lord FOPPINGTON.*]

Enter Colonel TOWNLY.

Col. T. So, so, I am glad to find you all alive—I met a wounded peer carrying off. For Heaven's sake, what was the matter?

Lov. Oh, a trifle—he would have made love to my wife before my face; so she obliged him with a box o' the ear, and I ran him through the body, that was all.

Col. T. Bagatelle on all sides. But pray, madam, how long has this noble lord been an humble servant of yours?

Ama. This is the first I have heard on't—so, I suppose, 'tis his quality more than his love has brought him into this adventure. He thinks his

title an authentic passport to every woman's heart below the degree of a peeress.

Col. T. He's coxcomb enough to think anything; but I would not have you brought into trouble for him. I hope there's no danger of his life?

Lov. None at all—he's fallen into the hands of a roguish surgeon, who, I perceive, designs to frighten a little money out of him—but I saw his wound—'tis nothing—he may go to the ball to-night if he pleases.

Col. T. I am glad you have corrected him without further mischief, or you might have deprived me of the pleasure of executing a plot against his lordship, which I have been contriving with an old acquaintance of yours.

Lov. Explain—

Col. T. His brother, Tom Fashion, is come down here, and we have it in contemplation to save him the trouble of his intended wedding; but we want your assistance. Tom would have called, but he is preparing for his enterprise, so I promised to bring you to him—so, sir, if these ladies can spare you—

Lov. I'll go with you, with all my heart—*[Aside]*—though I could wish, methinks, to stay and gaze a little longer on that creature.—Good gods! how engaging she is—but what have I to do with beauty! I have already had my portion, and must not covet more.

Ama. Mr. Loveless, pray one word with you before you go. *[Exit Colonel TOWNLY.]*

Lov. What would my dear?

Ama. Only a woman's foolish question—how do you like my cousin, here?

Lov. Jealous already, Amanda?

Ama. Not at all.—I ask you for another reason.

Lov. What'er her reason be, I must not tell her true. *[Aside.]* Why, I confess, she's handsome: but you must not think I slight your kinswoman, if I own to you, of all the women who may claim that character, she is the last that would triumph in my heart.

Ama. I am satisfied.

Lov. Now tell me why you ask'd.

Ama. At night I will—adieu.

Lov. I'm yours. *[Kissing her.—Exit.]*

Ama. I am glad to find he does not like her, for I have a great mind to persuade her to come and live with me. *[Aside.]*

Ber. *[Aside.]* So! I find my colonel continues in his airs; there must be something more at the bottom of this than the provocation he pretends from me. *[Aside.]*

Ama. For Heaven's sake, Berinthia, tell me what way I shall take to persuade you to come and live with me!

Ber. Why one way in the world there is—and but one.

Ama. And pray what is that?

Ber. It is to assure me—I shall be very welcome.

Ama. If that be all, you shall e'en sleep here to-night.

Ber. To-night!

Ama. Yes, to-night.

Ber. Why, the people where I lodge will think me mad.

Ama. Let 'em think what they please.

Ber. Say you so, Amanda?—Why then they shall think what they please—for I'm a young widow, and I care not what anybody thinks.—Ah! Amanda, it's a delicious thing to be a young widow,

Ama. You'll hardly make me think so.

Ber. Poh! because you are in love with your husband.

Ama. Pray, 'tis, with a world of innocence, I would inquire whether you think those we call women of reputation, do really escape all other men as they do those shadows of beaux?

Ber. Oh, no, Amanda; there are a sort of men make dreadful work amongst 'em—men that may be called beaux' antipathy—for they agree in nothing but walking on two legs. These have brains—the beau has none. These are in love with their mistresses—the beau with himself. They take care of their reputation—the beau is industrious to destroy it. They are decent—he's a fop; in short, they are men—he's an ass.

Ama. If this be their character, I fancy we had here, e'en now, a pattern of 'em both.

Ber. His lordship and Colonel Townly?

Ama. The same.

Ber. As for the lord, he is eminently so; and for the other, I can assure you there's not a man in the town who has a better interest with the women, that are worth having an interest with.

Ama. He answers the opinion I had ever of him. *[Takes her hand.]* I must acquaint you with a secret—'tis not that fool alone that has talked to me of love. Townly has been tampering too.

Ber. So, so! here the mystery comes out!

[Aside.] Colonel Townly! impossible, my dear!

Ama. 'Tis true, indeed; though he has done it in vain; nor do I think that all the merit of mankind combined could shake the tender love I bear my husband; yet I will own to you, Berinthia, I did not start at his addresses, as when they came from one whom I contemned.

Ber. Oh, this is better and better. *[Aside.]* Well said, innocence: and you think, my dear, that nothing could abate your constancy and attachment to your husband?

Ama. Nothing, I am convinced.

Ber. What if you found he lov'd another woman better?

Ama. Well!

Ber. Well!—why, were I that thing they call a slighted wife, somebody should run the risk of being that thing they call—a husband. Don't I talk madly?

Ama. Madly, indeed!

Ber. Yet I am very innocent.

Ama. That I dare swear you are. I know how to make allowances for your humour—but you resolve, then, never to marry again?

Ber. Oh, no!—I resolve I will.

Ama. How so?

Ber. That I never may.

Ama. You banter me.

Ber. Indeed I don't—but I consider I'm a woman, and form my resolutions accordingly.

Ama. Well, my opinion is, form what resolution you will, matrimony will be the end on't.

Ber. I don't it—but a—Heavens! I have business at home, and am half an hour too late.

Ama. As you are to return with me, I'll just give some orders, and walk with you.

Ber. Well, make haste, and we'll finish this subject as we go. *[Exit AMANDA.]* Ah, poor Amanda, you have led a country life. Well, this discovery is lucky! Base Townly!—at once false to me and treacherous to his friend! and my innocent and demure cousin, too! I have it in my power to be revenged on her, however. Her

husband, if I have any skill in countenance, would be as happy in my smiles as Townly can hope to be in hers. I'll make the experiment, come what will on't. The woman who can forgive the being robb'd of a favoured lover, must be either an idiot or something worse.

[Exit.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Drawing-room.

Enter Lord POPPINGTON and LA VAROLE.

Lord F. Hey, fellow, let my vis-a-vis come to the door.

La Var. Will your lordship venture so soon to expose yourself to the weather?

Lord F. Sir, I will venture as soon as I can to expose myself to the ladies.

La Var. I wish your lordship would please to keep house a little longer; I'm afraid your honour does not well consider your wound.

Lord F. My wound!—I would not be in eclipse another day, though I had as many wounds in my body as I have had in my heart. So mind, Varole, let these cards be left as directed; for this evening I shall wait on my future father-in-law, Sir Tunbelly, and I mean to commence my devoirs to the lady, by giving an entertainment at her father's expense; and bark thee, tell Mr. Loveless I request he and his company will honour me with their presence, or I shall think we are not friends.

La Var. I will be sure, mi lor. [Exit.

Enter Young FASHION.

Young F. Brother, your servant; how do you find yourself to-day?

Lord F. So well that I have ordered my coach to the door—so there's no danger of death this bout, Tam.

Young F. I'm very glad of it

Lord F. That I believe's a lie. [Aside.] Pr'ythee, Tam, tell me one thing—did not your heart cut a caper up to your mouth, when you heard I was run through the body?

Young F. Why do you think it should?

Lord F. Because I remember mine did so, when I heard my uncle was shot through the head.

Young F. It then did very ill.

Lord F. Pr'ythee, why so?

Young F. Because he used you very well.

Lord F. Well!—naw strike me dumb, he starv'd me; he has let me want a thousand women, for want of a thousand pawnd.

Young F. Then he hinder'd you from making a great many ill bargains; for I think no woman worth money that will take money.

Lord F. If I was a younger brother, I should think so too.

Young F. Then you are seldom much in love?

Lord F. Never, stap my vitals.

Young F. Why then did you make all this bustle about Amanda?

Lord F. Because she's a woman of insolent virtue, and I thought myself piqued, in honour, to debauch her.

Young F. Very well.—Here's a rare fellow for you, to have the spending of ten thousand pounds

a year. But now for my business with him. [Aside.]—Brother, though I know to talk of any business (especially that of money) is a theme not quite so entertaining to you as that of the ladies, my necessities are such, I hope you'll have patience to hear me—

Lord F. The greatness of your necessities, Tam, is the worst argument in the waurld for your being patiently heard. I do believe you are going to make a very good speech, but strike me dumb, it has the worst beginning of any speech I have heard this twelvemonth.

Young F. I'm sorry you think so.

Lord F. I do believe thou art—but come, let's know the affair quickly.

Young F. Why, then, my case in a word is this.—The necessary expenses of my travels have so much exceeded the wretched income of my annuity, that I have been forced to mortgage it for five hundred pounds, which is spent. So, unless you are so kind as to assist me in redeeming it, I know no remedy but to take a purse.

Lord F. Why, faith, Tam, to give you my sense of the thing, I do think taking a purse the best remedy in the waurld—for if you succeed you are relieved that way, if you are taken [Drawing his hand round his neck]—you are relieved t'other.

Young F. I'm glad to see you are in so pleasant a humour; I hope I shall find the effects on't.

Lord F. Why, do you then really think it a reasonable thing, that I should give you five hundred pawnds?

Young F. I do not ask it as a due, brother; I am willing to receive it as a favour.

Lord F. Then thou art willing to receive it any how, strike me speechless! But these are d—n'd times to give money in; taxes are so great, repairs so exorbitant, tenants such rogues, and bouquets so dear, that, the devil take me, I am reduced to that extremity in my cash, I have been forced to retrench in that one article of sweet powder, till I have brought it down to five guineas a maunth—now judge, Tam, whether I can spare you five hundred pawnds?

Young F. If you can't, I must starve, that's all.—Damn him! [Aside.]

Lord F. All I can say is, you should have been a better husband.

Young F. Ouns!—If you can't live upon ten thousand a year, how do you think I should do't upon two hundred?

Lord F. Don't be in a passion, Tam, for passion is the most unbecoming thing in the waurld—to the face. Look you, I don't love to say anything to you to make you melancholy, but, upon this occasion, I must take leave to put you in mind, that a running-horse does require more attendance than a coach-horse.—Nature has made some difference 'twixt you and me.

Young F. Yes—she has made you older.—Plague take her! [Aside.]

Lord F. That is not all, Tam.

Young F. Why, what is there else?

Lord F. [Looks first on himself, and then on his brother.] Ask the ladies.

Young F. Why, thou essence-bottle, thou musk-cat!—dost thou then think thou hast any advantage over me but what fortune has given thee?

Lord F. I do, stap my vitals!

Young F. Now, by all that's great and powerful, thou art the prince of coxcombs!

Lord F. Sir, I am proud at being at the head of so prevailing a party.

Young F. Will nothing provoke thee?—Draw, coward.

Lord F. Look you, Tam, you know I have always taken you for a mighty dull fellow, and here is one of the foolishlest plats broke out that I have seen a lang time. Your poverty makes life so burdensome to you, you would provoke me to a quarrel, in hopes either to slip through my lungs into my estate, or to get yourself run through the guts, to put an end to your pain, but I will disappoint you in both your designs; far, with the temper of a philosopher, and the discretion of a statesman—I shall leave the room with my sword in the scabbard. [Exit.]

Young F. So! farewell, brother; and now, conscience, I defy thee.—Lory!

Enter LORY.

Lory. Sir.

Young F. Here's rare news, Lory; his lordship has given me a pill has purged off all my scruples.

Lory. Then my heart's at ease again. For I have been in a lamentable fright, sir, ever since your conscience had the impudence to intrude into your company.

Young F. Be at peace; it will come there no more: my brother has given it a wring by the nose, and I have kick'd it down stairs. So run away to the inn, get the chaise ready quickly, and bring it to Dame Coupler's without a moment's delay.

Lory. Then, sir, you are going straight about the fortune?

Young F. I am.—Away—fly, Lory!

Lory. The happiest day I ever saw. I'm upon the wing already; now then I shall get my wages. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—A Garden.

Enter LOVELESS and Servant.

Lov. Is my wife within?

Serv. No, sir, she has gone out this half-hour.

Lov. Well, leave me. [Exit Servant.] How strangely does my mind run on this widow—never was my heart so suddenly seized on before—that my wife should pick out her, of all womankind, to be her playfellow. But, what fate does, let fate answer for—I sought it not—soh!—by heav'ns!—hero she comes!

Enter BERINTHIA.

Ber. What makes you look so thoughtful, sir? I hope you are not ill!

Lov. I was debating, madam, whether I was so or not, and that was it which made me look so thoughtful.

Ber. Is it, then, so hard a matter to decide? I thought all people were acquainted with their own bodies, though few people know their own minds.

Lov. What, if the distemper I suspect be in the mind?

Ber. Why, then, I'll undertake to prescribe you a cure.

Lov. Alas! you undertake you know not what.

Ber. So far, at least, then, you allow me to be a physician.

Lov. Nay, I'll allow you to be so yet further: for I have reason to believe, should I put myself into your hands, you would increase my distemper.

Ber. How?

Lov. Oh, you might betray me to my wife.

Ber. And so lose all my practice.

Lov. Will you then keep my secret?

Ber. I will.

Lov. Well—but swear it.

Ber. I swear by woman!

Lov. Nay, that's swearing by my deity; swear by your own, and I shall believe you.

Ber. Well, then, I swear by man!

Lov. I'm satisfied. Now hear my symptoms, and give me your advice. The first were these: when I saw you at the play, a random glance you threw at first alarm'd me. I could not turn my eyes from whence the danger came—I gaz'd upon you till my heart began to pant—nay, even now, on your approaching me, my illness is so increased, that, if you do not help me, I shall, whilst you look on, consume to ashes.

[Takes her hand.

Ber. Oh, Lord! let me go! 'tis the plague, and we shall be infected. [Breaking from him.

Lov. Then we'll die together, my charming angel.

Ber. Oh, 'gad! the devil's in you. Lord, let me go—here's somebody coming.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, my lady's come home, and desires to speak with you.

Lov. Tell her I'm coming. [Exit Servant.] But before I go, one glass of nectar to drink her health.

[To BERINTHIA.

Ber. Stand off, or I shall hate you, by heavens!

Lov. [Kissing her.] In matters of love, a woman's oath is no more to be minded than a man's. [Exit.

Ber. Um!

Enter Colonel TOWNLY.

Col. T. Soh! what's here—Berinthia and Loveless—and in such close conversation!—I cannot now wonder at her indifference in excusing herself to me!—Oh, rare woman—well, then, let Loveless look to his wife, 'twill be but the retort courteous on both sides. Your servant,—madam, I need not ask you how you do, you have got so good a colour.

Ber. No better than I used to have, I suppose.

Col. T. A little more blood in your cheeks.

Ber. I have been walking!

Col. T. Is that all? Pray was it Mr. Loveless went from here just now?

Ber. Oh, yes—he has been walking with me.

Col. T. He has!

Ber. Upon my word, I think he is a very agreeable man!—and there is certainly something particularly insinuating in his address!

Col. T. So! so! she hasn't even the modesty to dissemble! [Aside.] Pray, madam, may I, without impertinence, trouble you with a few serious questions?

Ber. As many as you please; but pray let them be as little serious as possible.

Col. T. Is it not near two years since I have presumed to address you?

Ber. I don't know exactly—but it has been a tedious long time.

Col. T. Have I not, during that period, had every reason to believe that my assiduities were far from being unacceptable?

Ber. Why, to do you justice, you have been extremely troublesome—and I confess I have been more civil to you than you deserved.

Col. T. Did I not come to this place at your express desire, and for no purpose but the honour of meeting you?—and, after waiting a month in disappointment, have you condescended to explain, or, in the slightest way, apologize for your conduct?

Ber. Oh, heavens! apologize for my conduct!—apologize to you!—Oh, you barbarian!—But pray, now, my good serious colonel, have you anything more to add?

Col. T. Nothing, madam, but that, after such behaviour, I am less surprised at what I saw just now: it is not very wonderful that the woman who can trifle with the delicate addresses of an honourable lover, should be found coquetting with the husband of her friend.

Ber. Very true—no more wonderful than it was for this honourable lover to divert himself, in the absence of this coquette, with endeavouring to seduce his friend's wife! Oh, colonel, colonel, don't talk of honour or your friend, for Heaven's sake!

Col. T. 'Sdeath! how came she to suspect this? [*Aside.*] Really, madam, I don't understand you.

Ber. Nay—nay—you saw I did not pretend to misunderstand you. But here comes the lady: perhaps you would be glad to be left with her for an explanation.

Col. T. Oh, madam, this recrimination is a poor resource; and, to convince you how much you are mistaken, I beg leave to decline the happiness you propose me. Madam, your servant.

Enter AMANDA.—Colonel TOWNLY whispers AMANDA, and exit.

Ber. He carries it off well, however—upon my word—very well!—how tenderly they part.—[*Aside.*]—So, cousin—I hope you have not been chiding your admirer for being with me—I assure you we have been talking of you.

Ama. Fy, Berinthia!—my admirer—will you never learn to talk in earnest of anything?

Ber. Why, this shall be in earnest, if you please; for my part, I only tell you matter of fact.

Ama. I'm sure there's so much of jest and earnest in what you say to me on this subject, I scarce know how to take it. I have just parted with Mr. Loveless—perhaps it is fancy, but I think there is an alteration in his manner which alarms me.

Ber. And so you are jealous? is that all?

Ama. That all!—is jealousy, then, nothing?

Ber. It should be nothing, if I were in your case.

Ama. Why, what would you do?

Ber. I'd cure myself.

Ama. How?

Ber. Care as little for my husband as he did for me. Look you, Amanda, you may build castles in the air, and fume and fret, and grow thin, and lean, and pale, and ugly, if you please; but I tell you, no man worth having is true to his wife, or ever was, or ever will be so.

Ama. Do you then really think he's false to me? for I did not suspect him.

Ber. Think so! I am sure of it.

Ama. You are sure on't?

Ber. Positively—he fell in love at the play.

Ama. Right—the very same—but who could have told you this?

Ber. Um—oh—Townly!—I suppose your husband has made him his confidant.

Ama. Oh, base Loveless! and what did Townly say on't?

Ber. So, so—why should she ask that? [*Aside.*] Say! why he abused Loveless extremely, and said all the tender things of you in the world.

Ama. Did he?—Oh! my heart!—I'm very ill—dear Berinthia, don't leave me a moment. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—Outside of Sir Tunbely's House.

Enter Young FASHION and LORY.

Young F. So—here's our inheritance, Lory, if we can but get into possession—but, methinks, the seat of our family looks like Noah's ark, as if the chief part on't were designed for the fowls of the air and the beasts of the field.

Lory. Pray, sir, don't let your head run upon the orders of building here—get but the heirless, let the devil take the house.

Young F. Get but the house! let the devil take the heirless, I say—but come, we have no time to squander; knock at the door. [*Lory knocks two or three times at the gate.*] What the devil, have they no ears in this house?—Knock harder.

Lory. 'Egad, sir, this will prove some enchanted castle—we shall have the giant come out, by and by, with his club, and beat our brains out.

[*Knocks again.*]

Young F. Hush, they come.

Serv. [*Within.*] Who is there?

Lory. Open the door, and see—is that your country breeding?

Serv. Ay, but two words to that bargain—Tum-mus, is the blunderbuss prim'd?

Young F. Ouns! give 'em good words, Lory—or we shall be shot here a fortune-catching.

Lory. 'Egad, sir, I think you're in the right on't—ho!—Mr. What-d'ye-call-em—will you please to let us in? or are we to be left to grow like willows by your moat-side?

[*Servant looks over the wall with a blunderbuss in his hand.*]

Serv. Well, naw, what's ya're business?

Young F. Nothing, sir, but to wait upon Sir Tunbely, with your leave.

Serv. To wait upon Sir Tunbely? Why, you'll find that's just as Sir Tunbely pleases.

Young F. But will you do me the favour, sir, to learn whether Sir Tunbely pleases or not?

Serv. Why, look you, d'ye see, with good words much may be done. Ralph, go thy ways, and ask Sir Tunbely if he pleases to be waited upon—and, dost hear, call to Nurse, that she may lock up Miss Hoyden before the gates open.

Young F. D'ye hear that, Lory?

Gates open.—*Enter Sir TUNBELLY CLUMSY, M. D., with Servants, armed with guns, clubs, pitchforks, &c.*

Lory. O! [*Runs behind his master.*] O Lord! O Lord! we are both dead men!

Young F. Fool! thy fear will ruin us.

[*Apart to LORY.*]

Lory. My fear, sir! 'Sdeath, sir, I fear nothing.

—[*Apart.*] Would I were well up to the chin in a horse-pond. [*Aside.*]

Sir T. Who is it here hath any business with me?

Young F. Sir, 'tis I, 'if your name is Sir Tunbelly Clumsy.

Sir T. Sir, my name is Sir Tunbelly Clumsy, whether you have any business with me or not.—So you see I am not ashamed of my name, nor my face, either.

Young F. Sir, you have no cause that I know of.

Sir T. Sir, you have no cause either. I desire to know who you are; for, till I know your name, I shan't ask you to come into my house; and, when I do know your name, 'tis six to four I don't ask you then.

Young F. Sir, I hope you'll find this letter an authentic passport. [*Gives him a letter.*]

Sir T. Cod's my life, from Mrs. Coupler!—I ask your lordship's pardon ten thousand times. [*To his Servant.*] Here, run in a-doors quickly; get a Scotch coal fire in the parlour, set all the Turkey-work chairs in their places, get the brass candlesticks out, and be sure stick the sockets full of laurel—run—[*Turns to Young FASHION.*] My lord, I ask your lordship's pardon. [*To the Servant.*] And, do you hear, run away to Nurse, bid her let Miss Hoyden loose again. [*Exit Servant.*] I hope your honour will excuse the disorder of my family.—We are not used to receive men of your lordship's great quality every day. Pray where are your coaches and servants, my lord?

Young F. Sir, that I might give you and your daughter a proof how impatient I am to be nearer akin to you, I left my equipage to follow me, and came away post with only one servant.

Sir T. Your lordship does me too much honour—it was exposing your person to too much fatigue and danger.—I protest it was; but my daughter shall endeavour to make you what amends she can; and, though I say it that should not say it, Hoyden has charms.

Young F. Sir, I am not a stranger to them, though I am to her: common fame has done her justice.

Sir T. My lord, I am common fame's very grateful, humble servant. My lord, my girl's young—Hoyden is young, my lord: but this I must say for her, what she wants in art, she has in breeding: and what's wanting in her age, is made good in her constitution.—So pray, my lord, walk in; pray my lord, walk in.

Young F. Sir, I wait upon you. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*An Apartment in Sir TUNBELLY CLUMSY'S House.*

Miss HOYDEN discovered.

Miss H. Sure, nobody was ever used as I am. I know well enough what other girls do, for all they think to make a fool o' me. It's well I have a husband a coming, or, iced! I'd marry the baker, I would so. Nobody can knock at the gate, but presently I must be locked up; and here's the young greyhound can run loose about the house all the day long, so she can.—'Tis very well—

Nurse. [*Without, opening the door.*] Miss Hoyden, miss, miss, miss! Miss Hoyden!

Enter Nurse.

Miss H. Well, what do you make such a noise

for, ha?—What do you din a body's ears for? Can't one be quiet for you?

Nurse. What do I din your ears for? Here's one come will din your ears for you.

Miss H. What care I who's come? I care not a fig who comes or who goes, as long as I must be lock'd up like the ale-cellar.

Nurse. That, miss, is for fear you should be drunk before you are ripe.

Miss H. Oh, don't trouble your head about that; I'm as ripe as you, though not so mellow.

Nurse. Very well, now I have a good mind to lock you up again, and not let you see my lord to-night.

Miss H. My lord! why, has my husband come?

Nurse. Yes, marry, is he, and a goodly person, too.

[*Flinging away her knife, loaf, and butter.*]

Miss H. [*Hugs Nurse.*] Oh, my dear Nurse, forgive me this once, and I'll never misuse you again; no, if I do, you shall give me three thumps on the back, and a great pinch by the cheek.

Nurse. Ah, the poor thing! see how it melts: its as full of good nature as an egg's full of meat.

Miss H. But, my dear Nurse, don't lie, now—is he come, by your troth?

Nurse. Yes, by my truly, is he.

Miss H. Oh, Lord! I'll go and put on my laced tucker, though I'm lock'd up for a month for't.

[*Exeunt—Miss HOYDEN goes off capering and twirling her doll by its leg.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment at Sir TUNBELLY CLUMSY'S.*

Enter Miss HOYDEN and Nurse.

Nurse. Well, miss, how do you like your husband that is to be?

Miss H. Oh, Lord, Nurse, I'm so overjoyed, I can scarce contain myself.

Nurse. Oh, but you must have a care of being too fond; for men, now-a-days, hate a woman that loves 'em.

Miss H. Love him! why, do you think I love him, Nurse? 'Ecod, I would not care if he was hang'd, so I were but once married to him. No, that which pleases me is, to think what work I'll make when I get to London; for, when I'm a wife and a lady both, 'ecod, I'll flaunt it with the best of 'em. Ay, and I shall have money enough to do so, too, Nurse.

Nurse. Ah, there's no knowing that, miss; for, though these lords have a power of wealth, indeed, yet, as I have heard say, they give it all to their sluts and their trulls, who joggle it about in their coaches, with a murrain to 'em, whilst poor madam sits sighing and wishing, and has not a spare half-crown to buy her a "Practice of Piety."

Miss H. Oh, but for that, don't deceive yourself, Nurse; for this I must say of my lord, he's as free as an open house at Christmas; for this very morning he told me I should have six hundred a year to buy pins. Now, if he gives me six hundred a year to buy pins, what do you think he'll give me to buy petticoats?

Nurse. Ah, my dearest, he deceives thee foully, and he's no better than a rogue for his pains,

These Londoners have got a gibberish with 'em would confound a gipsy. That which they call pin-money is to buy everything in the versal world, down to their very shoe-knots. Nay, I have heard some folks say that some ladies, if they'll have gallants, as they call 'em, are forced to find them out of their pin-money, too. But look, look, if his honour be not coming to you! Now, if I were sure you would behave yourself handsomely, and not disgrace me that have brought you up, I'd leave you alone together.

Miss H. That's my best Nurse, do as you'd be done by. Trust us together this once, and, if I don't show my breeding, I wish I may never be married, but die an old maid.

Nurse. Well, this once I'll venture you. But, if you disparage me—

Miss H. Never fear.

[Exit Nurse.]

Enter Young FASHION.

Young F. Your servant, madam: I'm glad to find you alone, for I have something of importance to speak to you about.

Miss H. Sir—my lord, I meant—you may speak to me about what you please, I shall give you a civil answer.

Young F. You give so obliging a one, it encourages me to tell you, in a few words, what I think, both for your interest and mine. Your father, I suppose you know, has resolved to make me happy in being your husband; and I hope I may obtain your consent to perform what he desires.

Miss H. Sir, I never disobey my father, in anything but eating green gooseberries.

Young F. So good a daughter must needs be an admirable wife; I am therefore impatient till you are mine, and hope you will so far consider the violence of my love, that you won't have the cruelty to defer my happiness so long as your father designs it.

Miss H. Pray, my lord, how long is that?

Young F. Madam, a thousand years—a whole week.

Miss H. Why, I thought it was to be to-morrow morning, as soon as I was up. I'm sure Nurse told me so.

Young F. And it shall be to-morrow morning, if you'll consent.

Miss H. If I'll consent? Why, I thought I was to obey you as my husband?

Young F. That's when we are married. Till then, I'm to obey you.

Miss H. Why, then, if we are to take it by turns, it's the same thing. I'll obey you now, and, when we are married, you shall obey me.

Young F. With all my heart. But I doubt we must get Nurse on our side, or we shall hardly prevail with the chaplain.

Miss H. No more we sha'n't, indeed; for he loves her better than he loves his pulpit, and would always be a preaching to her by his good will.

Young F. Why, then, my dear, if you'll call her hither, we'll persuade her presently.

Miss H. Oh, lud! I'll tell you a way how to persuade her to anything.

Young F. How's that?

Miss H. Why, tell her she's a handsome, comely woman, and give her half-a-crown.

Young F. Nay, if that will do, she shall have half a score of them.

Miss H. Oh! gemini! for half that she'd marry you herself. I'll run and call her.

[Exit.]

Young F. So! matters go on swimmingly. This is a rare girl, i'faith. I shall have a fine time on't with her at London.

Enter LORY.

So, Lory, what's the matter?

Lory. Here, sir,—an intercepted letter from the enemy; your brother's postillion brought it.—I knew the livery, pretended to be a servant of Sir Tunbely's, and so got possession of the letter.

Young F. [Looks at the letter.] Ouns! he tells Sir Tunbely, here, that he will be with him this evening, with a large party, to supper. 'Egad, I must marry the girl directly.

Lory. Oh, zounds, sir, directly, to be sure. Here she comes. [Exit.]

Young F. And the old jesabel with her.

Re-enter Miss HOYDEN and Nurse.

How do you do, good Mrs. Nurse? I desired your young lady would give me leave to see you, that I might thank you for your extraordinary care and kind conduct in her education: pray accept of this small acknowledgment for it, at present, and depend upon my further kindness when I shall be that happy thing, her husband. [Gives her money.]

Nurse. Gold, by the maakins! [Aside.] Your honour's goodness is too great. Alas! all I can boast of is, I have given her pure good milk, and so your honour would have said, an' had you seen how the poor thing thrived, and how it would look up in my face—and crow and laugh, it would.

Miss H. [To Nurse, taking her angrily aside.] Pray, one word with you. Pr'ythee, Nurse, don't stand ripping up old stories, to make one ashamed before one's love. Do you think such a fine proper gentleman as he is, cares for a fiddle-come tale of a child? If you have a mind to make him have a good opinion of a woman, don't tell him what one did then, tell him what one can do now. [Goes to FASHION.] I hope your honour will excuse my mis-manners to whisper before you; it was only to give some orders about the family.

Young F. Oh, everything, madam, is to give way to business; beside, good housewifery is a very commendable quality in a young lady.

Miss H. Pray, sir, are young ladies good housewives at London town? Do they darn their own linen?

Young F. Oh, no, they study how to spend money, not to save.

Miss H. 'Ecod, I don't know but that may be the better sport! ha, Nurse!

Young F. Well, you shall have your choice when you come there.

Miss H. Shall I?—Then, by my troth, I'll get there as fast as I can. His honour desires you'll be so kind as to let us be married to-morrow.

[To Nurse.]

Nurse. To-morrow, my dear madam!

Young F. Ay, faith, Nurse, you may well be surprised at my's wanting to put it off so long. To-morrow! no, no; 'tis now, this very hour, I would have the ceremony performed.

Miss H. 'Ecod, with all my heart!

Nurse. Oh, mercy! worse and worse!

Young F. Yes, sweet Nurse, now, and privately; for, all things being signed and sealed, why should Sir Tunbely make us stay a week for a wedding-dinner?

Nurse. But if you should be married now, what will you do when Sir Tunbely calls for you to be married?

Miss H. Why, then we will be married again.

Nurse. What, twice, my child?

Miss H. 'Ecod! I don't care how often I'm married, not I.

Nurse. Well, I'm such a tender-hearted fool, I find I can refuse you nothing. So you shall e'en follow your own inventions.

Miss H. Shall I?—Oh, Lord, I could leap over the moon.

Young F. Dear Nurse, this goodness of yours shall be still more rewarded. But you must employ your power with the chaplain, that he may do his friendly office too, and then we shall all be happy. Do you think you can prevail with him?

Nurse. Prevail with him? or he shall never prevail with me, I can tell him that.

Young F. I'm glad to hear it; however, to strengthen your interest with him, you may let him know I have several fat livings in my gift, and that the first that falls shall be in your disposal.

Nurse. Nay, then, I'll make him marry more folks than one, I'll promise him.

Miss H. Faith, do, Nurse! make him marry you too; I'm sure he'll do it for a fat living.

Young F. Well, Nurse, while you go and settle matters with him, your lady and I will go and take a walk in the garden. [*Exit Nurse.*] Come, madam, dare you venture yourself alone with me?

[*Takes Miss HOYDEN by the hand.*]

Miss H. Oh dear, yes, sir! I don't think you'll do anything to me I need be afraid of. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—A Garden. Moonlight.

Enter LOVELESS.

Lov. Now, does she mean to make a fool of me, or not? I shan't wait much longer, for my wife will soon be inquiring for me to set out on our supping-party. Suspense is at all times the devil—but of all modes of suspense, the watching for a loitering mistress is the worst. But let me accuse her no longer; she approaches with one smile, to o'erpay the anxieties of a year!

Enter BERINTHIA.

O, Berinthia, what a world of kindness are you in my debt! Had you stayed five minutes longer—

Ber. You would have gone, I suppose?

Lov. 'Egad! she's right enough. [*Aside.*]

Ber. And I assure you, 'twas ten to one that I came at all. In short, I begin to think you are too dangerous a being to trifle with; and, as I shall probably only make a fool of you at last, I believe we had better let matters rest as they are.

Lov. You cannot mean it, sure?

Ber. What more would you have me give to a married man?

Lov. How doubly cruel to remind me of my misfortunes!

Ber. A misfortune to be married to so charming a woman as Amanda?

Lov. I grant all her merit, but—'Sdeath! now see what you have done by talking of her—she's here, by all that's unlucky, and Townly with her—I'll observe them.

Ber. O God, we had better get out of the way; for I should feel as awkward to meet her as you.

Lov. Ay, if I mistake not, I see Townly coming this way also. I must see a little into this matter.

[*Steps aside.*]

Ber. Oh, if that's your intention, I am no woman, if I suffer myself to be outdone in curiosity.

[*Goes on the other side.*]

Enter AMANDA.

Ama. Mr. Loveless come home, and walking on the lawn! I will not suffer him to walk so late, though perhaps it is to show his neglect of me. Mr. Loveless, I must speak with you. Ha! Townly again! How I am persecuted!

Enter Colonel TOWNLY.

Col. T. Madam, you seem disturbed.

Ama. Sir, I have reason.

Col. T. Whatever be the cause, I would to Heaven it were in my power to bear the pain, or to remove the malady.

Ama. Your interference can only add to my distress.

Col. T. Ah, madam, if it be the sting of unrequited love you suffer from, seek for your remedy in revenge: weigh well the strength and beauty of your charms, and rouse up that spirit a woman ought to bear. Disdain the false embraces of a husband. See at your feet a real lover; his zeal may give him title to your pity, although his merit cannot claim your love.

Lov. So, so, very fine, I faith. [*Aside.*]

Ama. Why do you presume to talk to me thus? Is this your friendship to Mr. Loveless? I perceive you will compel me at last to acquaint him with your treachery.

Col. T. He could not upbraid me if you were—he deserves it from me; for he has not been more false to you than faithless to me.

Ama. To you?

Col. T. Yes, madam: the lady for whom he now deserts those charms which he was never worthy of, was mine by right; and I imagined, too, by inclination.—Yes, Madam Berinthia, who now—

Ama. Berinthia! Impossible!

Col. T. 'Tis true, or may I never merit your attention. She is the deceitful sorceress who now holds your husband's heart in bondage.

Ama. I will not believe it.

Col. T. By the faith of a true lover, I speak from conviction. This very day I saw them together, and overheard—

Ama. Peace, sir, I will not even listen to such slander—this is a poor device to work on my resentment, to listen to your insidious addresses. No, sir, though Mr. Loveless may be capable of error, I am convinced I cannot be deceived so grossly in him, as to believe what you now report; and for Berinthia, you should have fixed on some more probable person for my rival, than she who is my relation and my friend: for, while I am myself free from guilt, I will never believe that love can beget injury, or confidence create ingratitude.

Col. T. If I do not prove to you—

Ama. You never shall have an opportunity. From the artful manner in which you first showed yourself to me, I might have been led, as far as virtue permitted, to have thought you less criminal than unhappy; but this last unmanly artifice merits at once my resentment and contempt. [*Exit.*]

Col. T. Sure, there's divinity about her; and she has dispensed some portion of honour's light to me: yet can I bear to lose Berinthia without revenge or compensation? Perhaps she is not so culpable as I thought her. I was mistaken when

I began to think lightly of Amanda's virtue, and may be in my censure of my Berinthia. Surely I love her still, for I feel I should be happy to find myself in the wrong. [Exit.]

Re-enter LOVELESS and BERINTHIA.

Ber. Your servant, Mr. Loveless.

Lov. Your servant, madam.

Ber. Pray what do you think of this?

Lov. Truly, I don't know what to say.

Ber. Don't you think we steal forth two contemptible creatures?

Lov. Why tolerably so, I must confess.

Ber. And do you conceive it possible for you ever to give Amanda the least uneasiness again?

Lov. No, I think we never should, indeed.

Ber. We!—Why, monster, you don't pretend that I ever entertained a thought?

Lov. Why, then, sincerely and honestly, Berinthia, there is something in my wife's conduct which strikes me so forcibly, that if it were not for shame, and the fear of hurting you in her opinion, I swear I would follow her, confess my error, and trust to her generosity for forgiveness.

Ber. Nay, pr'ythee, don't let your respect for me prevent you; for, as my object in trifling with you was nothing more than to pique Townly, and, as I perceive he has been actuated by a similar motive, you may depend on't I shall make no mystery of the matter to him.

Lov. By no means inform him; for though I may choose to pass by his conduct without resentment, how will he presume to look me in the face again?

Ber. How will you presume to look him in the face again?

Lov. He who has dared to attempt the honour of my wife.

Ber. You, who have dared to attempt the honour of his mistress! Come, come, be ruled by me, who affect more levity than I have, and don't think of anger in this cause. A readiness to resent injuries, is a virtue only in those who are slow to injure.

Lov. Then I will be ruled by you; and when you shall think proper to undeceive Townly, may your good qualities make as sincere a convert of him, as Amanda's have of me. When truth's extorted from us, then we own the robe of virtue is a sacred habit:

Could women but our secret counsels scan—

Could they but reach the deep reserve of man—

To keep our love they'd rate their virtue high.

They live together, and together die. [Exeunt.]

SCENE III.—*Sir TUNBELLY CLUMSY's House.*

Enter Miss HOYDEN, Nurse, and Young FASHION.

Young F. This quick despatch of the chaplain's I take so kindly, it shall give him claim to my favour as long as I live, I assure you.

Miss H. And to mine, too, I promise you.

Nurse. I most humbly thank your honours; and may your children swarm about you like bees about a honeycomb.

Miss H. 'Cod, with all my heart—the more the merrier, I say—ha, Nurse!

Enter LORY.

Lory. One word with you, for Heaven's sake.

[Taking Young FASHION hastily aside.]

Young F. What the devil's the matter!

Lory. Sir, your fortune's ruin'd if you are not married. Yonder's your brother arrived, with two coaches and six horses, twenty footmen, and a coat worth fourscore pounds—so judge what will become of your lady's heart.

Young F. Is he in the house yet?

Lory. No, they are capitulating with him at the gate. Sir Tunbely luckily takes him for an impostor; and I have told him that we had heard of this plot before.

Young F. That's right. [Turning to Miss HOYDEN.] My dear, here's a troublesome business my man tells me of; but don't be frightened, we shall be too hard for the rogue. Here's an impudent fellow at the gate (not knowing I was come hither incognito), has taken my name upon him, in hopes to run away with you.

Miss H. Oh, the brazen-faced varlet, it's well we are married, or may be we might never have been so.

Young F. 'Egad, like enough. [Aside.] Pr'ythee, Nurse, run to Sir Tunbely, and stop him from going to the gate before I speak with him.

Nurse. An't please your honour, my lady and I had best lock ourselves up till the danger be over.

Young F. Do so, if you please.

Miss H. Not so fast; I won't be lock'd up any more, now I'm married.

Young F. Yes, pray, my dear, do, till we have seized this rascal.

Miss H. Nay, if you'll pray me, I'll do anything. [Exit Miss HOYDEN and Nurse.]

Young F. [To LORY.] Hark you, sirrah, things are better than you imagine. The wedding's over.

Lory. The devil it is, sir! [Capers about.]

Young F. Not a word—all's safe—but Sir Tunbely don't know it, nor must he yet. So I am resolved to brazen the brunt of the business out and have the pleasure of turning the impostor upon his lordship, which I believe may easily be done.

Enter Sir TUNBELLY CLUMSY.

Did you ever hear, sir, of so impudent an undertaking?

Sir T. Never, by the mass; but we'll tickle him, I'll warrant you.

Young F. They tell me, sir, he has a great many people with him, disguised like servants.

Sir T. Ay, ay, rogues enow, but we have mastered them. We only fired a few shot over their heads, and the regiment scowered in an instant. Here, Tummas, bring in your prisoner.

Young F. If you please, Sir Tunbely, it will be best for me not to confront the fellow yet, till you have heard how far his impudence will carry him.

Sir T. 'Egad, your lordship is an ingenious person. Your lordship then will please to step aside.

Lory. 'Fore heaven, I applaud my master's modesty. [Exit with Young FASHION.]

Enter Servants, with Lord FOPPINGTON disarmed.

Sir T. Come, bring him along, bring him along.

Lord F. What the plague do you mean, gentlemen? Is it fair time, that you are all drunk before supper?

Sir T. Drunk, sirrah! here's an impudent rogue for you now. Drunk or sober, bully, I'm a justice of the peace, and know how to deal with strollers.

Lord F. Strollers!

Sir T. Ay, strollers. Come, give an account of yourself. What's your name? where do you live?

do you pay scot and lot? Come, are you a freeholder or a copyholder?

Lord F. And why dost thou ask me so many impertinent questions?

Sir T. Because I'll make you answer 'em, before I have done with you, you rascal you.

Lord F. Before Gad, all the answers I can make to them is, that you are a very extraordinary old fellow, stap my vitals!

Sir T. Nay, if thou art joking, deputy lieutenants, we know how to deal with you. Here, draw a warrant for him immediately.

Lord F. A warrant! What the devil is't thou wouldst be at, old gentleman?

Sir T. I would be at you, sirrah (if my hands were not tied as a magistrate), and with these two double fists beat your teeth down your throat, you dog you.

[Driving him.

Lord F. And why wouldst thou spoil my face at that rate?

Sir T. For your design to rob me of my daughter, villain.

Lord F. Rab thee of thy daughter! Now do I begin to believe I am in bed and asleep, and that all this is but a dream. Pr'ythee, old father, wilt thou give me leave to ask thee one question?

Sir T. I can't tell whether I will or not, till I know what it is.

Lord F. Why, then, it is, whether thou didst not write to my Lord Foppington, to come down and marry thy daughter?

Sir T. Yes, marry, did I, and my Lord Foppington is come down, and shall marry my daughter before she's a day older.

Lord F. Now give me thy hand, old dad; I thought we should understand one another at last.

Sir T. The fellow's mad—here, bind him hand and foot.

[They bind him.

Lord F. Nay, pr'ythee, knight, leave fooling; thy jest begins to grow dull.

Sir T. Bind him, I say—he's mad; bread and water, a dark room, and a whip, may bring him to his senses again.

Lord F. Pr'ythee, Sir Tunbely, why should you take such an aversion to the freedom of my address, as to suffer the rascals thus to skewer down my arms like a rabbit? 'Egad, if I don't awake, by all that I can see, this is like to prove one of the most impertinent dreams that ever I dreamt in my life.

[Aside.

Re-enter Miss HOYDEN and Nurse.

Miss H. [Going up to him.] Is this he that would have run?—Fough, how he stinks of sweets. Pray, father, let him be dragged through the horse-pond.

Lord F. This must be my wife, by her natural inclination to her husband.

[Aside.

Miss H. Pray, father, what do you intend to do with him—hang him?

Sir T. That at least, child.

Nurse. Ay, and it's e'en too good for him, too.

Lord F. Madame la gouvernante, I presume: hitherto this appears to me to be one of the most extraordinary families that ever man of quality marched into.

[Aside.

Sir T. What's become of my lord, daughter?

Miss H. He's just coming, sir.

Lord F. My lord! What does he mean by that, now?

[Aside.

Re-enter Young FASHION and LORY.

Stap my vitals, Tam! now the dream's out.

Young F. Is this the fellow, sir, that designed to trick me of your daughter?

Sir T. This is he, my lord; how do you like him? Is not he a pretty fellow to get a fortune?

Young F. I find by his dress he thought your daughter might be taken with a beau.

Miss H. Oh, gemini! Is this a beau? Let me see him again. [Surveys him.] Ha! I find a beau is no such ugly thing, neither.

Young F. 'Egad, she'll be in love with him presently—I'll e'en have him sent away to gaol. [Aside.] Sir, though your undertaking shows you a person of no extraordinary modesty, I suppose you ha'n't confidence enough to expect much favour from me?

[To Lord FOPPINGTON.

Lord F. Strike me dumb, Tam, thou art a very impudent fellow.

Nurse. Look! if the varlet has not the effrontery to call his lordship, plain Thomas.

Lord F. My Lord Foppington, shall I beg one word with your lordship?

Nurse. Ho, ho, it's my lord with him now. See how afflictions will humble folks.

Miss H. Pray, my lord, [To FASHION] don't let him whisper too close, lest he bite your ear off.

Lord F. I am not altogether so hungry as your ladyship is pleased to imagine. Look you, Tam, I am sensible I have not been so kind to you as I ought, but I hope you'll forgive what's past, and accept of the five thousand pounds I offer—thou mayst live in extreme splendour with it, stap my vitals.

[Apart to Young FASHION.

Young F. It's a much easier matter to prevent a disease than to cure it. A quarter of that sum would have secured your mistress, twice as much cannot redeem her.

[Apart—leaving him.

Sir T. Well, what says he?

Young F. Only the rascal offered me a bribe to let him go.

Sir T. Ay, he shall go, with a plague to him—lead on, constable.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, here is Muster Loveless, and Muster Colonel Townly, and some ladies to wait on you.

[To Young FASHION.

Lory. So, sir, what will you do now?

[Aside.

Young F. Be quiet; they are in the plot. [Aside to Lory.] Only a few friends, Sir Tunbely, whom I wish'd to introduce to you.

Lord F. Thou art the most impudent fellow, Tam, that ever nature yet brought into the world. Sir Tunbely, strike me speechless, but these are my friends and acquaintance, and my guests, and they will soon inform thee whether I am the true Lord Foppington or not.

Enter LOVELESS, COLONEL TOWNLY, AMANDA, and BERTINIA.—LORD FOPPINGTON accosts them as they pass, but none answer him.

Young F. So, gentlemen, this is friendly; I rejoice to see you.

Col. T. My lord, we are fortunate to be the witnesses of your lordship's happiness.

Lov. But your lordship will do us the honour to introduce us to Sir Tunbely Clumsy.

Ama. And us to your lady.

Lord F. [Amazed.] Ged take me, but they are all in a story.

Sir T. Gentlemen, you do me much honour; my Lord Foppington's friends will ever be welcome to me and mine.

Young F. My love, let me introduce you to these ladies.

Miss H. By goles they look so fine and so stiff, I am almost ashamed to come nigh 'em.

Ama. A most engaging lady, indeed!

Miss H. Thank ye, ma'am.

Ber. And, I doubt not, will soon distinguish herself in the beau monde.

Miss H. Where is that?

Young F. You'll soon learn, my dear.

Lov. But, Lord Foppington—

Lord F. Sir!

Lov. Sir! I was not addressing myself to you, sir! Pray, who is this gentleman? He seems rather in a singular predicament—

Col. T. For so well-dressed a person, a little oddly circumstanced, indeed.

Sir T. Ha, ha, ha! So these are your friends and your guests, ha! my adventurer?

Lord F. I am struck dumb with their impudence, and cannot positively say whether I shall ever speak again or not.

Sir T. Why, sir, this modest gentleman wanted to pass himself upon me as Lord Foppington, and carry off my daughter.

Lov. A likely plot to succeed, truly; ha, ha!

Lord F. As Gad shall judge me, Loveless, I did not expect this from thee. Come, pr'ythee, confess the joke: tell Sir Tunbely that I am the real Lord Foppington, who yesterday made love to thy wife, was honoured by her with a slap on the face, and afterwards pinked through the body by thee.

Sir T. A likely story, truly, that a peer would behave thus!

Lov. A pretty fellow, indeed, that would scandalize the character he wants to assume; but what will you do with him, Sir Tunbely?

Sir T. Commit him, certainly, unless the bride and bridegroom choose to pardon him.

Lord F. Bride and bridegroom! for Gad's sake, Sir Tunbely, 'tis torture to me to hear you call 'em so.

Miss H. Why, you ugly thing, what would you have him call us—dog and cat?

Lord F. By no means, miss; for that sounds ten times more like man and wife than 't'other.

Sir T. A precious rogue, this, to come a wooing!

Re-enter a Servant.

Serv. There are some gentlefolks below to wait upon Lord Foppington.

Col. T. 'Sdeath, Tom, what will you do now?

[*Apart to Young FASHION.*]

Lord F. Now, Sir Tunbely, here are witnesses, who, I believe, are not corrupted.

Sir T. Peace, fellow! Would your lordship choose to have your guests shown here, or shall they wait till we come to 'em?

Young F. I believe, Sir Tunbely, we had better not have these visitors here yet. 'Egad, all must out.

[*Aside.*]

Lov. Confess, confess; we'll stand by you.

[*Apart to Young FASHION.*]

Lord F. Nay, Sir Tunbely, I insist on your calling evidence on both sides—and, if I do not prove that fellow an impostor—

Young F. Brother, I will save you the trouble, by now confessing that I am not what I have passed myself for. Sir Tunbely, I am a gentleman, and, I flatter myself, a man of character; but, 'tis with great pride I assure you I am not Lord Foppington.

Sir T. Ouns!—what's this?—an impostor?—a cheat?—fire and faggots, sir, if you are not Lord Foppington, who the devil are you?

Young F. Sir, the best of my condition is, I am your son-in-law; and the worst of it is, I am brother to that noble peer.

Lord F. Impudent to the last, Gad demme.

Sir T. My son-in-law! Not yet, I hope.

Young F. Pardon me, sir; thanks to the goodness of your chaplain, and the kind offices of this old gentlewoman.

Lory. 'Tis true, indeed, sir; I gave your daughter away, and Mrs. Nurse, here, was clerk.

Sir T. Knock that rascal down! But speak, Jesabel, how's this?

Nurse. Alas! your honour, forgive me! I have been overreach'd in this business as well as you. Your worship knows, if the wedding-dinner had been ready, you would have given her away with your own hands.

Sir T. But how durst you do this, without acquainting me!

Nurse. Alas! if your worship had seen how the poor thing begg'd and pray'd, and clung and twin'd about me like ivy round an old wall, you would say, I, who had nurs'd it, and rear'd it, must have had a heart like stone to refuse it.

Sir T. Ouns! I shall go mad! Unloose my lord, there, you scoundrels!

Lord F. Why, when these gentlemen are at leisure, I should be glad to congratulate you on your son-in-law with a little more freedom of address.

Miss H. 'Egad, though, I don't see which is to be my husband, after all.

Lov. Come, come, Sir Tunbely, a man of your understanding must perceive, that an affair of this kind is not to be mended by anger and reproaches.

Col. T. Take my word for it, Sir Tunbely, you are only trick'd into a son-in-law you may be proud of; my friend, Tom Fashion, is as honest a fellow as ever breath'd.

Lov. That he is, depend on't; and will hunt or drink with you most affectionately; be generous, old boy, and forgive them—

Sir T. Never. The hussy!—when I had set my heart on getting her a title.

Lord F. Now, Sir Tunbely, that I am untruss'd, give me leave to thank thee for the very extraordinary reception I have met with in thy damn'd, execrable mansion; and, at the same time, to assure you, that, of all the bumpkins and block-heads I have had the misfortune to meet with, thou art the most obstinate and egregious, strike me ugly!

Sir T. What's this? I believe you are both rogues alike.

Lord F. No, Sir Tunbely, thou wilt find, to thy unspeakable mortification, that I am the real Lord Foppington, who was to have disgraced myself by an alliance with a clod; and that thou hast match'd thy girl to a beggarly younger brother of mine, whose title-deeds might be contained in thy tobacco-box.

Sir T. Puppy! puppy!—I might prevent their being beggars, if I choose it; for I could give them as good a rent-roll as your lordship.

Lord F. Ay, old fellow, but you will not do that—for that would be acting like a Christian, and thou art a barbarian, stap my vitals!

Sir T. Udzookers! Now six such words more, and I'll forgive them directly.

Lov. 'Slife, Sir Tunbelly, you should do it, and bless yourself: ladies, what say you?

Ama. Good Sir Tunbelly, you must consent.

Ber. Come, you have been young yourself, Sir Tunbelly,

Sir T. Well, then, if I must, I must; but turn—turn that sneering lord out, however, and let me be revenged on somebody. But first look whether I am a barbarian or not; there, children, I join your hands; and, when I'm in a better humour, I'll give you my blessing.

Lov. Nobly done, Sir Tunbelly; and we shall see you dance at a grandson's christening, yet.

Miss H. By goles, though, I don't understand this; what, a'nt I to be a lady, after all? only plain Mrs. — What's my husband's name, Nurse?

Nurse. Squire Fashion.

Miss H. Squire, is he?—Well, that's better than nothing.

Lord F. Now will I put on a philosophic air, and show these people that it is not possible to put a man of my quality out of countenance. [*Aside.*] Dear Tam, since things have fallen out, pr'ythee give me leave to wish thee joy; I do it de bon cœur, strike me dumb! You have married into a family of great politeness and uncommon elegance of manners, and your bride appears to be a lady beautiful in person, modest in her deportment, refined in her sentiments, and of nice morality, split my windpipe!

Miss H. By goles, husband, break his bones, if he calls me names.

Young F. Your lordship may keep up your spirits with your grimace, if you please; I shall support mine, by Sir Tunbelly's favour, with this lady and three thousand pounds a year.

Lord F. Well adieu, Tam. Ladies, I kiss your

hands. Sir Tunbelly, I shall now quit this thy den; but, while I retain the use of my arms, I shall ever remember thou art a demn'd horrid savage; Ged demn me! [*Exit.*]

Sir T. By the mass, 'tis well he's gone—for I should have been provoked, by and by, to ha' dun un a mischief. Well, if this is a lord, I think Hoyden has luck on her side, in troth.

Col. T. She has, indeed, Sir Tunbelly.—But I hear the fiddles; his lordship, I know, had provided 'em.

Lov. Oh, a dance and a bottle, Sir Tunbelly, by all means.

Sir T. I had forgot the company below; well—what—we must be merry then, ha? and dance and drink, ha? Well, 'fore George, you sha'n't say I do these things by halves. Son-in-law, thee looks a hearty rogue, so we'll have a night on't: and which of these ladies will be the old man's partner, ha?—'Ecod, I don't know how I came to be in so good a humour.

Ber. Well, Sir Tunbelly, my friend and I both will endeavour to keep you so: you have done a generous action, and are entitled to our attention. If you should be at a loss to divert your new guests, we will assist you to relate to them the plot of your daughter's marriage, and his lordship's deserved mortification; a subject which, perhaps, may afford no bad evening's entertainment.

Sir T. 'Ecod! with all my heart; though I am a main bungler at a long story.

Ber. Never fear, we will assist you, if the tale is judged worth being repeated; but of this you may be assured, that, while the intention is evidently to please, British auditors will ever be indulgent to the errors of the performance.

[*Exeunt.*]

THE DUENNA.

AN OPERA.

BY RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN,

Author of "The School for Scandal," &c.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

DON JEROME.
DON FERDINAND.
DON ANTONIO.
CARLOS.
ISAAC MENDOZA.
LOPEZ.
FATHER PAUL.
Lay Brother.
FRANCIS.
AUGUSTINE.
LORENZO.
LEWIS.
SANCHO.
CLARA.
LOUISA.
MARGARET, the Duenna.
LOUISA'S Maid.
CLARA'S Maid.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Street.*

Enter LOPEZ, with a dark Lantern.

Lopez. Past three o'clock! soh! a notable hour for one of my regular disposition to be strolling like a bravo through the streets of Seville! Well, of all services, to serve a young lover is the hardest—not that I am an enemy to love; but my love and my master's differ strangely;—Don Ferdinand is much too gallant to eat, drink, or sleep;—now, my love gives me an appetite;—then I am fond of dreaming of my mistress, and I love dearly to toast her—This cannot be done without good sleep and good liquor; hence my partiality to a feather-bed and a bottle. What a pity, now, that I have not further time for reflections! but my master expects thee, honest Lopez, to secure his retreat from Donna Clara's window, as I guess—[*Music without*]—Hey! sure I heard music! So, so! who have we here? Oh, Don Antonio, my master's

friend, come from the masquerade, to serenade my young mistress, Donna Louisa, I suppose: soh! we shall have the old gentleman up presently. Lest he should miss his son, I had best lose no time in getting to my post. [Exit.]

Enter ANTONIO and LORENZO, with Masks and Music.

SONG.—ANTONIO.

Tell me, my lute, can thy soft strain
So gently speak thy master's pain?
So softly sing, so humbly sigh,
That, though my sleeping love shall know
Who sings—who sighs below,
Her rosy slumbers shall not fly!
Thus may some vision whisper more
Than ever I dare speak before.

1 *Mask.* Antonio, your mistress will never wake, while you sing so dolefully: love, like a cradled infant, is lulled by a sad melody.

Ant. I do not wish to disturb her rest.

1 *Mask.* The reason is, because you know she does not regard you enough to appear, if you awakened her.

Ant. Nay, then, I'll convince you. [Sings.]

The breath of morn bids hence the night;
Unveil those beauteous eyes, my fair,
For till the dawn of love is there,
I feel no day, I own no light.

LOUISA—*replies from a Window.*

Waking, I heard thy numbers chide,
Waking, the dawn did bless my sight;
'Tis Phæbus sure that woos, I cried,
Who speaks in song, who moves in light.

DON JEROME—*from another Window.*

What vagabonds are these I hear
Fiddling, fluting, rhyming, ranting,
Piping, scraping, whining, canting!
Fly, scurvy minstrels, fly!

TRIO.

Louisa. Nay, pr'ythee, father, why so rough?
Ant. An humble lover I.

Jerome. How durst you, daughter, lend an ear
To such deceitful stuff?

Quick from the window, fly!

Louisa. Adieu, Antonio!

Ant. Must you go?

Louisa. } We soon, perhaps, may meet again;

Ant. } For though hard fortune is our foe,
The god of love will fight for us.

Jerome. Reach me the blunderbuss.

Ant. & L. The god of love, who knows our pain,

Jerome. Hence, or these slugs are through your
brain.

[*Exeunt JEROME and LOUISA from the Window.*
ANTONIO and LORENZO.

SCENE II.—A Piazza.

Enter FERDINAND and LOPEZ.

Lopez. Truly, sir, I think that a little sleep,
once in a week, or so—

Ferd. Peace, fool! don't mention sleep to me.

Lopez. No, no, sir, I don't mention your low-
bred, vulgar, sound sleep; but I can't help think-
ing that a gentle slumber, or half an hour's dozing,
if it were only for the novelty of the thing—

Ferd. Peace, booby, I say!—Oh Clara, dear,
cruel disturber of my rest!

Lopez. And of mine, too.

Ferd. 'Sdeath! to trifle with me at such a junc-
ture as this—now to stand on punctilios—love
me! I don't believe she ever did.

Lopez. Nor I either.

Ferd. Or is it, that her sex never know their
desires for an hour together?

Lopez. Ah, they know them oftener than they'll
own them?

Ferd. Is there, in the world, so inconstant a
creature as Clara?

Lopez. I could name one.

Ferd. Yes; the tame fool who submits to her
caprice.

Lopez. I thought he couldn't miss it. [*Aside.*

Ferd. Is she not capricious, teasing, tyrannical,
obstinate, perverse, absurd? ay, a wilderness of
faults and follies; her looks are scorn, and her
very smiles—'sdeath! I wish I had'n't mentioned
her smiles! for she does smile with such beaming
loveliness, such fascinating brightness—Oh, death
and madness! I shall die if I lose her.

Lopez. Oh, those damned smiles have undone all.

AIR.—FERDINAND.

Could I her faults remember,

Forgetting every charm,

Soon would impartial Reason

The tyrant Love disarm.

But when enraged I number

Each failing of her mind,

Love still suggests each beauty,

And sees—while Reason's blind.

Lopez. Here comes Don Antonio, sir.

Ferd. Well, go you home—I shall be there pre-
sently.

Lopez. Ah, those cursed smiles! [*Exit.*

Enter ANTONIO.

Ferd. Antonio, Lopez tells me he left you chant-
ing before our door. Was my father waked?

Ant. Yes, yes; he has a singular affection for
music, so I left him roaring at his barred window,
like the print of Bajazet in the cage. And what
brings you out so early?

Ferd. I believe I told you, that to-morrow was
the day fixed by Don Pedro and Clara's unnatural
step-mother, for her to enter a convent, in order
that her brat might possess her fortune: made
desperate by this, I procured a key to the door,
and bribed Clara's maid to leave it unbolted; at
two this morning, I entered unperceived, and stole
to her chamber. I found her waking and weeping.

Ant. Happy Ferdinand!

Ferd. 'Sdeath! hear the conclusion. I was
rated as the most confident ruffian, for daring to
approach her room at that hour of night.

Ant. Ay, ay, this was at first?

Ferd. No such thing; she would not hear a
word from me, but threatened to raise her mother,
if I did not instantly leave her.

Ant. Well, but at last?—

Ferd. At last! why, I was forced to leave the
house, as I came in.

Ant. And did you do nothing to offend her?

Ferd. Nothing, as I hope to be saved! I believe,
I might snatch a dozen or two of kisses.

Ant. Was that all? Well, I think I never heard
of such assurance!

Ferd. Zounds! I tell you, I behaved with the
utmost respect.

Ant. O Lord! I don't mean you, but in her—
but hark ye, Ferdinand, did you leave your key
with them?

Ferd. Yes, the maid, who saw me out, took it
from the door.

Ant. Then, my life for it, her mistress elopes
after you.

Ferd. Ay, to bless my rival, perhaps. I am in
a humour to suspect every body. You loved her
once, and thought her an angel, as I do now.

Ant. Yes, I loved her, till I found she wouldn't
love me, and then I discovered that she had'n't a
good feature in her face.

AIR.

I ne'er could any lustre see
In eyes that would not look on me;
I ne'er saw nectar on a lip,
But where my own did hope to sip.
Has the maid, who seeks my heart,
Cheeks of rose, untouch'd by art?
I will own the colour true,
When yielding blushes aid their hue.

Is her hand so soft and pure?

I must press it, to be sure;

Nor can I be certain then,

Till it, grateful, press again.

Must I, with attentive eye,

Watch her heaving bosom sigh?

I will do so, when I see

That heaving bosom sigh for me.

Besides, Ferdinand, you have full security in my
love for your sister. Help me there, and I can
never disturb you with Clara.

Ferd. As far as I can, consistently with the hon-
our of our family, you know I will; but there
must be no eloping.

Ant. And yet, now, you would carry off Clara?

Ferd. Ah, that's a different case. We never
mean that others should act to our sisters and
wives, as we do to others.—But, to-morrow, Clara
is to be forced into a convent.

Ant. Well, and am not I so unfortunately cir-
cumstanced? To-morrow, your father forces Louisa
to marry Isaac, the Portuguese—but come with
me, and we'll devise something, I warrant.

Ferd. I must go home.

Ant. Well, adieu!

Ferd. But, Antonio, if you did not love my sister, you have too much honour and friendship to supplant me with Clara.

AIR.—ANTONIO.

Friendship is the bond of reason;
But if beauty disapprove,
Heaven dissolves all other treason,
In the heart that's true to love.

The faith which to my friend I swore,
As a civil oath I view;
But, to the charms which I adore,
'Tis religion to be true.

[Exit.

Ferd. There is always a levity in Antonio's manner of replying to me on this subject, that is very alarming.—Sdeath! if Clara should love him, after all.

[Exit.

SCENE III.—A Room in Don Jerome's House.

Enter LOUISA and DUENNA.

Louisa. But, my dear Margaret, my charming Duenna, do you think we shall succeed?

Duenna. I tell you again, I have no doubt on't; but it must be instantly put to the trial. Everything is prepared in your room, and for the rest, we must trust to fortune.

Louisa. My father's oath was, never to see me till I had consented to—

Duenna. 'Twas thus I overheard him say to his friend, Don Guzman—"I will demand of her to-morrow, once for all, whether she will consent to marry Isaac Mendoza: if she hesitates, I will make a solemn oath never to see or speak to her, till she returns to her duty."—These were his words.

Louisa. And on his known obstinate adherence to what he has once said, you have formed this plan for my escape. But have you secured my maid in our interest?

Duenna. She is a party in the whole; but remember, if we succeed, you resign all right and title in little Isaac, the Jew, over to me.

Louisa. That I do, with all my soul: get him, if you can, and I shall wish you joy, most heartily. He is twenty times as rich as my poor Antonio.

AIR.—LOUISA.

Thou canst not boast of fortune's store,
My love, while me they wealthy call;
But I was glad to find thee poor,
For, with my heart, I'd give thee all.
And then the grateful youth shall own,
I loved him for himself alone.

But when his worth my hand shall gain,
No word or look of mine shall show
That I the smallest thought retain
Of what my bounty did bestow.
Yet still his grateful heart shall own,
I loved him for himself alone.

Duenna. I hear Don Jerome coming. Quick, give me the last letter I brought you from Antonio,—you know that is to be the ground of my dismission. I must slip out to seal it up, as undelivered.

[Exit.—JEROME speaking within.

Enter DON JEROME and FERDINAND.

Jerome. What, I suppose, you have been serenading, too! Eh, disturbing some peaceable

neighbourhood with villanous catgut, and lascivious piping! Out on't! you set your sister, here, a vile example; but I come to tell you, madam, that I'll suffer no more of these midnight incantations—these amorous orgies, that steal the senses in the hearing; as, they say, Egyptian embalmers serve mummies, extracting the brain through the ears: however, there's an end of your frolics—Isaac Mendoza will be here presently, and to-morrow you shall marry him.

Louisa. Never, while I have life.

Ferd. Indeed, sir, I wonder how you can think of such a man for a son-in-law.

Jerome. Sir, you are very kind, to favour me with your sentiments:—and, pray, what is your objection to him?

Ferd. He is a Portuguese, in the first place.

Jerome. No such thing, boy: he has forsworn his country.

Louisa. He is a Jew.

Jerome. Another mistake: he has been a Christian these six weeks.

Ferd. Ay, he left his old religion for an estate, and has not had time to get a new one.

Louisa. But stands like a dead wall between church and synagogue, or like the blank leaves between the Old and New Testament.

Jerome. Anything more?

Ferd. But the most remarkable part of his character is, his passion for deceit and tricks of cunning.

Louisa. Though at the same time the fool predominates so much over the knave, that I am told he is generally the dupe of his own art.

Ferd. True, like an unskilful gunner, he usually misses his aim, and is hurt by the recoil of his own piece.

Jerome. Anything more?

Louisa. To sum up all, he has the worst fault a husband can have—he's not my choice.

Jerome. But you are his; and choice on one side is sufficient. Two lovers should never meet in marriage. Be you sour as you please, he is sweet-tempered, and for your good fruit, there's nothing like ingrafting on a crab. Anything more?

Louisa. I detest him as a lover, and shall ten times more as a husband.

Jerome. I don't know that. Marriage generally makes a great change—but, to cut the matter short, will you have him, or not?

Louisa. There is nothing else I could disobey you in.

Jerome. Do you value your father's peace?

Louisa. So much, that I will not fasten on him the regret of making an only daughter wretched.

Jerome. Very well, ma'am; then mark me—never more will I see or converse with you till you return to your duty. No reply! This and your chamber shall be your apartments; I never will stir out, without leaving you under lock and key; and when I'm at home, no creature can approach you but through my library. Well try who can be most obstinate. Out of my sight!—there remain, till you know your duty. [Pushes her out.

Ferd. Surely, sir, my sister's inclinations should be consulted in a matter of this kind, and some regard paid to Don Antonio, being my particular friend.

Jerome. That, doubtless, is a very great recommendation. I certainly have not paid sufficient respect to it.

Ferd. There is not a man living I would sooner choose for a brother-in-law.

Jerome. Very possible; and if you happen to have e'er a sister who is not at the same time a daughter of mine, I'm sure I shall have no objection to the relationship—but at present, if you please, we'll drop the subject.

Ferd. Nay, sir, 'tis only my regard for my sister makes me speak.

Jerome. Then pray, sir, in future, let your regard for your father make you hold your tongue.

Ferd. I have done, sir—I shall only add a wish, that you would reflect what at our age you would have felt, had you been crossed in your affection for the mother of her you are so severe to.

Jerome. Why, I must confess I had a great affection for your mother's ducats, but that was all, boy. I married her for her fortune, and she took me in obedience to her father, and a very happy couple we were. We never expected any love from one another, and so we were never disappointed. If we grumbled a little now and then, it was soon over, for we were never fond enough to quarrel; and when the good woman died, why, why—I had as lieve she had lived, and I wish every widower in Seville could say the same. I shall now go and get the key of this dressing-room—so, good son, if you have any lecture in support of disobedience to give your sister, it must be brief; so make the best of your time. D'ye hear? [*Exit.*]

Ferd. I fear, indeed, my friend Antonio has little to hope for: however, Louisa has firmness, and my father's anger will probably only increase her affection. In our intercourse with the world, it is natural for us to dislike those who are innocently the cause of our distress; but in the heart's attachment, a woman never likes a man with ar-dour till she has suffered for his sake. [*Noise.*] Soh! what bustle is here! between my father and the Duenna, too. I'll e'en get out of the way. [*Exit.*]

Enter Don JEROME with a letter, pulling in the Duenna.

Jerome. I'm astonish'd! I'm thunder-struck! here's treachery and conspiracy with a vengeance! You, Antonio's creature, and chief manager of this plot for my daughter's eloping!—you, that I placed here as a scarecrow?

Duenna. What?

Jerome. A scarecrow—to prove a decoy-duck! What have you to say for yourself?

Duenna. Well, sir, since you have forced that letter from me, and discovered my real sentiments, I scorn to renounce them. I am Antonio's friend, and it was my intention that your daughter should have served you as all such old tyrannical sots should be served. I delight in the tender passions, and would befriend all under their influence.

Jerome. The tender passions! yes, they would become those impenetrable features! Why, thou deceitful hag I placed thee as a guard to the rich blossoms of my daughter's beauty. I thought that dragon's front of thine would cry aloof to the sons of gallantry: steel traps and spring-guns seemed writ in every wrinkle of it. But you shall quit my house this instant. The tender passions, indeed! Go, thou wanton sibyl, thou amorous woman of Endor, go!

Duenna. You base, scurrilous, old—but I won't demean myself by naming what you are. Yes, savage, I'll leave your den; but I suppose you don't mean to detain my apparel. I may have my things, I presume?

ACT. DRAMA.—NO. XI.

Jerome. I took you, mistress, with your wardrobe on. What have you pilfered, eh?

Duenna. Sir, I must take leave of my mistress; she has valuables of mine; besides, my cardinal and veil are in her room.

Jerome. Your veil, forsooth! What, do you dread being gazed at? or are you afraid of your complexion? Well, go, take your leave, and get your veil and cardinal! soh! you quit the house within these five minutes. In—in—quick! [*Exit Duenna.*] Here was a precious plot of mischief! These are the comforts daughters bring us!

AIR.

If a daughter you have, she's the plague of your life;
No peace shall you know, though you've buried
your wife:

At twenty she mocks at the duty you taught her:
O what a plague is an obstinate daughter!

Sighing and whining,

Dying and pining;

O what a plague is an obstinate daughter!

When scarce in their teens, they have wit to perplex us;

With letters and lovers for ever they vex us;

While each still rejects the fair suitor you've brought her;

O what a plague is an obstinate daughter!

Wrangling and jangling,

Flouting and pouting;

O what a plague is an obstinate daughter!

Enter LOUISA, dressed as the Duenna, with cardinal and veil, seeming to cry.

Jerome. This way, mistress; this way. What, I warrant, a tender parting! Soh! tears of turpentine down those deal cheeks. Ay, you may well hide your head. Yes, whine till your heart breaks; but I'll not hear one word of excuse—so you are right to be dumb. This way. [*Pushing her out.*]

Enter Duenna.

Duenna. So, speed you well, sagacious Don Jerome! Oh, rare effects of passion and obstinacy! Now shall I try whether I can't play the fine lady as well as my mistress; and, if I succeed, I may be a fine lady for the rest of my life. I'll lose no time to equip myself. [*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.—The Court before Don Jerome's House.

Enter Don JEROME and LOUISA.

Jerome. Come, mistress, there is your way. The world lies before you, so troop, thou antiquated Eve, thou original sin. Hold, yonder is some fellow skulking; perhaps it is Antonio. Go to him, d'ye hear? and tell him to make you amends, and as he has got you turned away, tell him I say it is but just he should take you himself: go. [*Exit LOUISA.*] Soh! I am rid of her, thank Heaven! and now I shall be able to keep my oath, and confine my daughter with better security. [*Exit.*]

SCENE V.—The Piazza.

Enter CLARA and her Maïa.

Maid. But where, madam, is it you intend to go?
Clara. Any where to avoid the selfish violence of my mother-in-law, and Ferdinand's insolent importunity.

Maid. Indeed, ma'am, since we have profited by Don Ferdinand's key, in making our escape, I think we had best find him, if it were only to thank him.

Clara. No: he has offended me exceedingly.

[Retires.]

Enter LOUISA.

Louisa. So, I have succeeded in being turned out of doors—but how shall I find Antonio? I dare not inquire for him, for fear of being discovered. I would send to my friend Clara, but that I doubt her prudery would condemn me.

[Apart.]

Maid. Then suppose, ma'am, you were to try if your friend, Donna Louisa, would not receive you?

[Apart to CLARA.]

Clara. No: her notions of filial duty are so severe, she would certainly betray me.

[Apart.]

Louisa. Clara is of a cold temper, and would think this step of mine highly forward.

[Apart.]

Clara. Louisa's respect for her father is so great, she would not credit the unkindness of mine.

[Apart.]

[LOUISA turns, and sees CLARA and Maid.]

Louisa. Ha! who are those? Sure one is Clara. If it be, I'll trust her.

[Advances.]

Clara. Louisa! and in masquerade, too!

Louisa. You will be more surprised when I tell you, that I have run away from my father.

Clara. Surprised indeed! and I should certainly chide you most horribly, only that I have just run away from mine.

Louisa. My dear Clara!

[Embrace.]

Clara. Dear sister! and whither are you going?

Louisa. To find the man I love, to be sure. And, I presume, you would have no aversion to meet with my brother?

Clara. Indeed I should: he has behaved so ill to me, I don't believe I shall ever forgive him.

AIR.—CLARA.

When sable night, each drooping plant restoring,

Wept o'er the flowers her breath did cheer,

As some sad widow, o'er her babe deploring,

Wakes its beauty with a tear;

When all did sleep, whose weary hearts did borrow

One hour from love and care to rest,

Lo! as I press'd my couch in silent sorrow,

My lover caught me to his breast:

He vow'd he came to save me

From those who would enslave me!

Then kneeling,

Kisses stealing,

Endless faith he swore;

But soon I chid him thence,

For had his fond pretence

Obtain'd one favour then,

And he had press'd again,

I fear'd my treacherous heart might grant him more.

Louisa. Well, for all this, I would have sent him to plead his pardon, but that I would not yet awhile have him know of my flight. And where do you hope to find protection?

Clara. The Lady Abbess of the convent of St. Catherine is a relation and kind friend of mine. I shall be secure with her, and you had best go thither with me.

Louisa. No; I am determined to find Antonio first; and, as I live, here comes the very man I will employ to seek him for me.

Clara. Who is he? he's a strange figure!

Louisa. Yes; that sweet creature is the man whom my father has fixed on for my husband.

Clara. And will you speak to him? Are you mad?

Louisa. He is the fittest man in the world for my purpose; for, though I was to have married him to-morrow, he is the only man in Seville, who, I am sure, never saw me in his life.

Clara. And how do you know him?

Louisa. He arrived but yesterday, and he was shown to me from the window, as he visited my father.

Clara. Well, I'll begone.

Louisa. Hold, my dear Clara: a thought has struck me. Will you give me leave to borrow your name, as I see occasion?

Clara. It will but disgrace you—but use it as you please. I dare not stay—[Going]—but, Louisa, if you should see your brother, be sure you don't inform him that I have taken refuge with the Dame Prior of the convent of St. Catherine, on the left hand side of the Piazza, which leads to the church of St. Anthony.

Louisa. Ha! ha! ha! I'll be very particular in my directions where he may not find you. [Exeunt CLARA and Maid.] So! my swain, yonder has done admiring himself, and draws nearer.

Enter ISAAC and CARLOS, ISAAC with a pocket-glass.

Isaac. [Looking in the glass.] I tell you, friend Carlos, I will please myself in the habit of my chin.

Carlos. But, my dear friend, how can you think to please a lady with such a face?

Isaac. Why, what's the matter with the face? I think it is a very engaging face; and, I am sure, a lady must have very little taste, who could dislike my beard. [Sees LOUISA.] See now!—I'll die if here is not a little damsel struck with it already.

Louisa. Signior, are you disposed to oblige a lady, who greatly wants your assistance? [Unveils.]

Isaac. Egad, a very pretty black-eyed girl! She has certainly taken a fancy to me, Carlos. First, ma'am, I must beg the favour of your name.

Louisa. So! it's well I am provided. [Aside.] My name, sir, is Donna Clara d'Almanza.

Isaac. What!—Don Guzman's daughter? I faith, I just now heard she was missing.

Louisa. But sure, sir, you have too much gallantry and honour to betray me, whose fault is love?

Isaac. So! a passion for me! Poor girl! Why, ma'am, as for betraying you, I don't see how I could get anything by it; so you may rely on my honour; but as for your love, I am sorry your case is so desperate.

Louisa. Why so, signior?

Isaac. Because I am positively engaged to another—an't I, Carlos?

Louisa. Nay, but hear me.

Isaac. No, no; what should I hear for? It is impossible for me to court you in an honourable way; and, for anything else, if I were to comply now, I suppose you have some ungrateful brother, or cousin, who would want to cut my throat for my civility: so, truly, you had best go home again.

Louisa. Odious wretch! [Aside.] But, good signior, it is Antonio d'Ercilla, on whose account I have eloped.

Isaac. How! what! It is not with me, then, that you are in love?

Louisa. No, indeed, it is not.

Isaac. Then you are a forward, impertinent simpleton, and I shall certainly acquaint your father.

Louisa. Is this your gallantry?

Isaac. Yet, hold—Antonio d'Ercilla, did you say. Egad, I may make something of this—Antonio d'Ercilla?

Louisa. Yes; and if ever you hope to prosper in love, you will bring me to him.

Isaac. By St. Iago, and I will, too. Carlos, this Antonio is one who rivals me (as I have heard) with Louisa. Now, if I could hamper him with this girl, I should have the field to myself. Eh, Carlos! A lucky thought, isn't it?

Carlos. Yes, very good—very good.

Isaac. Ah! this little brain is never at a loss. Cunning Isaac! cunning rogue! Donna Clara, will you trust yourself awhile to my friend's discretion?

Louisa. May I rely on you, good signior?

Carlos. Lady, it is impossible I should deceive you.

AIR.

Had I a heart for falsehood framed,
I ne'er could injure you;
For though your tongue no promise claim'd,
Your charms would make me true.
To you no soul shall bear deceit,
No stranger offer wrong;
But friends in all the aged you'll meet,
And lovers in the young.

But when they learn that you have blest
Another with your heart,
They'll bid aspiring passions rest,
And act a brother's part.
Then, lady, dread not here deceit,
Nor fear to suffer wrong;
For friends in all the aged you'll meet,
And brothers in the young.

Isaac. Conduct the lady to my lodgings, Carlos: I must haste to Don Jerome. Perhaps you know Louisa, ma'am. She is divinely handsome, isn't she?

Louisa. You must excuse me not joining with you.

Isaac. Why, I have heard it on all hands.

Louisa. Her father is uncommonly partial to her; but I believe you will find she has rather a matronly air.

Isaac. Carlos, this is all envy: you pretty girls never speak well of one another. Hark ye, find out Antonio, and I'll saddle him with this scrape, I warrant! Oh, 'twas the luckiest thought! Donna Clara, your very obedient—Carlos, to your post.

DUET.

Isaac. My mistress expects me, and I must to her,

Or how can I hope for a smile?

Louisa. Soon may you return a prosperous wooer,
But think what I suffer the while:

Alone, and away from the man whom I love,

In strangers I'm forced to confide.

Isaac. Dear lady, my friend you may trust, and he'll prove,

Your servant, protector, and guide.

AIR.—CARLOS.

Gentle maid, ah! why suspect me?

Let me serve thee—then reject me.

Canst thou trust, and I deceive thee?
Art thou sad, and shall I grieve thee?
Gentle maid, ah! why suspect me?
Let me serve thee—then reject me.

TRIO.

Louisa. Never may'st thou happy be,
If in aught thou'rt false to me.

Isaac. Never may he happy be,
If in aught he's false to thee.

Carlos. Never may I happy be,
If in aught I'm false to thee.

Louisa. Never may'st thou, &c.

Isaac. Never may he, &c.

Carlos. Never may I, &c. [Exeunt.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Library in Don JEROME's House.

Enter Don JEROME and ISAAC.

Jerome. Ha! ha! ha! Run away from her father! Has she given him the slip? Ha! ha! ha! Poor Don Guzman!

Isaac. Ay; and I am to conduct her to Antonio; by which means, you see, I shall hamper him so that he can give me no disturbance with your daughter. This is trap, isn't it? A nice stroke of cunning, eh?

Jerome. Excellent! excellent! Yes, yes, carry her to him; hamper him, by all means. Ha! ha! ha! poor Don Guzman! An old fool! imposed on by a girl!

Isaac. Nay, they have the cunning of serpents, that's the truth on't.

Jerome. Psha! they are cunning only when they have fools to deal with. Why don't my girl play me such a trick? Let her cunning overreach my caution, I say—eh! little Isaac!

Isaac. True, true; or let me see any of the sex make a fool of me. No, no, egad, little Solomon (as my aunt used to call me) understands tricking a little too well.

Jerome. Ay, but such a driveller as Don Guzman—

Isaac. And such a dupe as Antonio—

Jerome. True; sure never were seen such a couple of credulous simpletons; but come, 'tis time you should see my daughter. You must carry on the siege by yourself, friend Isaac.

Isaac. Sir, you'll introduce—

Jerome. No—I have sworn a solemn oath not to see or speak to her till she renounces her disobedience: win her to that, and she gains a father and a husband at once.

Isaac. 'Gad, I shall never be able to deal with her alone. Nothing keeps me in such awe as perfect beauty; now there is something consoling and encouraging in ugliness.

SONG.

Give Isaac the nymph who no beauty can boast,
But health and good-humour to make her his toast:
If straight, I don't mind whether slender or fat,
And six feet or four—we'll ne'er quarrel for that.

Whate'er her complexion, I vow I don't care ;
If brown it is lasting, more pleasing if fair ;
And though in her face I no dimples should see,
Let her smile, and each dell is a dimple to me.

Let her locks be the reddest that ever were seen,
And her eyes may be e'en any colour but green ;
Be they light, gray, or black, their lustre and hue,
I swear I've no choice, only let her have two.

Tis true, I'd dispense with a throne on her back ;
And white teeth, I own, are genteeler than black ;
A little round chin, too, 's a beauty, I've heard ;
But I only desire she may not have a beard.

Jerome. You will change your note, my friend,
when you've seen Louisa.

Isaac. Oh, Don Jerome, the honour of your alliance—

Jerome. Ay, but her beauty will affect you. She is, though I say it, who am her father, a very prodigy. There you will see features ! with an eye like mine—yes, i'faith, there is a kind of wicked sparkling—something of a roguish brightness, that shows her to be my own.

Isaac. Pretty rogue !

Jerome. Then, when she smiles, you'll see a little dimple in one cheek only ; a beauty it is certainly, yet you shall not say which is prettiest, the cheek with the dimple or the cheek without.

Isaac. Pretty rogue !

Jerome. Then the roses 'on those cheeks are shaded with a sort of velvet down, that gives a delicacy to the glow of health.

Isaac. Pretty rogue !

Jerome. Her skin pure dimity, yet more fair, being spangled here and there with a golden freckle.

Isaac. Charming pretty rogue ! Pray how is the tone of her voice ?

Jerome. Remarkably pleasing—but if you could prevail on her to sing, you would be enchanted. She is a nightingale—a Virginia nightingale—but come, come ; her maid shall conduct you to her antechamber.

Isaac. Well, egad, I'll pluck up resolution, and meet her frowns intrepidly.

Jerome. Ay ! woo her briskly—win her, and give me a proof of your address, my little Solomon.

Isaac. But hold—I expect my friend Carlos to call on me here. If he comes, will you send him to me ?

Jerome. I will. Lauretta, come—she'll show you to the room. What ! do you droop ? here's a mournful face to make love with ! [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—LOUISA'S Dressing-room.

Enter Maid and ISAAC.

Maid. Sir, my mistress will wait on you presently.

Isaac. When she's at leisure—don't hurry her. [Exit Maid.] I wish I had ever practised a love scene !—I doubt I shall make a poor figure. I couldn't be more afraid, if I was going before the Inquisition. So ! the door opens—yes, she's coming—the very rustling of her silk has a disdainful sound.

Enter Duenna, dressed as LOUISA.

Now dar'n't I look round, for the soul of me :—her beauty will certainly strike me dumb, if I do. I wish she'd speak first.

Duenna. Sir, I attend your pleasure.

Isaac. So ! the ice is broke, and a pretty civil beginning, too ! Hem ! madam—miss—I'm all attention.

Duenna. Nay, sir, 'tis I who should listen, and you propose.

Isaac. Egad, this isn't so disdainful, neither. I believe I may venture to look. No—I dar'n't—one glance of those roguish sparklers would fix me again.

Duenna. You seem thoughtful, sir. Let me persuade you to sit down.

Isaac. So, so ; she mollifies apace—she's struck with my figure ! This attitude has had its effect.

Duenna. Come, sir, here's a chair.

Isaac. Madam, the greatness of your goodness overpowers me. That a lady so lovely should deign to turn her beauteous eyes on me—

[She takes his hand—he turns, and sees her.]

Duenna. You seem surprised at my condescension.

Isaac. Why, yes, madam, I am a little surprised at it. Zounds ! this can never be Louisa :—she's as old as my mother ! [Aside.]

Duenna. But former prepossessions give way to my papa's commands.

Isaac. [Aside.] Her papa ! Yes, 'tis she, then. Lord ! Lord ! how blind some parents are !

Duenna. Signior Isaac.

Isaac. Truly, the little damsel was right :—she has rather a matronly air, indeed ! Ah ! 'tis well my affections are fixed on her fortune, and not her person.

Duenna. Signior, won't you sit ? [She sits.]

Isaac. Pardon me, madam ; I have scarce recovered my astonishment at—your condescension, madam. She has the devil's own dimples, to be sure ! [Aside.]

Duenna. I do not wonder, sir, that you are surprised at my affability. I own, signior, that I was vastly prepossessed against you, and being teased by my papa, I did give some encouragement to Antonio ; but then, sir, you were described to me as quite a different person.

Isaac. Ay, and so were you to me, upon my soul, madam.

Duenna. But when I saw you, I was never more struck in my life.

Isaac. That was just my case too, madam : I was struck all on a heap, for my part.

Duenna. Well, sir, I see our misapprehension has been mutual. You expected to find me haughty and averse, and I was taught to believe you a little, black, snub-nosed fellow, without person, manners, or address.

Isaac. Egad, I wish she had answered her picture as well.

Duenna. But, sir, your air is noble—something so liberal in your carriage, with so penetrating an eye, and so bewitching a smile !

Isaac. Egad, now I look at her again, I don't think she is so ugly.

Duenna. So little like a Jew, and so much like a gentleman !

Isaac. Well, certainly, there is something pleasing in the tone of her voice.

Duenna. You will pardon this breach of decorum in praising you thus ; but my joy in being so agreeably deceived has given me such a flow of spirits !

Isaac. O, dear lady, may I thank those dear lips

for this goodness? [*Kisses her.*] Why, she has a pretty sort of velvet down, that's the truth on't!

[*Aside.*]

Duenna. O, sir, you have the most insinuating manner: but indeed you should get rid of that odious beard—one might as well kiss an hedgehog.

Isaac. Yes, ma'am, the razor wouldn't be amiss—for either of us. [*Aside.*] Could you favour me with a song?

Duenna. Willingly, sir, though I am rather hoarse.—Ahem! [*Begins to sing.*]

Isaac. Very like a Virginia nightingale! Ma'am, I perceive you're hoarse—I beg you will not distress—

Duenna. Oh, not in the least distressed. Now sir.

SONG.

When a tender maid
Is first assay'd
By some admiring swain,
How her blushes rise,
If she meets his eyes,
While he unfolds his pain!
If he takes her hand, she trembles quite;
Touch her lips, and she swoons outright,
While a pit-a-pat, &c.
Her heart avows her fright.
But in time appear
Fewer signs of fear,—
The youth she boldly views;
If her hand he grasps,
Or her bosom clasps,
No mantle blush ensues.
Then to church well pleased the lovers move,
While her smiles her contentment prove,
And a pit-a-pat, &c.
Her heart avows her love.

Isaac. Charming, ma'am! Enchanting! and, truly, your notes put me in mind of one that's very dear to me; a lady, indeed, whom you greatly resemble!

Duenna. How! is there, then, another so dear to you?

Isaac. O, no, ma'am,—you mistake; it was my mother I meant.

Duenna. Come, sir, I see you are amazed and confounded at my condescension, and know not what to say!

Isaac. It is very true, indeed, ma'am; but it is a judgment, I look on it as a judgment on me, for delaying to urge the time when you'll permit me to complete my happiness, by acquainting Don Jerome with your condescension.

Duenna. Sir, I must frankly own to you, that I can never be yours with my papa's consent.

Isaac. Good lack! how so?

Duenna. When my father in his passion, swore he would never see me again till I acquiesced in his will, I also made a vow, that I would never take a husband from his hand: nothing shall make me break that oath: but, if you have spirit and contrivance enough to carry me off without his knowledge, I'm yours.

Isaac. Hum!

Duenna. Nay, sir, if you hesitate—

Isaac. I'faith, no bad whim this. If I take her at her word, I shall secure her fortune, and avoid making any settlement in return: thus, I shall not only cheat the lover, but the father too. Oh,

cunning rogue, Isaac! Ay, ay, let this little brain alone. Egad, I'll take her in the mind.

Duenna. Well, sir, what's your determination

Isaac. Madam, I was dumb only from rapture. I applaud your spirit, and joyfully close with your proposal; for which, thus let me on this lily hand express my gratitude.

Duenna. Well, sir, you must get my father's consent to walk with me in the garden. But by no means inform him of my kindness to you.

Isaac. No, to be sure; that would spoil all: but, trust me, when tricking is the word—let me alone for a piece of cunning: this very day you shall be out of his power.

Duenna. Well, I leave the management of it all to you. I perceive plainly, sir, that you are not one that can be easily outwitted.

Isaac. Egad, you're right, madam—you're right, i'faith.

Enter Maid.

Maid. Here's a gentleman at the door, who begs permission to speak with Signior Isaac.

Isaac. A friend of mine, ma'am, and a trusty friend—let him come in. [*Exit Maid.*] He is one to be depended on, ma'am.

Enter CARLOS.

So, coz. [*Aside.*]

Carlos. I have left Donna Clara at your lodging—
—but can no where find Antonio.

Isaac. Well, I will search him out myself. Carlos, you rogue, I thrive, I prosper.

Carlos. Where is your mistress?

Isaac. There, you booby, there she stands.

Carlos. Why, she's damned ugly!

Isaac. Hush! [*Stops his mouth.*]

Duenna. What is your friend saying, signior?

Isaac. Oh, ma'am, he is expressing his raptures at such charms as he never saw before,—eh, Carlos?

Carlos. Ay, such as I never saw before, indeed!

Duenna. You are a very obliging gentleman. Well, Signior Isaac, I believe we had better part for the present. Remember our plan.

Isaac. Oh, ma'am, it is written in my heart, fixed as the image of those divine beauties, Adieu, idol of my soul!—yet once more permit me—

[*Kisses her.*]

Duenna. Sweet, courteous sir, adieu!

Isaac. Your slave eternally. Come, Carlos, say something civil at taking leave.

Carlos. I'faith, Isaac, she is the hardest woman to compliment I ever saw: however, I'll try something I had studied for the occasion.

SONG.

Ah! sure a pair was never seen,

So justly form'd to meet by nature:

The youth excelling so in mien,

The maid in ev'ry grace of feature.

Oh, how happy are such lovers,

When kindred beauties each discovers!

For surely she

Was made for thee,

And thou to bless this lovely creature.

So mild your looks, your children thence

Will early learn the task of duty;

The boys with all their father's sense,

The girls with all their mother's beauty.

Oh! how happy to inherit
At once such graces and such spirit!
Thus while you live
May fortune give
Each blessing equal to your merit!

[*Exeunt.*]SCENE III.—*A Library.*JEROME and FERDINAND *discovered.*

Jerome. Object to Antonio? I have said it: his poverty, can you acquit him of that?

Ferd. Sir, I own he is not over rich; but he is of as ancient and honourable a family as any in the kingdom.

Jerome. Yes, I know the beggars are a very ancient family in most kingdoms; but never in great repute, boy.

Ferd. Antonio, sir, has many amiable qualities.

Jerome. But he is poor. Can you clear him of that, I say? Is he not a gay, dissipated rake, who has squandered his patrimony?

Ferd. Sir, he inherited but little; and that, his generosity, more than his profuseness, has stripped him of; but he has never sullied his honour, which, with his title, has outlived his means.

Jerome. Pshaw! you talk like a blockhead! Nobility, without an estate, is as ridiculous as gold-lace on a frize coat.

Ferd. This language, sir, would better become a Dutch or English trader, than a Spaniard.

Jerome. Yes; and those Dutch and English traders, as you call them, are the wiser people. Why, booby, in England, they were formerly as nice, as to birth and family, as we are; but they have long discovered what a wonderful purifier gold is; and now, no one there regards pedigree in anything but a horse. Oh, here comes Isaac!

I hope he has prospered in his suit.

Ferd. Doubtless, that agreeable figure of his must have helped his suit surprisingly.

Jerome. How now? [*FERDINAND walks aside.*]

Enter ISAAC.

Well, my friend, have you softened her?

Isaac. Oh, yes; I have softened her.

Jerome. What, does she come to?

Isaac. Why, truly, she was kinder than I expected to find her.

Jerome. And the dear little angel was civil, eh?

Isaac. Yes, the pretty little angel was very civil.

Jerome. I'm transported to hear it.

Isaac. Ay, and if all the family were transported, it would not signify. [*Aside.*]

Jerome. Well, and you were astonished at her beauty, eh?

Isaac. I was astonished, indeed! Pray, how old is miss?

Jerome. How old? Let me see—eight and twelve: she is twenty.

Isaac. Twenty?

Jerome. Ay, to a month.

Isaac. Then, upon my soul, she is the oldest-looking girl of her age in Christendom!

Jerome. Do you think so? but, I believe, you will not see a prettier girl.

Isaac. Here and there one.

Jerome. Louisa has the family face.

Isaac. Yes, egad, I should have taken it for a family face, and one that has been in the family some time, too. [*Aside.*]

Jerome. She has her father's eyes.

Isaac. Truly, I should have guessed them to have been so. If she had her mother's spectacles, I believe she would not see the worse. [*Aside.*]

Jerome. Her aunt Ursula's nose, and her grandmother's forehead, to a hair.

Isaac. Ay, 'faith, and her grandfather's chin, to a hair. [*Aside.*]

Jerome. Well, if she was but as dutiful as she's handsome—and hark ye, friend Isaac, she is none of your made-up beauties—her charms are of the lasting kind.

Isaac. I'faith, so they should; for if she be but twenty now, she may double her age before her years will overtake her face.

Jerome. Why, zounds, Master Isaac! you are not sneering, are you?

Isaac. Why now, seriously, Don Jerome, do you think your daughter handsome?

Jerome. By this light, she's as handsome a girl as any in Seville.

Isaac. Then, by these eyes, I think her as plain a woman as ever I beheld.

Jerome. By St. Iago, you must be blind.

Isaac. No, no; 'tis you are partial.

Jerome. How! have I neither sense nor taste? If a fair skin, fine eyes, teeth of ivory, with a lovely bloom, and a delicate shape,—if these, with a heavenly voice, and a world of grace, are not charms, I know not what you call beautiful.

Isaac. Good lack! with what eyes a father sees! As I have life, she is the very reverse of all this. As for the dimity skin you told me of, I swear, 'tis as thorough nankeen as ever I saw! For her eyes, their utmost merit is not squinting! For her teeth, where there is one of ivory, its neighbour is pure ebony; black and white alternately, just like the keys of an harpsichord. Then, as to her singing, and heavenly voice—by this hand, she has a shrill, cracked pipe, that sounds, for all the world, like a child's trumpet.

Jerome. Why, you little Hebrew scoundrel, do you mean to insult me? Out of my house, I say!

Ferd. Dear sir, what's the matter?

Jerome. Why, this Israelite here has the impudence to say your sister's ugly.

Ferd. He must be either blind or insolent.

Isaac. So, I find they are all in a story. Egad, I believe I have gone too far!

Ferd. Sure, sir, there must be some mistake: it can't be my sister whom he has seen.

Jerome. 'Sdeath! you are as great a fool as he! What mistake can there be? Did not I lock up Louisa, and hav'n't I the key in my own pocket? And didn't her maid show him into the dressing-room? And yet you talk of a mistake! No, the Portuguese meant to insult me! and, but that this roof protects him, old as I am, this sword should do me justice.

Isaac. I must get off as well as I can: her fortune is not the less handsome.

DUET.

Isaac. Believe me, good sir, I ne'er meant to offend;
My mistress I love, and I value my friend:
To win her, and wed her, is still my request,
For better, for worse, and I swear I don't jest.

Jerome. Zounds! you'd best not provoke me, my rage is so high.

Isaac. Hold him fast, I beseech you, his rage is so high.

Good sir, you're too hot, and this place I must fly.

Jerome. You're a knave and a sot, and this place you'd best fly.

Isaac. Don Jerome, come now, let us lay aside all joking, and be serious.

Jerome. How?

Isaac. Ha! ha! ha! I'll be hanged if you hav'n't taken my abuse of your daughter seriously.

Jerome. You meant it so, did not you?

Isaac. O mercy, no! a joke—just to try how angry it would make you.

Jerome. Was that all, if faith? I didn't know you had been such a wag. Ha! ha! ha! By St. Iago! you made me very angry, though. Well, and you do think Louisa handsome?

Isaac. Handsome! Venus de Medicis was a sibyl to her.

Jerome. Give me your hand, you little jocose rogue. Egad, I thought we had been all off.

Ferd. So! I was in hopes this would have been a quarrel; but I find the Jew is too cunning.

Jerome. Ay, this gust of passion has made me dry—I am seldom ruffled. Order some wine in the next room. Let us drink the poor girl's health. Poor Louisa! ugly, eh! Ha! ha! ha! 'Twas a very good joke, indeed!

Isaac. And a very true one, for all that.

Jerome. And, Ferdinand, I insist upon your drinking success to my friend.

Ferd. Sir, I will drink success to my friend, with all my heart,

Jerome. Come, little Solomon, if any sparks of anger had remained, this would be the only way to quench them.

TRIO.

A bumper of good liquor
Will end a contest quicker
Than justice, judge, or vicar.
So fill a cheerful glass,
And let good humour pass;
But if more deep the quarrel,
Why, sooner drain the barrel,
Than be the hateful fellow,
That's crabbed when he's mellow.
A bumper, &c. [Ereunt.]

SCENE IV.—ISAAC'S Lodgings.

Enter LOUISA.

Louisa. Was ever truant daughter so whimsically circumstanced as I am! I have sent my intended husband to look after my lover—the man of my father's choice is gone to bring me the man of my own: but how dispiriting is this interval of expectation!

Enter CARLOS.

So, friend, is Antonio found?

Carlos. I could not meet with him, lady; but I doubt not, my friend Isaac will be here with him presently.

Louisa. Oh, shame! you have used no diligence. Is this your courtesy to a lady, who has trusted herself to your protection?

Carlos. Indeed, madam, I have not been remiss.

Louisa. Well, well; but if either of you had known how each moment of delay weighs upon the heart of her who loves, and waits the object of her love, oh, ye would not then have trifled thus!

Carlos. Alas, I know it well!

Louisa. Were you ever in love, then?

Carlos. I was, lady; but, while I have life, will never be again.

Louisa. Was your mistress so cruel?

Carlos. If she had always been so, I should have been happier.

SONG.

O, had my love ne'er smiled on me,
I ne'er had known such anguish;
But think how false, how cruel she,
To bid me cease to languish—
To bid me hope her hand to gain,
Breathe on a flame half perish'd;
And then, with cold and fix'd disdain,
To kill the hope she cherish'd.

Not worse his fate, who on a wreck,
That drove as winds did blow it,
Silent had left the shatter'd deck,
To find a grave below it.
Then land was cried—no more resign'd,
He glow'd with joy to hear it;
Not worse his fate, his woe, to find
The wreck must sink ere near it.

Louisa. As I live, here is your friend coming with Antonio. I'll retire for a moment, to surprise him. [Exit.]

Enter ISAAC and ANTONIO.

Ant. Indeed, my good friend, you must be mistaken. Clara d'Almanza in love with me, and employ you to bring me to meet her! It is impossible!

Isaac. That you shall see in an instant. Carlos, where is the lady? In the next room, is she?

Ant. Nay, if that lady is really here, she certainly wants me to conduct her to a dear friend of mine, who has long been her lover.

Isaac. Pshaw! I tell you 'tis no such thing. You are the man she wants, and nobody but you. Here's ado to persuade you to take a pretty girl that's dying for you!

Ant. But I have no affection for this lady.

Isaac. And you have for Louisa, eh? but, take my word for it, Antonio, you have no chance there—so you may as well secure the good that offers itself to you.

Ant. And could you reconcile it to your conscience, to supplant your friend?

Isaac. Pish! Conscience has no more to do with gallantry, than it has with politics. Why, you are no honest fellow, if love can't make a rogue of you—so come, do go in, and speak to her, at least.

Ant. Well, I have no objection to that.

Isaac. [Opens the door.] There—there she is, yonder by the window. Get in, do. [Pushes him in, and half shuts the door.] Now, Carlos, now I shall hamper him, I warrant. Stay, I'll peep how they go on. Egad, he looks confoundedly posed:—now she's coaxing him:—see, Carlos, he begins to come to. Ay, ay, he'll soon forget his conscience.

Carlos. Look:—now they are both laughing!

Isaac. Ay, so they are. Yes, yes, they are laughing at that dear friend he talked of. Ay, poor devil, they have outwitted him.

Carlos. Now he's kissing her hand.

Isaac. Yes, yes, 'faith, they're agreed:—he's caught, he's entangled. My dear Carlos, we have brought it about. O this little cunning head! I'm a Machiavel—a very Machiavel.

Carlos. I hear somebody inquiring for you. I'll see who it is. [Exit CARLOS.]

Enter ANTONIO and LOUISA.

Ant. Well, my good friend, this lady has so entirely convinced me of the certainty of your success at Don Jerome's, that I now resign my pretensions there.

Isaac. You never did a wiser thing, believe me—and, as for deceiving your friend, that's nothing at all. Tricking is all fair in love, isn't it, madam?

Louisa. Certainly, sir, and I am particularly glad to find you are of that opinion.

Isaac. O lud! yes, ma'am. Let any one outwit me that can, I say—but here, let me join your hands.—There, you lucky rogue! I wish you happily married, from the bottom of my soul!

Louisa. And I am sure if you wish it, no one else should prevent it.

Isaac. Now, Antonio, we are rivals no more; so let us be friends, will you?

Ant. With all my heart, Isaac.

Isaac. It is not every man, let me tell you, that would have taken such pains, or been so generous to a rival.

Ant. No, faith; I don't believe there's another beside yourself in all Spain.

Isaac. Well, but you resign all pretensions to the other lady!

Ant. That I do, most sincerely.

Isaac. I doubt you have a little hankering there still.

Ant. None in the least, upon my soul.

Isaac. I mean after her fortune.

Ant. No, believe me. You are heartily welcome to everything she has.

Isaac. Well, 'faith, you have the best of the bargain, as to beauty, twenty to one. Now I'll tell you a secret:—I am to carry off Louisa this very evening.

Louisa. Indeed!

Isaac. Yes: she has sworn not to take a husband from her father's hand—so, I've persuaded him to trust her to walk with me in the garden, and then we shall give him the slip.

Louisa. And is Don Jerome to know nothing of this?

Isaac. O lud, no! There lies the jest. Don't you see that, by this step, I overreach him? I shall be entitled to the girl's fortune, without settling a ducat on her. Ha! ha! ha! This is trap!—I'm a cunning dog, an't I? A sly little villain, eh?

Ant. Ha! ha! you are, indeed

Isaac. Roguish, you'll say; but keen, eh?—devilish keen.

Ant. So you are, indeed—keen—very keen.

Isaac. And what a laugh we shall have at Don Jerome, when the truth comes out! eh?

Louisa. Yes, I'll answer for it, we shall have a good laugh when the truth comes out. Ha! ha! ha!

Enter CARLOS.

Carlos. Here are the dancers come to practise the fandango you intended to have honoured Donna Louisa with

Isaac. O, I sha'n't want them; but as I must pay them, I'll see a caper for my money. Will you excuse me?

Louisa. Willingly.

Isaac. Here's my friend, whom you may command for any services. Madam, your most obedient—Antonio, I wish you all happiness. Oh, the easy blockhead! what a tool I have made of him!—This was a master-piece! [Aside.] [Exit.]

Louisa. Carlos, will you be my guard again, and convey me to the convent of St. Catharine?

Ant. Why, Louisa—why should you go there?

Louisa. I have my reasons, and you must not be seen to go with me. I shall write from thence to my father: perhaps, when he finds what he has driven me to, he may relent.

Ant. I have no hope from him. O Louisa! in these arms should be your sanctuary.

Louisa. Be patient but for a little while:—my father cannot force me from thence. But let me see you there before evening, and I will explain myself.

Ant. I shall obey.

Louisa. Come, friend. Antonio, Carlos has been a lover himself.

Ant. Then he knows the value of his trust.

Carlos. You shall not find me unfaithful.

TRIO.

Soft pity never leaves the gentle breast
Where love has been received a welcome guest:
As wandering saints poor huts have sacred made,
He hallows every heart he once has sway'd;
And when his presence we no longer share,
Still leaves compassion as a relic there. [Exeunt.]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Library.

Enter JEROME and Servant.

Jerome. Why, I never was so amazed in my life! Louisa gone off with Isaac Mendoza! What! steal away with the very man whom I wanted her to marry!—elope with her own husband, as it were!—it is impossible!

Serv. Her maid says, sir, they had your leave to walk in the garden, while you were abroad. The door by the shrubbery was found open, and they have not been heard of since. [Exit.]

Jerome. Well, it is the most unaccountable affair! 'Sdeath! there is certainly some infernal mystery in it, I can't comprehend!

Enter Servant, with a letter.

Serv. Here is a letter, sir, from Signior Isaac.

[Exit.]

Jerome. So, so, this will explain—ay, Isaac Mendoza—let me see—

[Reads.]

"Dear st sir,

"You must, doubtless, be much surprised at my flight with your daughter.—[Yes, 'faith, and well I may!—I had the happiness to gain her heart at our first interview.—[The devil you had!—But she having unfortunately made a vow not to receive a husband from your hands, I was obliged to comply with her whim.—[So, so!—We shall

shortly throw ourselves at your feet, and I hope you will have a blessing ready for one, who will then be

"Your son-in-law,
"ISAAC MENDOZA."

A whim, eh? Why, the devil's in the girl, I think! This morning, she would sooner die than have him, and before evening, she runs away with him! Well, well, my will's accomplished—let the motive be what it will—and the Portuguese, sure, will never refuse to fulfil the rest of the article.

Enter Second Servant, with a Letter.

Serv. Sir, here's a man below, who says he brought this from my young lady, Donna Louisa.

[Exit.

Jerome. How? yes, it is my daughter's hand, indeed! Lord, there was no occasion for them both to write: well, let's see what she says—

[Reads.

"My dearest Father,

"How shall I entreat your pardon for the rash step I have taken?—how confess the motive?—[Pish! hasn't Isaac just told me the motive? One would think they weren't together when they wrote.]—If I have a spirit too resentful of ill-usage, I have also a heart as easily affected by kindness—[So, so, here the whole matter comes out! Her resentment for Antonio's ill-usage has made her sensible of Isaac's kindness. Yes, yes, it is all plain enough—well]—I am not married yet, though with a man, I am convinced, adores me—[Yes, yes, I dare say Isaac is very fond of her]—But I shall anxiously expect your answer, in which, should I be so fortunate as to receive your consent, you will make completely happy,

"Your ever affectionate daughter,

"LOUISA."

My consent? to be sure she shall have it! Egad, I was never better pleased. I have fulfilled my resolution—I knew I should. Oh, there's nothing like obstinacy—Lewis!

Enter Servant.

Let the man, who brought the last letter, wait; and get me a pen and ink below. I am impatient to set poor Louisa's heart at rest. Holloa! Lewis! Sancho!

Enter Servants.

See, that there be a noble supper provided in the saloon to-night—serve up my best wines, and let me have music, d'ye hear?

Serv. Yes, sir.

[Exeunt.

Jerome. And order all my doors to be thrown open—admit all guests, with masks or without masks—I'faith, we'll have a night of it. And I'll let them see how merry an old man can be.

SONG.

Oh, the days when I was young,
When I laugh'd in fortune's spite,
Talk'd of love the whole day long,
And with nectar crown'd the night!
Then it was, old father Care,
Little reck'd I of thy frown;
Half thy malice youth could bear,
And the rest a bumper drown.

Truth, they say, lies in a well,
Why, I vow, I ne'er could see;
Let the water-drinkers tell,
There it always lay for me:

For when sparkling wine went round,
Never saw I falsehood's mask,
But still honest truth I found,
In the bottom of each flask.

True, at length my vigour's flown,
I have years to bring decay;
Few the locks that now I own,
And the few I have are gray.
Yet, old Jerome, thou may'st boast,
While thy spirits do not tire,
Still beneath thy age's frost
Glow a spark of youthful fire. [Exit.

SCENE II.—*The New Piazza.*

Enter FERDINAND and LOPEZ.

Ferd. What, could you gather no tidings of her? Nor guess where she was gone? O Clara! Clara!

Lopez. In truth, sir, I could not. That she was run away from her father, was in everybody's mouth, and that Don Guzman was in pursuit of her was also a very common report. Where she was gone, or what was become of her, no one could take upon them to say.

Ferd. 'Sdeath and fury, you blockhead! She can't be out of Seville.

Lopez. So I said to myself, sir:—'Sdeath and fury, you blockhead, says I, she can't be out of Seville. Then some said, she had hanged herself for love; and others have it, Don Antonio had carried her off.

Ferd. 'Tis false, scoundrel! No one said that.

Lopez. Then I misunderstood them, sir.

Ferd. Go, fool, get home, and never let me see you again, till you bring me news of her. [Exit LOPEZ.] Oh, how my fondness for this ungrateful girl has hurt my disposition!

Enter ISAAC.

Isaac. So, I have her safe, and have only to find a priest to marry us. Antonio now may marry Clara, or not, if he pleases!

Ferd. What! what was that you said of Clara?

Isaac. Oh Ferdinand, my brother-in-law, that shall be, who thought of meeting you?

Ferd. But what of Clara?

Isaac. I'faith, you shall hear. This morning, as I was coming down, I met a pretty damsel, who told me her name was Clara d'Almanza, and begged my protection.

Ferd. How?

Isaac. She said she had eloped from her father, Don Guzman, but that love for a young gentleman in Seville was the cause.

Ferd. O Heavens! did she confess it?

Isaac. O yes, she confessed at once. But then, says she, my lover is not informed of my flight, nor suspects my intention.

Ferd. Dear creature! No more I did, indeed! Oh, I am the happiest fellow! [Aside.] Well, Isaac!

Isaac. Why, then she entreated me to find him out for her, and bring him to her.

Ferd. Good Heavens, how lucky! Well, come along, let's lose no time. [Pulling him.

Isaac. Zooks! where are we to go?

Ferd. Why, did any thing more pass?

Isaac. Any thing more! Yes—the end on't was, that I was moved with her speeches, and complied with her desires.

Ferd. Well, and where is she?

Isaac. Where is she? why, don't I tell you, I complied with her request, and left her safe in the arms of her lover?

Ferd. 'Sdeath, you raffle with me! I have never seen her.

Isaac. You! O lud, no! How the devil should you? 'Twas Antonio she wanted: and with Antonio I left her.

Ferd. Hell and madness! [*Aside.*] What, Antonio d'Ercilla?

Isaac. Ay, ay, the very man; and the best part of it was, he was shy of taking her at first. He talked a good deal about honour, and conscience, and deceiving some dear friend; but, Lord, we soon overruled that.

Ferd. You did?

Isaac. Oh yes, presently. "Such deceit!" says he. "Pish!" says the lady, "tricking is all fair in love." "But then, my friend!" says he. "Pshaw! damn your friend!" says I. So, poor wretch, he has no chance:—no, no; he may hang himself as soon as he pleases.

Ferd. I must go, 'or I shall betray myself.

Isaac. But stay, Ferdinand: you ha'n't heard the best of the joke.

Ferd. Curse on your joke!

Isaac. Good luck! what's the matter now? I thought to have diverted you.

Ferd. Be racked! tortured! damned——

Isaac. Why, sure, you are not the poor devil of a lover, are you? 'I'faith, as sure as can be, he is. This is a better joke than t'other! Ha! ha!

Ferd. What, do you laugh! you vile, mischievous varlet! [*Collars him.*] But that you're beneath my anger, I'd tear your heart out. [*Throws him from him.*]

Isaac. O mercy! here's usage for a brother-in-law!

Ferd. But, hark ye, rascal? tell me directly where these false friends are gone, or by my soul——
[*Draws.*]

Isaac. For Heaven's sake, now, my dear brother-in-law, don't be in a rage!—I'll recollect as well as I can.

Ferd. Be quick, then!

Isaac. I will, I will—but people's memories differ—some have a treacherous memory—now mine is a cowardly memory—it takes to its heels, at sight of a drawn sword; it does, 'i'faith; and I could as soon fight as recollect.

Ferd. Zounds! tell me the truth, and I won't hurt you.

Isaac. No, no, I know you won't, my dear brother-in-law—but that ill-looking thing there——

Ferd. What, then, you won't tell me?

Isaac. Yes, yes, I will; I'll tell you all, upon my soul—but why need you listen sword in hand?

Ferd. Why, there. [*Puts up.*] Now.

Isaac. Why, then, I believe they are gone to—that is, my friend Carlos told me, he had left Donna Clara—dear Ferdinand, keep your hands off—at the convent of St. Catharine.

Ferd. St. Catharine!

Isaac. Yes; and that Antonio was to come to her there.

Ferd. Is this the truth?

Isaac. It is, indeed—and all I know, as I hope for life.

Ferd. Well, coward, take your life. 'Tis that false, dishonourable Antonio who shall feel my vengeance.

Isaac. Ay, ay, kill him—cut his throat, and welcome.

Ferd. But, for Clara—infamy on her! she is not worth my resentment.

Isaac. No more she is, my dear brother-in-law.—'I'faith, I would not be angry about her—she is not worth it, indeed.

Ferd. 'Tis false! she is worth the enmity of princes.

Isaac. True, true, so she is; and I pity you exceedingly for having lost her.

Ferd. 'Sdeath, you rascal! how durst you talk of pitying me?

Isaac. Oh, dear brother-in-law, I beg pardon; I don't pity you in the least, upon my soul.

Ferd. Get hence, fool, and provoke me no further; nothing but your insignificance saves you.

Isaac. 'I'faith, then, my insignificance is the best friend I have. I'm going, dear Ferdinand. What a cursed hot-headed bully it is! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—The Garden of the Convent.

Enter LOUISA and CLARA.

Louisa. And you really wish my brother may not find you out?

Clara. Why else have I concealed myself under this disguise?

Louisa. Why, perhaps, because the dress becomes you; for you certainly don't intend to be a nun for life.

Clara. If, indeed, Ferdinand had not offended me so last night.

Louisa. Come, come; it was his fear of losing you made him so rash.

Clara. Well, you may think me cruel—but I swear, if he were here this instant, I believe I should forgive him.

SONG.—CLARA.

By him we love offended,
How soon our anger flies!
One day apart, 'tis ended;
Behold him, and it dies.

Last night, your roving brother,
Enraged, I bade depart,
And sure his rude presumption
Deserved to lose my heart.

Yet, were he now before me,
In spite of injured pride,
I fear my eyes would pardon
Before my tongue could chide.

Louisa. I protest, Clara, I shall begin to think you are seriously resolved to enter on your probation.

Clara. And, seriously, I very much doubt whether the character of a nun would not become me best.

Louisa. Why, to be sure, the character of a nun is a very becoming one at a masquerade; but no pretty woman, in her senses, ever thought of taking the veil for above a night.

Clara. Yonder I see your Antonio is returned, I shall only interrupt you. Ah, Louisa, with what happy eagerness you turn to look for him! [*Exit.*]

Enter ANTONIO.

Ant. Well, my Louisa, any news since I left you?

Louisa. None—the messenger is not returned from my father.

Ant. Well, I confess, I do not perceive what we are to expect from him

Louisa. I shall be easier, however, in having made the trial. I do not doubt thy sincerity, Antonio; but there is a chilling air around poverty, that often kills affection that was not nursed in it. If we would make love our household god, we had best secure him a comfortable roof.

SONG.—ANTONIO.

How oft, Louisa, hast thou told,
Nor wilt thou the fond boast disown,
Thou wouldst not lose Antonio's love,
To reign the partner of a throne.
And by those lips, that spoke so kind,
And by that hand, I've pressed to mine,
To be the lord of wealth and power,
By Heav'n's, I would not part with thine!

Then bow, my soul, can we be poor,
Who own what kingdoms could not buy?
Of this true heart thou shalt be queen,—
In serving thee, a monarch I.
Thus uncontroll'd, in mutual bliss,
And rich in love's exhaustless mine,
Do thou snatch treasures from my lips,
And I'll take kingdoms back from thine.

Enter Maid with a letter.

Louisa. My father's answer, I suppose.

Ant. My dearest Louisa, you may be assured, that it contains nothing but threats and reproaches.

Louisa. Let us see, however.—[*Reads.*] "Dearest daughter,—Make your lover happy: you have my full consent to marry as your whim has chosen; but be sure come home, and sup with your affectionate father."

Ant. You jest, Louisa!

Louisa. [*Gives him the letter.*] Read—read.

Ant. 'Tis so, by heavens! Sure there must be some mistake; but that's none of our business.—Now, Louisa, you have no excuse for delay.

Louisa. Shall we not then return, and thank my father?

Ant. But first let the priest put it out of his power to recall his word.—I'll fly to procure one.

Louisa. Nay, if you part with me again, perhaps you may lose me.

Ant. Come, then—there is a friar of a neighbouring convent is my friend. You have already been diverted by the manners of a nunnery: let us see whether there is less hypocrisy among the holy fathers.

Louisa. I'm afraid not, Antonio—for in religion, as in friendship, they who profess most are ever the least sincere. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter CLARA.

Clara. So, yonder they go, as happy as a mutual and confessed affection can make them, while I am left in solitude. Heigho! love may perhaps excuse the rashness of an elopement from one's friend, but I am sure, nothing but the presence of the man we love can support it. Ha! what do I see! Ferdinand, as I live! How could he gain admission? By potent gold, I suppose, as Antonio did. How eager and disturbed he seems! He shall not know me as yet. [*Draws her veil.*]

Enter FERDINAND.

Ferd. Yes, those were certainly they:—my information was right. [*Going.*]

Clara. [*Stops him.*] Pray, signior, what is your business here?

Ferd. No matter—no matter! Oh, they stop.

[*Looks out.*] Yes, that is the perfidious Clara, indeed!

Clara. So, a jealous error. I'm glad to see him so moved. [*Aside.*]

Ferd. Her disguise can't conceal her. No, no; I know her too well.

Clara. Wonderful discernment! But, signior—

Ferd. Be quiet, good nun! don't tease me. By heavens, she leans upon his arm,—hangs fondly on it! O woman! woman!

Clara. But, signior, who is it you want?

Ferd. Not you, not you; so prythee don't tease me. Yet, pray stay. Gentle nun, was it not Donna Clara d'Almanza just parted from you.

Clara. Clara d'Almanza, signior, is not yet out of the garden.

Ferd. Ay, ay; I knew I was right. And pray, is not that gentleman, now at the porch with her, Antonio d'Ercilla?

Clara. It is indeed, signior.

Ferd. So, so; now but one question more. Can you inform me for what purpose they have gone away?

Clara. They are gone to be married, I believe.

Ferd. Very well:—enough. Now if I don't mar their wedding! [*Erit.*]

Clara. [*Unreels.*] I thought jealousy had made lovers quick-sighted; but it has made mine blind. Louisa's story accounts to me for this error, and I am glad to find I have power enough over him to make him so unhappy. But why should not I be present at his surprise when undeceived? When he's through the porch, I'll follow him; and, perhaps, Louisa shall not singly be a bride.

SONG.

Adieu, thou dreary pile, where never dies

The sullen echo of repentant sighs:

Ye sister mourners of each lonely cell,

Inured to hymns and sorrow, fare ye well;

For happier scenes I fly this darksome grove,—
To saints a prison, but a tomb to love. [*Erit.*]

SCENE IV.—A Court before the Priory.

Enter ISAAC, crossing the stage.—Enter ANTONIO.

Ant. What, my friend Isaac!

Isaac. What, Antonio! wish me joy! I have Louisa safe.

Ant. Have you?—I wish you joy, with all my soul.

Isaac. Yes, I am come here to procure a priest to marry us.

Ant. So, then we are both on the same errand. I am come to look for Father Paul.

Isaac. Hah! I am glad on't: but, i'faith, he must tack me first, my love is waiting.

Ant. So is mine: I left her in the porch.

Isaac. Ay, but I am in haste to get back to Don Jerome.

Ant. And so am I, too.

Isaac. Well, perhaps he'll save time, and marry us both together—or I'll be your father, and you shall be mine. Come along: but you're obliged to me for all this.

Ant. Yes, yes. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.—A Room in the Priory.—Friars at the table drinking.

GLEE AND CHORUS.

This bottle's the sun of our table,
His beams are rosy wine;

We, planets, that are not able,
Without his help to shine.
Let mirth and glee abound.
You'll soon grow bright
With borrow'd light,
And shine as he goes round.

Paul. Brother Francis, toss the bottle about, and give me your toast.

Francis. Have we drusk the abbess of St. Ursuline?

Paul. Yes, yes; she was the last.

Francis. Then I'll give you the blue-eyed nun of St. Catharine's.

Paul. With all my heart. [*Drinks.*] Pray, brother Augustine, were there any benefactions left in my absorce?

Francis. Don Juan Corduba has left a hundred ducats, to remember him in our masses.

Paul. Has he? Let them be paid to our wine-merchant, and we'll remember him in our cups, which will do just as well. Anything more?

Aug. Yes; Baptista, the rich miser, who died last week, has bequeathed us a thousand pistoles, and the silver lamp he used in his own chamber, to burn before the image of St. Anthony.

Paul. 'Twas well meant; but we'll employ his money better. Baptista's bounty shall light the living, not the dead. St. Anthony is not afraid to be left in the dark, though he was—See, who's there. [*A knocking.—Francis goes to the door, and opens it.*]

Enter Porter.

Porter. Here's one without, in pressing haste to speak with Father Paul.

Francis. Brother Paul!

[*PAUL comes from behind a curtain, with a glass of wine, and in his hand a piece of cake.*]

Paul. Here! how durst you, fellow, thus abruptly break in upon our devotions?

Porter. I thought they were finished.

Paul. No, they were not—were they, Brother Francis?

Francis. Not by a bottle each.

Paul. But neither you nor your fellows mark how the hours go: no, you mind nothing but the gratifying of your appetites: ye eat, and swill, and sleep, and gormandize, and thrive, while we are wasting in mortification.

Porter. We ask no more than nature craves.

Paul. 'Tis false! ye have more appetites than hairs! and your flushed, sleek, and pampered appearance, is the disgrace of our order. Out on't! If you are hungry, can't you be content with the wholesome roots of the earth! and if you are dry, isn't there the crystal spring? [*Drinks.*] Put this away [*Gives the glass*], and show me where I'm wanted. [*Porter drains the glass—PAUL, going, turns.*] So, you would have drunk it, if there had been any left? Ah, glutton! glutton!

SCENE VI.—*The Court before the Priory.*

Enter ISAAC and ANTONIO.

Isaac. A plaguy while coming, this same Father Paul! He's detained at vespers, I suppose, poor fellow!

Ant. No, here he comes.

Enter PAUL.

Good Father Paul, I crave your blessing.

Isaac. Yes, good Father Paul, we are come to beg a favour.

Paul. What is it, pray?

Isaac. To marry us, good Father Paul; and in truth thou dost look the very priest of Hymen.

Paul. In short, I may be called so; for I deal in repentance and mortification.

Isaac. No, no; thou seemest an officer of Hymen, because thy presence speaks content and good humour.

Paul. Alas! my appearance is deceitful. Bloating I am, indeed! for fasting is a windy recreation, and it hath swoln me like a bladder.

Ant. But thou hast a good fresh colour in thy face, father,—rosy, i'faith.

Paul. Yes, I have blushed for mankind, till the hue of my shame is as fixed as their vices.

Isaac. Good man!

Paul. And I have laboured, too, but to what purpose? They continue to sin under my very nose.

Isaac. Efects, father, I should have guessed as much, for your nose seems to be put to the blush more than any other part of your face.

Paul. Go, you're a wag.

Ant. But, to the purpose, father: will you officiate for us?

Paul. To join young people thus clandestinely is not safe; and, indeed, I have in my heart many weighty reasons against it.

Ant. And I have in my hand many weighty reasons for it. Isaac, hav'n't you an argument or two in our favour about you?

Isaac. Yes, yes: here is a most unanswerable purse.

Paul. For shame! You make me angry; you forget who I am; and when importunate people have forced their trash—ay, into this pocket, here—or into this—why, then the ain was theirs. [*They put money into his pockets.*] Fie! now how you distress me! I would return it, but that I must touch it that way, and so wrong my oath.

Ant. Now then, come with us.

Isaac. Ay, now give us your title to joy and rapture.

Paul. Well, when your hour of repentance comes, don't blame me.

Ant. No bad caution to my friend Isaac. [*Aside.*] Well, well, father, do you do your part, and I'll abide the consequence.

Isaac. Ay, and so will I.

[*They are going.*]

Enter LOUISA, running.

Louisa. O Antonio! Ferdinand is at the porch, and inquiring for us.

Isaac. Who? Don Ferdinand! He's not inquiring for me, I hope.

Ant. Fear not, my love; I'll soon pacify him.

Isaac. Egad, you won't. Antonio, take my advice, and run away: this Ferdinand is the most unmerciful dog! and has the cursedest long sword!—and, upon my soul, he comes on purpose to cut your throat.

Ant. Never fear, never fear.

Isaac. Well, you may stay if you will; but I'll get some one to marry me; for, by St. Iago, he shall never meet me again, while I am master of a pair of heels. [*Runs out.*]

Enter FERDINAND.—(LOUISA veils.)

Ferd. So, sir, I have met with you at last.

Ant. Well, sir.

Ferd. Base, treacherous man! whence can a false, deceitful soul, like yours, borrow confidence to look so steadily on the man you've injured?

Ant. Ferdinand, you are too warm:—'tis true you find me on the point of wedding one I love beyond my life; but no argument of mine prevailed on her to elope. I scorn deceit as much as you. By heaven, I knew not she had left her father's, till I saw her.

Ferd. What a mean excuse! You have wronged your friend, then, for one, whose wanton forwardness anticipated your treachery; of this, indeed, your Jew pander informed me; but let your conduct be consistent, and since you have dared to do a wrong, follow me, and show you have a spirit to avow it.

Louisa. Antonio, I perceive his mistake. Leave him to me.

Paul. Friend, you are rude, to interrupt the union of two willing hearts.

Ferd. No, meddling priest, the hand he seeks is mine.

Paul. If so, I'll proceed no further. Lady, did you ever promise this youth your hand?

[*To LOUISA, who shakes her head.*]

Ferd. Clara, I thank you for your silence. I would not have heard your tongue avow such falsity; be't your punishment to remember, I have not reproached you.

Enter CLARA.

Clara. What mockery is this?

Ferd. Antonio, you are protected now, but we shall meet. [*Going, CLARA holds one arm, and LOUISA the other.*]

DUET.

Louisa. Turn thee round, I pray thee,
Calm awhile thy rage.

Clara. I must help to stay thee,
And thy wrath assuage.

Louisa. Couldst thou not discover
One so dear to thee?

Clara. Canst thou be a lover,
And thus fly from me? [*Both unveil.*]

Ferd. How's this? my sister! Clara, too! I'm confounded.

Louisa. 'Tis even so, good brother.

Paul. How! what impiety! Did the man want to marry his own sister?

Louisa. And arn't you ashamed of yourself, not to know your own sister?

Clara. To drive away your own mistress—

Louisa. Don't you see how jealousy blinds people?

Clara. Ay, and will you ever be jealous again?

Ferd. Never—never! You, sister, I know will forgive me—but how, Clara, shall I presume—

Clara. No, no; just now you told me not to tease you.—“Who do you want, good signior?” “Not you, not you.” Oh you blind wretch! But swear never to be jealous again, and I'll forgive you.

Ferd. By all—

Clara. There, that will do—you'll keep the oath just as well. [*Gives her hand.*]

Louisa. But, brother, here is one, to whom some apology is due.

Ferd. Antonio, I am ashamed to think—

Ant. Not a word of excuse, Ferdinand. I have not been in love myself without learning that a lover's anger should never be resented. But come—let us retire with this good father, and we'll explain to you the cause of this error.

GLEE AND CHORUS.

Oft does Hymen smile to hear

Wordy vows of feign'd regard;

Well he knows when they're sincere,

Never slow to give reward;

For his glory is to prove

Kind to those who wed for love. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VII.—A Grand Saloon.

Enter DON JEROME, Servants, and LOPEZ.

Jerome. Be sure, now, let every thing be in the best order. Let all my servants have on their merriest faces: but tell them to get as little drunk as possible, till after supper. So, Lopez, where's your master? Sha'n't we have him at supper?

Lopez. Indeed, I believe not, sir. He's mad, I doubt: I'm sure he has frightened me from him.

Jerome. Ay, ay, he's after some wench, I suppose: a young rake! Well, well, we'll be merry without him.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, here is Signior Isaac.

Enter ISAAC.

Jerome. So, my dear son-in-law: there, take my blessing and forgiveness. But where's my daughter? where's Louisa?

Isaac. She's without, impatient for a blessing, but almost afraid to enter.

Jerome. Oh, fly, and bring her in. [*Exit ISAAC.*]

Poor girl! I long to see her pretty face.

Isaac [*Without.*] Come, my charmer, my trembling angel!

Enter ISAAC and Duenna; DON JEROME runs to meet them; she kneels.

Jerome. Come to my arms, my—[*Starts back.*] Why, who the devil have we here!

Isaac. Nay, Don Jerome, you promised her forgiveness; see how the dear creature droops!

Jerome. Droops, indeed! Why, Gad take me, this is old Margaret! But where's my daughter? where's Louisa?

Isaac. Why, here, before your eyes: nay, don't be abashed, my sweet wife!

Jerome. Wife with a vengeance! Why, zounds, you have not married the Duenna!

Duenna. [*Kneeling.*] O dear papa! you'll not disown me, sure!

Jerome. Papa! papa! Why, zounds, your impudence is as great as your ugliness!

Isaac. Rise, my charmer: go throw your snowy arms about his neck, and convince him you are—

Duenna. Oh, sir, forgive me! [*Embraces him*]

Jerome. Help! murder!

Servants. What's the matter, sir?

Jerome. Why, here, this damned Jew has brought an old harriidan to strangle me.

Isaac. Lord, it is his own daughter, and he is so hard-hearted, he won't forgive her!

Enter ANTONIO and LOUISA; they kneel.

Jerome. Zounds and fury! what's here now? Who sent for you, sir? and who the devil are you?

Ant. This lady's husband, sir.

Isaac. Ay, that he is, I'll be sworn; for I left them with the priest, and was to have given her away.

Jerome. You were?

Isaac. Ay: that's my honest friend, Antonio; and that's the little girl I told you I had hampered him with.

Jerome. Why, you are either drunk or mad. This is my daughter.

Isaac. No, no; 'tis you are both drunk and mad, I think: here's your daughter.

Jerome. Hark ye, old iniquity, will you explain all this, or not?

Duenna. Come, then, Don Jerome, I will—though our habits might inform you all. Look on your daughter, there, and on me.

Isaac. What's this I hear?

Duenna. The truth is, that in your passion this morning, you made a small mistake; for you turned your daughter out of doors, and locked up your humble servant.

Isaac. O lud! O lud! Here's a pretty fellow! to turn his daughter out of doors instead of an old Duenna.

Jerome. And, O lud! O lud! Here's a pretty fellow, to marry an old Duenna instead of my daughter! But how came the rest about?

Duenna. I have only to add, that I remained in your daughter's place, and had the good fortune to engage the affections of my sweet husband here.

Isaac. Her husband! Why, you old witch, do you think I'll be your husband now! This is a trick, a cheat, and you ought all to be ashamed of yourselves.

Ant. Hark ye, Isaac, do you dare to complain of tricking? Don Jerome, I give you my word, this cunning Portuguese has brought all this upon himself, by endeavouring to overreach you, by getting your daughter's fortune, without making any settlement in return.

Jerome. Overreach me!

Louisa. 'Tis so, indeed, sir, and we can prove it to you.

Jerome. Why, Gad take me, it must be so, or he could never have put up with such a face as Margaret's—so, little Solomon, I wish you joy of your wife, with all my soul.

Louisa. Isaac, tricking is all fair in love:—let you alone for the plot.

Ant. A cunning dog, ar'n't you? A sly little villain, eh?

Louisa. Roguish, perhaps; but keen, devilish keen.

Jerome. Yes, yes; his aunt always called him little Solomon.

Isaac. Why, the plagues of Egypt upon you all!—but do you think I'll submit to such an imposition?

Ant. Isaac, one serious word:—you'd better be content as you are; for, believe me, you will find, that, in the opinion of the world, there is not a fairer subject for contempt and ridicule, than a knave become the dupe of his own art.

Isaac. I don't care—I'll not endure this. Don Jerome, 'tis you have done this—you would be so cursed positive about the beauty of her you locked

up, and all the time I told you she was as old as my mother, and as ugly as the devil.

Duenna. Why, you little insignificant reptile!

Jerome. That's right—attack him, Margaret.

Duenna. Dares such a thing as you pretend to talk of beauty! A walking rouleau!—a body that seems to owe all its consequence to the dropsy!—a pair of eyes like two dead beetles in a wad of brown dough!—a beard like an artichoke, with dry shriveled jaws that would disgrace the mummy of a monkey!

Jerome. Well done, Margaret!

Duenna. But you shall know that I have a brother, who wears a sword, and if you don't do me justice—

Isaac. Fire seize your brother, and you too! I'll fly to Jerusalem, to avoid you.

Duenna. Fly where you will, I'll follow you.

Jerome. Throw your snowy arms about him, Margaret. [*Exeunt ISAAC and Duenna.*] But, Louisa, are you really married to this modest gentleman?

Louisa. Sir, in obedience to your commands, I gave him my hand within this hour.

Jerome. My commands!

Ant. Yes, sir; here is your consent, under your own hand.

Jerome. How! would you rob me of my child by a trick, a false pretence? and do you think to get her fortune by the same means? Why, 'slife, you are as great a rogue as Isaac!

Ant. No, Don Jerome; though I have profited by this paper in gaining your daughter's hand, I scorn to obtain her fortune by deceit. There, sir. [*Gives a letter.*] Now give her your blessing for a dower, and all the little I possess shall be settled on her in return. Had you wedded her to a prince, he could do no more.

Jerome. Why, Gad take me, but you are a very extraordinary fellow! But have you the impudence to suppose no one can do a generous action but yourself? Here, Louisa, tell this proud fool of yours, that he's the only man I know that would renounce your fortune; and, by my soul, he's the only man in Spain that's worthy of it. There, bless you both; I'm an obstinate old fellow when I'm in the wrong; but you shall now find me as steady in the right.

Enter FERDINAND and CLARA.

Another wonder still! Why, sirrah! Ferdinand you have not stole a nun, have you?

Ferd. She is a nun in nothing but her habit, sir.—look nearer, and you will perceive, 'tis Clara d'Almanza, Don Guzman's daughter; and, with pardon for stealing a wedding, she is also my wife.

Jerome. Gadsbud, and a great fortune. Ferdinand, you are a prudent young rogue, and I forgive you; and, i'fecs, you're a pretty little damsel. Give your father-in-law a kiss, you smiling rogue!

Clara. There, old gentleman: and now mind you behave well to us.

Jerome. I'fecs, those lips ha'n't been chilled by kissing beads. Egad, I believe I shall grow the best-humoured fellow in Spain. Lewis! Sancho! Carlos! d'ye hear? Are all my doors thrown open? Our children's weddings are the only holidays our age can boast; and then we drain, with pleasure, the little stock of spirits time has left us. [*Music within.*] But see, here come our friends and neighbours!

Enter Masqueraders, from the back of the stage.

And, 'faith, we'll make a night on't, with wine,
and dance, and catches—then old and young shall
join us.

FINALE.

Jerome. Come now for jest and smiling,
Both old and young beguiling;
Let us laugh and play, so blithe and gay,
Till we banish care away.

Louisa. Thus crown'd with dance and song,
The hours shall glide along,
With a heart at ease, merry, merry
glees,
Can never fail to please.

Ferd. Each bride with blushes glowing,
Our wine as rosy flowing;

Let us laugh and play, so blithe and gay,
Till we banish care away.

Ant. Then healths to every friend
The night's repast shall end,
With a heart at ease, merry, merry
glees,
Can never fail to please.

Clara. Nor, while we are so joyous,
Shall anxious fear annoy us;
Let us laugh and play, so blithe and gay,
Till we banish care away.

Jerome. For generous guests like these,
Accept the wish to please;
So we'll laugh and play, so blithe and
gay;
Your smiles drive care away.

[*Exeunt*

PIZARRO.

A TRAGIC PLAY.

BY RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN,

Author of "The School for Scandal," &c.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

ATALIBA.	Sentinel.
OROZEMBO.	GOMEZ.
ROLLA.	ORANO.
HUALPA.	ALMAGRO.
HUASCA.	DAVILLO.
TOPAC.	High Priest.
PIZARRO.	
ALONZO.	CORA.
LAS CASAS.	ELVIRA.
VALVERDE.	

Priests, Virgins, Matrons, &c.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Tented Field in the back-ground—the fore-ground, a Pavilion near Pizarro's Tent.*

ELVIRA discovered reclining on a couch.—VALVERDE enters, and attempts to kiss her hand.—ELVIRA rises.

Elv. Audacious! Whence is thy privilege to interrupt the few moments of repose my harassed mind can snatch amid the tumults of this noisy camp? Shall I inform thy master, Pizarro, of this presumptuous treachery?

Val. I am his servant, it is true—trusted by him—and I know him well; and therefore 'tis I ask, by what magic could Pizarro gain thy heart, by what fatality still holds he thy affection?

Elv. Hold! thou trusty secretary!

Val. Ignobly born! in mind and manners rude, ferocious, and unpolished, though cool and crafty if occasion need—in youth audacious—ill his first manhood—a licensed pirate—treating men as brutes—the world as booty; yet now the Spanish hero he is styled—the first of Spanish conquerors! and for a warrior so accomplished, 'tis fit Elvira should leave her noble family, her fame, her home, to share the dangers, humours, and the crimes of such a lover as Pizarro!

Elv. What! Valverde moralizing! But grant I am in error, what is thy incentive? Passion, infatuation, call it what thou wilt; but what attaches thee to this despised, unworthy leader? Base lucre is thy object, mean fraud thy means. Could you gain me, thou only hop'st to win a higher interest in Pizarro—I know you.

Val. On my soul, thou wrong'st me; what else my faults, I have none towards thee: but indulge the scorn and levity of thy nature; do it while yet the time permits; the gloomy hour, I fear, too soon approaches.

Elv. Valverde a prophet, too!

Val. Hear me, Elvira—Shame from his late defeat, and burning wishes for revenge, again have brought Pizarro to Peru; but trust me, he over-

rates his strength, nor measures well the foe. Encamped in a strange country, where terror cannot force, nor corruption buy, a single friend, what have we to hope? The army murmuring at increasing hardships; while Pizarro decorates with gaudy spoil the gay pavilion of his luxury, each day diminishes our force.

Elv. But are you not the heirs of those that fall?

Val. Are gain and plunder, then, our only purpose? Is this Elvira's heroism?

Elv. No, so save me Heaven! I abhor the motive, means, and end of your pursuits; but I will trust none of you:—in your whole army there is not one of you that has a heart, or speaks ingenuously—aged Las Casas, and he alone, excepted.

Val. He! an enthusiast in the opposite and worst extreme!

Elv. Oh! had I earlier known that virtuous man, how different might my lot have been?

Val. I will grant Pizarro could not then so easily have duped you! forgive me, but at that event I still must wonder.

Elv. Hear me, Valverde. When first my virgin fancy waked to love, Pizarro was my country's idol. 'Tis known that when he left Panama in a slight vessel, his force was not a hundred men. Arrived at the island of Gallo, with his sword he drew a line upon the sand, and said, "Pass those who fear to die or conquer with their leader." Thirteen alone remained, and at the head of these the warrior stood his ground. Even at the moment when my ears first caught this tale, my heart exclaimed, "Pizarro is its lord!" What since I have perceived, or thought, or felt! you must have more worth to win the knowledge of.

Val. I press no further; still assured, that while Alonzo de Molina, our general's former friend and pupil, leads the enemy, Pizarro never more will be a conqueror. *[Trumpets without.]*

Elv. Silence! I hear him coming; look not perplexed.—How mystery and fraud confound the countenance? Quick, put on an honest face, if thou canst.

Piz. *[Speaking without.]* Chain and secure him: I will examine him myself.

Enter PIZARRO.

Piz. *[Advancing.]* Why dost thou smile, Elvira?

Elv. To laugh or weep without a reason, is one of the few privileges poor women have.

Piz. Elvira, I will know the cause, I am resolved.

Elv. I am glad of that, because I love resolution, and am resolved not to tell thee. Now my resolution, I take it, is better of the two, because it depends upon myself, and thine does not.

Piz. Psha! trifle!

Val. Elvira was laughing at my apprehensions that—

Piz. Apprehensions!

Val. Yes—that Alonzo's skill and genius should so have disciplined and informed the enemy, as to—

Piz. Alonzo! the traitor! How I once loved that man! His noble mother trusted him, a boy, to my protection. *[ELVIRA walks about pensively in the background.]* At my table did he feast—in my tent did he repose. I had marked his early genius, and the valorous spirit that grew with it. Often had I talked to him of our first adventures—what storms we struggled with—what perils we

surmounted! when landed with a slender host upon an unknown land—then, when I told how famine and fatigue, discord and toil, day by day, did thin our ranks; and close-pressing enemies, how, still undaunted, I endured and dared—maintained my purpose and my power, in despite of growing mutiny or bold revolt, till, with my faithful few remaining, I became at last victorious!—When, I say, of these things I spoke, the youth, Alonzo, with tears of wonder and delight, would throw him on my neck, and swear his soul's ambition owned no other leader.

Val. What could subdue attachment so begun.

Piz. Las Casas.—He it was, with fascinating craft and canting precepts of humanity, raised in Alonzo's mind a new enthusiasm, which forced him, as the stripling termed it, to forego his country's claims for those of human nature.

Val. Yes, the traitor left thee, joined the Peruvians, and became thy enemy, and Spain's.

Piz. But first with weariless remonstrance he sued to win me from my purpose, and untwine the sword from my determined grasp. Much he spoke of right, of justice, and humanity, calling the Peruvians our innocent and unoffending brethren.

Val. They!—Obdurate heathens!—They our brethren!

Piz. But when he found that the soft folly of the pleading tears he dropped upon my bosom, fell on marble, he flew and joined the foe; then, profiting by the lessons he had gained in wronged Pizarro's school, the youth so disciplined and led his new allies, that soon he forced me—Ha! I burn with shame and fury while I own it!—in base retreat and foul discomfiture to quit the shore.

Val. But the hour of revenge is come.

Piz. It is; I have returned—my force is strengthened, and the audacious boy shall soon know that Pizarro lives, and has—a grateful recollection of the thanks he owes him.

Val. 'Tis doubted whether still Alonzo lives.

Piz. 'Tis certain that he does; one of his armour-bearers is just made prisoner; twelve thousand is their force, as he reports, led by Alonzo and Peruvian Rolla. This day they make a solemn sacrifice on their ungodly altars. We must profit by their security; and attack them unprepared—the sacrificers shall become the victims.

Elv. *[Advancing.]* Wretched innocents! and their own blood shall bedew their altars!

Piz. *[Trumpets without.]* Elvira, retire!

Elv. Why should I retire?

Piz. Because men are to meet here, and on manly business.

Elv. O men! men! ungrateful and perverse! O woman! still affectionate though wronged! The beings to whose eyes you turn for animation, hope, and rapture, through the days of mirth and revelry, and on whose bosoms, in the hour of sore calamity, you seek for rest and consolation, *them*, when the pompous follies of your mean ambition are the question, you treat as playthings or as slaves!—I shall not retire.

Piz. Remain, then—and, if thou canst, be silent.

Elv. They only babble who practise not reflection. I shall think—and thought is silence.

[Goes to the couch, and sits, VALVERDE stands at her back.]

Piz. Ha!—there's somewhat in her manner lately—

Enter LAS CASAS, ALMAGRO, GONZALO, DAVILLA, Officers, and Soldiers.

Las C. Pizarro, we attend thy summons.

Piz. Welcome, venerable father—my friends, most welcome. Friends and fellow-soldiers, at length the hour has arrived, which to Pizarro's hopes presents the full reward of our undaunted enterprise, and long-enduring toils. Confident in security, this day the foe devotes to solemn sacrifice: if with bold surprise we strike on their solemnity—trust to your leader's word—we shall not fail.

Alm. Too long inactive have we been mouldering on the coast—our stores exhausted, and our soldiers murmuring. Battle! battle!—then death to the arm'd, and chains for the defenceless.

Dav. Death to the whole Peruvian race!

Las C. Merciful Heaven!

Alm. Yes, General, the attack, and instantly! Then shall Alonzo, basking at his ease, soon cease to scoff our sufferings, and scorn our force.

Las C. Alonzo!—Scorn and presumption are not in his nature.

Alm. 'Tis fit Las Casas should defend his pupil.

Piz. Speak not of the traitor—or hear his name but as the bloody summons to assault and vengeance. It appears we are agreed?

Alm. Dav. We are.

Gon. All!—Battle! Battle!

Las C. Is, then, the dreadful measure of your cruelty not yet complete!—Battle!—gracious Heaven! Against whom?—Against a king, in whose mild bosom your atrocious injuries even yet have not excited hate! but who, insulted or victorious, still sues for peace. Against a people, who never wronged the living being their Creator formed: a people who, children of innocence! received you as cherished guests—with eager hospitality and confiding kindness. Generously and freely did they share with you their comforts, their treasures, and their homes: you repaid them by fraud, oppression, and dishonour. These eyes have witnessed all I speak—as gods you were received; as fiends you have acted.

Piz. Las Casas!

Las C. Pizarro, hear me!—Hear me, chieftains!—And thou, All-powerful, whose thunders can shiver into sand the adamant rock—whose lightnings can pierce to the core of the rived and quaking—Oh! let thy power give effect to thy servant's words, at thy spirit gives courage to his will! Do not, I implore ye, chieftains—countrymen—do not, I implore you, renew the foul barbarities which your insatiate avarice has inflicted on this wretched, unoffending race!—But hush, my sighs—fall not, drops of useless sorrow!—heart-breaking anguish, choke not my utterance. All I entreat is, send me once more to those you call your enemies—Oh! let me be the messenger of penitence from you, I shall return with blessings and with peace from them. [*Turning to ELV.*] Elvira, you weep!—Alas! and does this dreadful crisis move no heart but thine!

Alm. Because there are no women here but she and thou.

Piz. Close this idle war of words: time flies, and our opportunity will be lost. Chieftains, are ye for in-tant battle?

Alm. We are.

Las C. Oh, men of blood! [*Kneels.*] God! thou hast anointed me thy servant—not to curse, but to

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bless my countrymen: yet now my blessing on their force were blasphemy against thy goodness. [*Rises.*] No! I curse your purpose, homicides! I curse the bond of blood by which you are united. May fell disunion, infamy, and rout, defeat your projects, and betray your hopes! On you and your children be the peril of the innocent blood which shall be shed this day! I leave you, and for ever! No longer shall these aged eyes be seared by the horrors they have witnessed. In caves, in forests, will I hide myself; with tigers and with savage beasts commune; and when at length we meet before the blessed tribunal of that Deity, whose mild doctrines and whose mercies we have this day renounced, O then shall you feel the agony and grief of soul which tear the bosom of your accuser now! [*Going.*]

Elv. [*Rises, and takes the hand of Las C.*] Oh! take me with thee.

Las C. Stay! lost, abused lady! I alone am useless here. Perhaps thy loveliness may persuade to pity, where reason and religion plead in vain. Oh! save thy innocent fellow-creatures, if thou canst: then shall thy frailty be redeemed, and thou wilt share the mercy thou bestowest.

[*Exit.*]

Piz. How, Elvira! wouldst thou leave me?

Elv. I am bewildered—grown terrified! Your inhumanity—and that good old man—oh! he appeared to me just now something more than heavenly!—and you!—ye all looked worse than earthly.

Piz. Compassion sometimes becomes a beauty.

Elv. Humanity always becomes a conqueror.

Piz. [*Turning to Alm.*] Now to prepare our muster and our march. At mid-day is the hour of the sacrifice. [*Elv. sits.*] Consulting with our guides, the route of your divisions shall be given to each commander. If we surprise, we conquer; and if we conquer, the gates of Quito will be open to us.

Alm. And Pizarro then be monarch of Peru.

Piz. Not so fast—ambition for a time must take counsel from discretion. Ataliba still must hold the shadow of a sceptre in his hand—Pizarro still appear dependent upon Spain; while the pledge of future peace, his daughter's hand [*Elv. rises, much agitated*] secures the proud succession to the crown I seek.

Alm. This is best. In Pizarro's plans observe the statesman's wisdom guides the warrior's valour.

Val. [*To Elv.*] You mark, Elvira?

Elv. O yes—this is best—this is excellent.

Piz. You seem offended. Elvira still retains my heart. Think—a sceptre waves me on.

Elv. Offended! No! Thou knowest thy glory is my idol; and this will be most glorious, most just and honourable.

Piz. What mean you?

Elv. Oh! nothing—mere woman's prattle—a jealous whim, perhaps: but let it not impede the royal hero's course. [*Trumpets without.*] The call of arms invites you. Away! away! you, his brave, his worthy fellow-warriors.

Piz. And go you not with me?

Elv. Undoubtedly: I needs must be the first to hail the future monarch of Peru.

Enter GOMEZ.

Alm. How, Gomez! what bring'st thou?

Gom. On yonder hill, among the palm-trees, we have surprised an old cacique; escape by flight he

ould not, and we seized him and his attendant unresisting: yet his lips breathed nothing but bitterness and scorn.

Piz. Drag him before us. [ELV. sits pensively.—GOMEZ leaves the tent, and returns conducting OROZEMBO and attendant in chains.]

What art thou, stranger?

Oro. First tell me which among you is the captain of this band of robbers?

Piz. Ha!

Alm. Madman! Tear out his tongue, or else—

Oro. Thou'lt hear some truth.

Dav. [Showing his poignard.] Shall I not plunge this into his heart?

Oro. [After surveying DAV. contemptuously—then turning to Piz.] Does your army boast many such heroes as this?

Piz. Audacious!—This insolence has sealed thy doom. Die thou shalt, grey-headed ruffian. But first confess what thou knowest.

Oro. I know that which thou hast just assured me of—that I shall die.

Piz. Less audacity, perhaps, might have preserved thy life.

Oro. My life is as a withered tree—it is not worth preserving.

Piz. Hear me, old man. Even now we march against the Peruvian army. We know there is a secret path that leads to your strong-hold among the rocks: guide us to that, and name your reward. If wealth be thy wish—

Oro. Ha! ha! ha! ha!

Piz. Dost thou despise my offer?

Oro. Thee and thy offer!—Wealth! I have the wealth of two dear gallant sons—I have stored in heaven the riches which repay good actions here—and still my chief treasure I do bear about me.

Piz. What is that? Inform me.

Oro. I will; for it never can be thine—the treasure of a pure unsullied conscience. [ELV. still sits, paying marked attention to OROZEMBO.]

Iiz. I believe there is no other Peruvian who dares speak as thou dost.

Oro. Would I could believe there is no other Spaniard who dares act as thou dost.

Gon. Obdurate Pagan! How numerous is your army?

Oro. Count the leaves of yonder forest.

Alm. Which is the weakest part of your camp?

Oro. It has no weak part—on every side 'tis fortified by justice.

Piz. Where have you concealed your wives and your children?

Oro. In the hearts of their husbands and their fathers.

Piz. Know'st thou Alonzo?

Oro. Know him. Alonzo! Know him! Our nation's benefactor! The guardian angel of Peru!

Piz. By what has he merited that title?

Oro. By not resembling thee.

Alm. Who is this Rollo joined with Alonzo in command?

Oro. I will answer that; for I love to hear and to repeat the hero's name. Rollo, the kinsman of the king, is the idol of our army; in war a tiger, chased by the hunter's spear; in peace more gentle than the unweaned lamb. Cora was once betrothed to him; but finding she preferred Alonzo, he resigned his claim, and, I fear, his peace, to friendship and to Cora's happiness; yet still he loves her with a pure and holy fire.

Piz. Romantic savage! I shall meet this Rollo soon.

[Retires to confer with VAL.]

Oro. Thou hadst better not! The terrors of his noble eye would strike thee dead.

Dav. Silence, or tremble!

Oro. Beardless robber! I never yet have trembled before God—why should I tremble before man? Why before thee, thou less than man!

Dav. Another word, audacious heathen, and I strike!

Oro. Strike, Christian! Then boast among thy fellows—I too have murdered a Peruvian!

Dav. Hell and vengeance seize thee! [Stabs him.]

Piz. [Rushing forward.] Hold!

Dav. Couldst thou longer have endured his insults?

Piz. And therefore should he die untortur'd?

Oro. True! Observe, young man, [To DAV.] thy unthinking rashness has saved me from the rack; and thou thyself hast lost the opportunity of a useful lesson: thou mightst thyself have seen with what cruelty vengeance would have inflicted torments—and with what patience virtue would have borne them.

Elv. [Rising, runs to OROZ. and supports his head on her bosom.] Oh! ye are monsters all. Look up, thou martyr'd innocent! look up once more, and bless me ere thou diest. God! how I pity thee!

Oro. Pity me! Me! So near my happiness! Bless thee, lady! Spaniards—Heaven turn your hearts, and pardon you as I do.

[OROZ. is borne off, dying.]

Piz. Away!—Davilla! if thus rash a second time—

Dav. Forgive the hasty indignation which—

Piz. No more—unbind that trembling wretch—let him depart; 'tis well he should report the mercy which we show to insolent defiance. Hark! our troops are moving.

Att. [On passing ELVIRA.] If through thy gentle means my master's poor remains might be preserved from insult—

Elv. I understand thee.

Att. His sons may yet thank thy charity, if not avenge their father's fate. [Exit.]

Piz. What says the slave?

Elv. A parting word to thank you for your mercy.

Piz. Our guard and guides approach. [Soldiers cross.] Follow me, friends—each shall have his post assigned, and ere Peruvia's God shall sink beneath the main, the Spanish banner, bathed in blood, shall float above the walls of vanquish'd Quito. [Exeunt all but ELVIRA and VALVERDE.]

Val. Is it now presumption that my hopes gain strength with the increasing horrors which I see appal Elvira's soul!

Elv. I am mad with terror and remorse! Would I could fly these dreadful scenes!

Val. Might not Valverde's true attachment be thy refuge?

Elv. What wouldst thou do to save or to avenge me!

Val. I dare do all thy injuries may demand—a word—and he lies bleeding at your feet.

Elv. Perhaps we will speak again of this. Now leave me. [Exit VALVERDE.]

Elv. [Alone.] No! not this revenge—no! not this instrument. Fie, Elvira! even for a moment to counsel with this unworthy traitor! Can a wretch, false to a confiding master, be true to any pledge of love or honour? Pizarro will abandon

me—yes; me—who, for his sake, have sacrificed—Oh, God!—what have I not sacrificed for him? yet, curbing the avenging pride that swells this bosom, I still will further try him. Oh, men! ye who, wearied by the fond fidelity of virtuous love, seek in the wanton's flattery a new delight, oh, ye may insult and leave the hearts to which your faith was pledged, and, stifling self-reproach, may fear no other peril; because such hearts, howe'er you injure and desert them, have yet the proud retreat of an unspotted fame—of unreproaching conscience. But beware the desperate libertine, who forsakes the creature whom his arts have first deprived of all natural protection—of all self-consolation!—What has he left her?—Despair and vengeance.

[Exit.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Rock, with a Forest in the background.*

A Bank.—Cora playing with her Child, and ALONZO hanging over them with delight.

Cora. Now confess, does he resemble thee, or not?

Al. Indeed, he is liker thee—thy rosy softness, thy smiling gentleness.

Cora. But his auburn hair, the colour of his eyes, Alonzo. O! my lord's image, and my heart's adored!

[Pressing the Child to her bosom.

Al. The little daring urchin robs me, I doubt, of some portion of thy love, my Cora. At least he shares caresses, which till his birth were only mine.

Cora. O, no, Alonzo! A mother's love for her sweet babe is not a stealth from the dear father's store; it is a new delight that turns with quickened gratitude to him, the author of her augmented bliss.

Al. Could Cora think me serious?

Cora. I am sure he will speak soon: then will be the last of the three holidays allowed by Nature's sanction to the fond anxious mother's heart.

Al. What are those three?

Cora. The ecstasy of his birth I pass; that in part is selfish: but when first the white blossoms of his teeth appear, breaking the crimson buds that did incase them, that is a day of joy: next, when from his father's arms he runs without support, and clings, laughing and delighted, to his mother's knees, that is the mother's heart's next holiday: and sweeter still the third, whene'er his little stammering tongue shall utter the grateful sound of father, mother!—Oh! that is the dearest joy of all!

Al. Beloved Cora!

Cora. Oh! my Alonzo! daily, hourly, do I pour thanks to Heaven for the dear blessing I possess in him and thee.

Al. To Heaven and Rolla.

Cora. Yes, to Heaven and Rolla: and art thou not grateful to them too, Alonzo? Art thou not happy?

Al. Can Cora ask that question?

Cora. Why, then, of late, so restless on thy couch? Why to my waking, watching ear, so often does the stillness of the night betray thy struggling sighs?

Al. Must not I fight against my country, against my brethren?

Cora. Do they not seek our destruction? and are not all men brethren?

Al. Should they prove victorious!

Cora. I will fly, and meet thee in the mountains.

Al. Fly with thy infant, Cora?

Cora. What! think you a mother, when she runs from danger, can feel the weight of her child?

Al. Cora, my beloved, do you wish to set my heart at rest?

Cora. Oh, yes! yes! y-s!

Al. Hasten, then, to the concealment in the mountains; where all our matrons and virgins, and our warriors' offspring, are allotted to await the issue of the war.—Cora will not alone resist her husband's, her sister's, and her monarch's wish.

Cora. Alonzo, I cannot leave thee: Oh! how in every moment's absence would my fancy paint you, wounded, alone, abandoned! No, no, I cannot leave thee!

Al. Rolla will be with me.

Cora. Yes, while the battle rages, and where it rages most, brave Rolla will be found. He may revenge, but cannot save thee. To follow danger, he will leave even thee. But I have sworn never to forsake thee but with life. Dear, dear Alonzo! canst thou wish that I should break my vow?

Al. Then be it so. Oh! excellence in all that's great and lovely, in courage, gentleness, and truth! my pride, my content, my all! Can there on this earth be fools who seek for happiness, and pass by love in the pursuit?

Cora. Alonzo, I cannot thank thee—silence is the gratitude of true affection: who seeks to follow it by sound, will miss the track. [Shouts without.] Does the quick approach?

Al. No, 'tis the general, placing the guard that will surround the temple, during the sacrifice. 'Tis Rolla comes, the first and best of heroes.

ROLLA within.

Rol. Then place them on the hill fronting the Spanish camp.

[Enters

Cora. Rolla! my friend, my brother!

Al. Rolla! my friend, my benefactor! how can our lives repay the obligations which we owe thee?

Rol. Pass them in peace and bliss. Let Rolla witness it, he is overpaid.

Cora. Look on this child—he is the life-blood of my heart; but if ever he love or revere thee less than his own father, his mother's hate fall on him!

Rol. Oh, no more! What sacrifice have I made to merit gratitude? The object of my love was Cora's happiness. I see her happy. Is not my object gained; and am I not rewarded? Now, Cora, listen to a friend's advice. Thou must away; thou must seek the sacred caverns, the unprofaned recess, whither, after this day's sacrifice, our matrons, and e'en the virgins of the sun, retire.

Cora. Not secure with Alonzo and with thee?

Rol. We have heard Pizarro's plan is to surprise us. Thy presence, Cora, cannot aid, but may impede our efforts.

Cora. Impede!

Rol. Yes, yes. Thou know'st how tenderly we love thee; we, thy husband and thy friend. Art thou near us?—our thoughts, our valour—vengeance will not be our own. No advantage will be pursued, that leads us from the spot where thou art placed; no succour will be given but for the

protection. The faithful lover dares not be all himself amid the war, until he knows that the beloved of his soul is absent from the peril of the fight.

Al. Thanks to my friend; 'tis this I would have urged.

Cora. This timid excess of love, producing fear instead of valour, flatters, but does not convince me: the wife is incredulous.

Rol. And is the mother unbelieving, too?

Cora. [*Kisses Child.*] No more. Do with me as thou pleasest. My friend, my husband! place me where thou wilt.

Al. My adored! we thank you both. [*March without.*] Hark! the king approaches to the sacrifice. Thou, Rolla, spokest of rumours of surprise. A servant of mine, I hear, is missing; whether surprised or treacherous, I know not.

Rol. It matters not; we are everywhere prepared.—Come, Cora, upon the altar 'mid the rocks thou'lt implore a blessing on our cause. The pious supplication of the trembling wife, and mother's heart, rises to the throne of mercy, the most resistless prayer of human homage.

[*Exit.*—*ROLLA* leads off *CORA*.—*ALONZO* takes the child by the hand, and follows.

SCENE II.—*The Temple of the Sun.*—*A solemn March.*—*The Warriors and King enter.*—*ROLLA, ALONZO, and CORA.*

Ata. Welcome, Alonzo! [*To ROLLA.*] Kinsman, thy hand. [*To CORA.*] Bless'd be the object of the happy mother's love.

Cora. May the son bless the father of his people?

Ata. In the welfare of his children lives the happiness of their king. Friends, what is the temper of our soldiers?

Rol. Such as becomes the cause which they support; their cry is, Victory or death! our king, our country, and our God!

Ata. Thou, Rolla, in the hour of peril, hast been wont to animate the spirit of their leaders, ere we proceed to consecrate the banners which thy valour knows so well to guard.

Rol. Yet never was the hour of peril near, when to inspire them words were so little needed. My brave associates! partners of my toil, my feelings, and my fame! Can Rolla's words add vigour to the virtuous energies which inspire your hearts? No! you have judged as I have, the foulness of the crafty plea by which these bold invaders would delude you. Your generous spirit has compared, as mine has, the motives which, in a war like this, can animate their minds and ours. They, by a strange frenzy driven, fight for power, for plunder, and extended rule. We, for our country, our altars, and our homes. They follow an adventurer whom they fear, and obey a power which they hate. We serve a monarch whom we love—a God whom we adore. Whene'er they move in anger, desolation tracks their progress!—Whene'er they pause in amity, affliction mourns their friendship. They boast they come but to improve our state, enlarge our thoughts, and free us from the yoke of error! Yes—they will give enlightened freedom to our minds, who are themselves the slaves of passion, avarice, and pride. They offer us their protection—yes, such protection as vultures give to lambs—covering and devouring them! They call on us to barter all of good we have inherited and proved, for the desperate chance of something better which

they promise. Be our own plain answer this:—The throne we honour is the people's choice—the laws we reverence are our brave fathers' legacy—the faith we follow teaches us to live in bonds of charity with all mankind, and die with hope of bliss beyond the grave. Tell your invaders this, and tell them, too, we seek no change; and, least of all, such change as they would bring us.

[*Goes to the King.*—*Loud shouts of the Soldiery.*

Ata. [*Embracing him.*] Now, holy friends, ever mindful of these sacred truths, begin the sacrifice

CHORUS.—*Enter Priests and Virgins.*

Oh Pow'r supreme! in mercy smile
With favour on thy servant's toil!
Our hearts from guileful passions free,
Which here we render unto thee!
Thou Parent Light, but deign to hear
The voices of our feeble choir;
And this, our sacrifice of fear,
Consume with thine own hallow'd fire!

[*Fire from above alights upon the altar.*—*ROLLA and King advance to the altar.*]

Give praise, give praise, the God has heard,
Our God most awfully revered!
The altar his own flames enwreath'd!
Then be the conquering sword unsheath'd,
And victory set on Rolla's brow,
His foes to crush—to overthrow!

Ata. Our offering is accepted. [*Rise, and all close round, and prostrate at the altar.*—*Exit chorus, &c.*] Now to arms, my friends, prepare for battle!
[*Goes with ROLLA.*

Enter ORANO.

Ora. The enemy!

Ata. How near?

Ora. From the hill's brow, e'en now as I o'erlooked their force, suddenly I perceived the whole in motion: with eager haste they march towards our deserted camp, as if apprised of this most solemn sacrifice.

Rol. They must be met before they reach it.

Ata. [*To CORA, &c.*] And you, my daughters, with your dear children, away to the appointed place of safety.

Cora. Oh, Alonzo! [*Embracing him.*

Al. We shall meet again.

Cora. Bless us once more, ere thou leave us.

Al. Heaven protect and bless thee, my beloved; and thee, my innocent!

Ata. Haste! haste!—each moment is precious!

Cora. Farewell, Alonzo! Remember thy life is mine.

Rol. [*As she is passing him.*] Not one farewell to Rolla?

Cora. [*Giving him her hand.*] Farewell! the God of war be with thee: but bring me back Alonzo.

[*Exit with the Child.*

Ata. [*Drawing his sword.*] Now, my brethren, my sons, my friends, I know your valour. Should all success assail us, be despair the last feeling of your hearts. If successful, let mercy be the first. Alonzo, to thee I give to defend the narrow passage of the mountains. On the right of the wood be Rolla's station. For me, straight forwards will I march to meet them, and fight until I see my people saved, or they behold their monarch fall. Be the word of battle—God! and our native land

[*A march.*—*Exit.*

SCENE III.—A Wood.

Enter ROLLA and ALONZO.

Rol. Here, my friend, we separate—soon, I trust, to meet again in triumph.

Al. Or perhaps we part to meet no more. Rolla, a moment's pause; we are yet before our army's strength; one earnest word at parting.

Rol. There is in language now no word but battle.

Al. Yes, one word more—Cora!

Rol. Cora! speak!

Al. The next hour brings us—

Rol. Death or victory!

Al. It may be victory to one—death to the other.

Rol. Or both may fall.

Al. If so, my wife and child I bequeath to the protection of heaven and my king. But should I only fall, Rolla, be thou my heir.

Rol. How?

Al. Be Cora thy wife—be thou a father to my child.

Rol. Rouse thee, Alonzo! Banish these timid fancies.

Al. Rolla! I have tried in vain, and cannot fly from the foreboding which oppresses me: thou know'st it will not shake me in the fight; but give me the promise I exact.

Rol. If it be Cora's will—Yes—I promise.

[*Gives his hand.*]

Al. Tell her it was my last wish! and bear to her and to my son, my last blessing.

Rol. I will.—Now then to our posts, and let our swords speak for us. [*They draw their swords.*]

Al. For the king and Cora!

Rol. For Cora and the king!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—A view of the Peruvian Camp.

Enter an Old Blind Man and a Boy.

O. Man. Have none returned to the camp?

Boy. One messenger alone. From the temple they all march'd to meet the foe.

O. Man. Hark! I hear the din of battle. O! had I still retain'd my sight, I might now have grasp'd a sword, and died a soldier's death! Are we quite alone?

Boy. Yes.—I hope my father will be safe!

O. Man. He will do his duty. I am more anxious for thee, my child.

Boy. I can stay with thee, dear grandfather.

O. Man. But should the enemy come, they will drag thee from me, my boy.

Boy. Impossible, grandfather! for they will see at once that thou art old and blind, and cannot do without me.

O. Man. Poor child! thou little know'st the hearts of these inhuman men. [*Trumpets, alarms, and discharges of cannon.*] Hark! the noise is near—I hear the dreadful roaring of the fiery engines of these cruel strangers. [*Shouts at a distance.*] At every shout, with involuntary haste, I clench my hand, and fancy still it grasps a sword! Alas! I can only serve my country by my prayers. Heaven preserve the Inca and his gallant soldiers!

Boy. O father! there are soldiers running.

O. Man. Spaniards, boy?

Boy. No, Peruvians!

O. Man. How! and flying from the field!—It cannot be.

Enter two Peruvian Soldiers.

O speak to them, boy!—Whence come you? How goes the battle?

Sol. We may not stop; we are sent for the reserve behind the hill. The day's against us.

[*Exeunt Soldiers.*]

O. Man. Quick, then, quick!

Boy. I see the points of lances glittering in the light.

O. Man. Those are Peruvians. Do they bend this way?

Enter a Peruvian Soldier.

Boy. Soldier, speak to my blind father.

Sol. I'm sent to tell the helpless further to retreat among the rocks: all will be lost, I fear.—The king is wounded.

O. Man. Quick, boy! Lead me to the hill where thou mayst view the plain.

[*Alarms.—Old Man and Boy retire.*]

Enter ATALIBA, wounded, with ORANO, Officers, and Soldiers.

Ata. My wound is bound; believe me, the hurt is nothing; I may return to the fight.

Ora. Pardon your servant, but the allotted priest who attends the sacred banner has pronounced, that the Inca's blood once shed, no blessing can await the day, until he leave the field.

Ata. Hard restraint! O! my poor brave soldiers!—Hard that I may no longer be a witness of their valour. But haste you; return to your comrades: I will not keep one soldier from his post. Go, and avenge your fallen brethren. [*Exeunt ORANO, &c.*] I will not repine: my own fate is the last anxiety of my heart. It is for you, my people, that I feel and fear.

[*Old Man and Boy advance.*]

O. Man. Did I not hear the voice of an unfortunate? Who is it complains thus?

Ata. One almost by hope forsaken.

O. Man. Is the king alive?

Ata. The king still lives.

O. Man. Then thou art not forsaken. Ataliba protects the meanest of his subjects.

Ata. And who shall protect Ataliba?

O. Man. The Immortal Powers, that protect the just. The virtues of our monarch alike secure to him the affection of his people, and the benign regard of heaven.

Ata. How impious had I murmur'd! How wondrous, thou Supreme Disposer, are thy acts! Even in this moment, which I had thought the bitterest trial of mortal suffering, thou hast infused the sweetest sensation of my life—it is the assurance of my people's love.

Boy. [*Turning forward.*] O father!—Stranger! see those hideous men that rush upon us yonder!

Ata. Ha! Spaniards!—And I, Ataliba—ill-fated fugitive! without a sword even to try the ransom of a monarch's life,

Enter DAVILLA, ALMAGRO, and Spanish Soldiers.

Dav. 'Tis he—our hopes are answered—I know him well—it is the king.

Alm. Away; follow with your prize. Avoid those Peruvians, though in flight. This way we may regain our line.

[*Exeunt DAVILLA, ALMAGRO, &c. with ATALIBA prisoner.*]

O. Man. The king! Wretched old man, that

could not see his gracious form!—Boy, would thou hadst led me to the reach of those ruffians' swords!

Boy. Father! all our countrymen are flying here for refuge.

O. Man. No—to the rescue of their king—they never will desert him. *[Alarms without.]*

Enter Peruvian Officers and Soldiers, ORANO following.

Ora. Hold, I charge you! Rolla calls you.

Offi. We cannot combat with their dreadful engines.

Enter ROLLA.

Rol. Hold, recreants! cowards!—What, fear ye death, and fear not shame? By my soul's fury, I cleave to the earth the first of you that stirs, or plunge your dastard swords into your leader's heart, that he no more may witness your disgrace. Where is the king?

Ora. From this old man and boy I learn, that the detachment of the enemy, which you observed so suddenly to quit the field, have succeeded in surprising him; they are yet in sight.

Rol. And bear the Inca off a prisoner!—Hear this, ye base, disloyal rout! Look there!—the dust you see hangs on the bloody Spaniard's track, dragging, with ruffian taunts, your king, your father—Ataliba in bondage! Now fly and seek your own vile safety, if you can!

O. Man. Bless the voice of Rolla!—and bless the stroke I once lamented, but which now spares these extinguished eyes the shame of seeing the pale, trembling wretches who dare not follow Rolla, though to save their king!

Rol. Shrink ye from the thunder of the foe, and fall ye not at this rebuke!—Oh! had ye each but one drop of the loyal blood which gushes to waste through the brave heart of this sightless veteran! Eternal shame pursue you if you desert me now!—But do—alone I go—alone—to die with glory by my monarch's side!

Soldiers. Rolla! we'll follow thee!

[ROLLA rushes out, followed by ORANO, &c.]

O. Man. O, godlike Rolla! And thou, sun, send from thy clouds avenging lightning to his aid!—Haste, my boy, ascend some height, and tell to my impatient terror what thou seest!

Boy. I can climb this rock, and the tree above. *[Ascends a rock.]* O, now I see them—now—yes—and the Spaniards turning by the steep.

O. Man. Rolla follows them?

Boy. He does—he does—he moves like an arrow!—now he waves his arm to our soldiers. *[Report of cannon.]* Now there is fire and smoke.

O. Man. Yes, fire is the weapon of those fiends.

Boy. The wind blows off the smoke; they are all mixed together.

O. Man. Seest thou the king?

Boy. Yes! Rolla is near him!—His sword sheds fire as he strikes!

O. Man. Bless thee, Rolla! Spare not the monsters.

Boy. Father! father! the Spaniards fly!—O, now I see the king embracing Rolla.

[Shouts of victory, flourish of trumpets, &c.]

O. Man. *[Falls on his knees.]* Fountain of life! how can my exhausted breath bear to thee thanks for this one moment of my life! My boy, come down and let me kiss thee!—My strength is gone—

[Boy descends.]

Boy. Let me help thee, father. Thou tremblest so—

O. Man. 'Tis with transport, boy!

[Boy leads him off.—Shouts, flourish, &c.]

Enter ATALIBA, ROLLA, and Peruvians.

Ata. In the name of my people, the saviour of whose sovereign thou hast this day been, accept this emblem of his gratitude. *[Giving ROLLA his sun of diamonds.]* The tear that falls upon it may for a moment dim its lustre, yet does it not impair the value of the gift.

Rol. It was the hand of heaven, not mine, that saved my king.

Enter Peruvian Officer.

Rol. Now, soldier, from Alonzo?

Offi. Alonzo's genius soon repaired the panic which early broke into our ranks; but I fear we have to mourn Alonzo's loss: his eager spirit urged him too far in the pursuit.

Ata. How! Alonzo slain! O! victory, dearly purchased!

Rol. O Cora! who shall tell thee this?

Ata. Rolla, our friend is lost—our native country saved! Our private sorrows must yield to the public claim for triumph. Now go we to fulfil the first, the most sacred duty which belongs to victory—to dry the widowed and the orphaned tears of those whose brave protectors have perished in their country's cause.

[Triumphant march.—King takes the hand of ROLLA, and exeunt, Soldiers following.]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Wild Retreat.*—CORA sitting with her Child in the background, and Wives and Children discovered scattered about.

GLEE.—Women.

Fly away, Time, nor be the anxious hour delay'd—
Fly away, Time, that soothes the heart by grief
dismay'd;

Should ghastly death appear in view,

We can dare it;

With friends we love, so brave, so true,

We will share it.

Fly away, Time, &c.

A triumphant march of the army is heard at a distance.—CORA rises and looks anxiously about.

Wom. Hush! hush! don't you hear?

A distant march assails the ear;—

Hark! louder still from yonder hill

Increasing sounds with terror fill—

Enter Warriors, singing.—CORA attentively examines them all as they pass.

Victory now has made us free;

We haste, we haste, our friends to see!

Ata. Thanks, thanks, my children! I am well, believe it; the blood once stopped, my wound was nothing.

CORA at length approaches ROLLA, who appears to have been mournfully avoiding her.—Where is Alonzo?

[ROLLA turns away in silence.]

Cora. [*Falling at the King's feet.*] Give me my husband, give this child his father!

Ata. I grieve that Alonzo is not here.

Cora. Hoped you to find him?

Ata. Most anxiously.

Cora. Ataliba! is he not dead?

Ata. No! the gods will have heard our prayers.

Cora. [*Starts up.*] Is he not dead, Ataliba?

Ata. He lives—in my heart.

Cora. Oh, king! torture me not thus!—Speak out, is this child fatherless?

Ata. Dearest Cora! do not thus dash aside the little hope that still remains.

Cora. The little hope! yet still there is hope! [*Turns to ROLLA.*] Speak to me, Rolla; thou art the friend of truth.

Rolla. Alonzo has not been found.

Cora. Not found! What mean'st thou? Will not thou, Rolla, tell me true? Oh! let me not hear the thunder rolling at a distance; let the bolt fall and crush my brain at once.—Say not that he is not found; say at once that he is dead.

Rolla. Then should I say false.

Cora. False! blessings on thee for that word! But snatch me from this terrible suspense. [*CORA and Child kneel to ROLLA.*] Lift up thy little hands, my child; perhaps thy ignorance may plead better than thy mother's agony.

Rolla. Alonzo is taken prisoner.

Cora. Prisoner! and by the Spaniards? Pizarro's prisoner? Then is he dead.

Ata. Hope better—the richest ransom which our realm can yield, a herald shall this instant bear.

Cora. Now one boon more, beloved monarch. Let me go with the herald.

Ata. Remember, Cora, thou art not a wife only, but a mother too: hazard not thy own honour, and the safety of thy infant. Among these barbarians the sight of thy youth, thy loveliness, and innocence, would but rivet faster thy Alonzo's chains, and rack his heart with added fears for thee. Wait, Cora, the return of the herald.

Cora. Teach me how to live till then.

Ata. Now we go to offer to the gods thanks for our victory, and prayers for Alonzo's safety.

[*March and procession.—Exit King and Army.*]

—*CORA and Child, followed by ROLLA.*

SCENE II.—*The Wood.*

Enter CORA and Child.

Cora. Mild innocence! what will become of thee?

Enter ROLLA.

Rolla. Cora, I attend thy summons at the appointed spot.

Cora. Oh my child, my boy!—hast thou still a father?

Rolla. Cora, can thy child be fatherless, while Rolla lives?

Cora. Will he not soon want a mother too? For canst thou think I will survive Alonzo's loss?

Rolla. Yes! for his child's sake.—Yes, as thou didst love Alonzo, Cora, listen to Alonzo's friend.

Cora. Thou bid'st me listen to the world.—Who was not Alonzo's friend?

Rolla. His parting words—

Cora. His parting words! [*Wildly.*] Oh, speak!

Rolla. Consign'd to me two precious trusts—his blessing to his son, and a last request to thee.

Cora. His last request! his last!—Oh, name it!
Rolla. If I fall, said he—and sad forebodings shook him while he spoke—promise to take Cora for thy wife; be thou a father to my child. I pledged my word to him, and we parted. Observe me, Cora, I repeat this only as my faith to do so was given to Alonzo—for myself, I neither cherish claim nor hope.

Cora. Ha! does my reason fail me, or what is this horrid light that presses on my brain? Oh, Alonzo, it may be thou hast fallen a victim to thy own guileless heart—hadst thou been silent, hadst thou not made a fatal legacy of these wretched charms—

Rolla. Cora! what hateful suspicion has possessed thy mind?

Cora. Yes, yes, 'tis clear—his spirit was ensnared; he was led to the fatal spot, where mortal valour could not front a host of murderers.—He fell—in vain did he exclaim for help to Rolla. At a distance thou look'st on and smil'st—Thou couldst have saved him—couldst, but didst not.

Rolla. Oh, glorious sun! can I have deserved this? Cora, rather bid me strike this sword into my heart—

Cora. No! live! live for love! for that love thou seekest: whose blossoms are to shoot from the bleeding grave of thy betrayed and slaughtered friend!—But thou hast borne to me the last words of my Alonzo! now hear mine—Sooner shall this boy draw poison from this tortured breast—sooner would I link me to the pallid corpse of the meanest wretch that perish'd with Alonzo, than he call Rolla father—than I call Rolla husband!

Rolla. Yet call me what I am—thy friend, thy protector!

Cora. [*Distraughtly.*] Away! I have no protector but my God! [*Falls on her knees.—ROLLA steps back.*] With this child in my arms will I hasten to the field of slaughter.—There with these hands will I turn up to the light every mangled body—seeking, however disfigured, the sweet smile of my Alonzo—with fearful cries I will shriek out his name till my veins snap! If the smallest spark of life remain, he will know the voice of his Cora, open for a moment his unshrouded eyes, and bless me with a last look. [*Rises.*] But if we find him not—Oh! then, my boy, we will to the Spanish camp—that look of thine will win my passage through a thousand swords—they too are men. Is there a heart that could drive back the wife that seeks her bleeding husband; or the innocent babe that cries for his imprisoned father? No, no, my child, everywhere we shall be safe. A wretched mother, bearing a poor orphan in her arms, has Nature's passport through the world. Yes, yes, my son, we'll go and seek thy father.

[*Passes ROLLA, and exit with the Child.*]

Rolla. [*After a pause of agitation.*] Could I have merited one breath of thy reproaches, Cora, I should be the wretch—I think I was not formed to be. Her safety must be my present purpose—then to convince her she has wronged me! [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—*Pizarro's Tent.—PIZARRO traversing the stage in agitation.*

Piz. Well, capricious idol, Fortune, be my ruin thy work and boast. To myself I will still be true.—Yet, ere I fall, grant me thy smile to prosper in one act of vengeance, and be that smile Alonzo's death.

Enter ELVIRA.

Who's there? Who dares intrude? Why does my guard neglect their duty?

Elv. Thy guard did what they could—but they knew their duty better than to enforce authority, when I refused obedience.

Piz. And what is it thou desirest?

Elv. To see how a hero bears misfortune. Thou, Pizarro, art not now collected—nor thyself.

Piz. Wouldst thou, I should rejoice that the spears of the enemy, led by accurs'd Alonzo, have pierced the bravest hearts of my followers?

Elv. No!—I would have thee cold and dark as the night that follows the departed storm; still and sullen as the awful pause that precedes nature's convulsion: yet I would have thee feel assured, that a new morning shall arise, when the warrior's spirit shall stalk forth—nor fear the future, nor lament the past.

Piz. Woman! Elvira!—why had not all my men hearts like thine?

Elv. Then would thy brows have this day worn the crown of Quito.

Piz. Oh! hope fails me while that scourge of my life and fame, Alonzo, leads the enemy.

Elv. Pizarro, I am come to probe the hero farther: not now his courage, but his magnanimity—Alonzo is thy prisoner.

Piz. How!

Elv. 'Tis certain: Valverde saw him even now dragged in chains within thy camp. I chose to bring thee this intelligence myself.

Piz. Bless thee, Elvira, for the news!—Alonzo in my power!—Then I am the conqueror—the victory is mine!

Elv. Pizarro, this is savage and unmanly triumph. Believe me, thou raisest impatience in my mind to see the man whose valour and whose genius awe Pizarro; whose misfortunes are Pizarro's triumph; whose bondage is Pizarro's safety.

Piz. Guard!—Drag here the Spanish prisoner, Alonzo!—Quick, bring the traitor here!

Elv. What shall be his fate?

Piz. Death! death! in lingering torments! protracted to the last stretch that burning vengeance can devise, and fainting life sustain.

Elv. Shame on thee! Wilt thou have it said, that the Peruvians found Pizarro could not conquer till Alonzo felt that he could murder?

Piz. Be it said—I care not! His fate is sealed. Why this interest for a stranger? What is Alonzo's fate to thee?

Elv. His fate!—nothing!—thy glory, every thing!—Think'st thou I could love thee, stripp'd of fame, of honour, and a just renown!—Know me better.

Piz. Thou shouldst have known me better. Thou shouldst have known that, once provoked to hate, I am for ever fixed in vengeance—[Alonzo is brought in, in chains, guarded, Pizarro turns and surveys him.] Welcome, welcome, Don Alonzo de Molina; 'tis long since we have met; thy mended looks should speak a life of rural idolence. How is it, that amid the toils and cares of war, thou dost preserve the healthful bloom of careless ease? Tell me thy secret?

Al. Thou wilt not profit by it. Whate'er the toils or cares of war, peace still is here.

[Putting his hand to his heart.]

Piz. Sarcastic boy!

Elv. Thou art answered rightly. Why sport with the unfortunate?

Piz. And thou art wedded too, I hear; ay, and the father of a lovely boy—the heir, no doubt, of all his father's loyalty; of all his mother's faith.

Al. The heir, I trust, of all his father's scorn of fraud, oppression, and hypocrisy—the heir, I hope, of all his mother's virtue, gentleness, and truth—the heir, I trust, to all Pizarro's hate.

Piz. Really! Now do I feel for this poor orphan; for fatherless to-morrow's sun shall see that child.

Alonzo, thy hours are numbered.

Elv. Pizarro—no!

Piz. Hence—or dread my anger.

Elv. I will not hence; nor do I dread thy anger.

Al. [To ELVIRA.] Generous loveliness! spare thy unavailing pity.—Seek not to thwart the tiger with his prey beneath his fangs.

Piz. Audacious rebel! Thou art a renegade from thy monarch and thy God!

Al. 'Tis false.

Piz. Art thou not, tell me, a deserter from thy country's legions, and, with vile heathens leagued, hast thou not warred against thy native land?

Al. No! Deserter I am none! I was not born among robbers! pirates! murderers!—When those legions, lured by the abhorred lust of gold, and by thy foul ambition urged, forgot the honour of Castilians, and forsook the duties of humanity, they deserted me. I have not warred against my native land, but against those who have usurp'd its power. The banners of my country, when first I followed arms beneath them, were Justice, Faith, and Mercy. If these are beaten down, and trampled under foot—I have no country, nor exists the power entitled to reproach me with revolt.

Piz. The power to judge and punish thou at least exists.

Al. Where are my judges?

Piz. Thou wouldst appeal to the war-council?

Al. If the good Las Casas have yet a seat there, yes; if not, I appeal to heaven!

Piz. And to impose upon the folly of Las Casas, what would be the excuses of thy treason?

Elv. The folly of Las Casas!—Such, doubtless, his mild precepts seem to thy hard-hearted wisdom!—O! would I might have lived as I will die, a sharer in the follies of Las Casas!

Al. To him I should not need to urge the foul barbarities which drove me from your side; but I would gently lead him by the hand through all the lovely fields of Quito; there, in many a spot, where late was barrenness and waste, I would show him how now the opening blossom, blade, or perfumed bud, sweet bashful pledges of delicious harvest, waiting their incense to the ripening sun, give cheerful promise to the hope of industry. This, I would say, is my work! I would show him many an eye, and many a hand, by gentleness from error won, raised in pure devotion to the true and only God!—this, too, I could tell him is Alonzo's work! Then would Las Casas clasp me in his aged arms; from his uplifted eyes a tear of gracious thankfulness would fall upon my head, and that one blessed drop would be to me at once this world's best proof, that I had acted rightly here, and surest hope of my Creator's mercy and reward hereafter.

Elv. Happy, virtuous Alonzo! And thou, Pizarro, wouldst appal, with fear of death, a man who thinks and acts as he does?

Piz. Daring, obstinate enthusiast! But know,

the pious blessing of thy preceptor's tears does not avail thee here; he has fled like thee—like thee, no doubt, to join the foes of Spain. The perilous trial of the next reward thouapest, is nearer than perhaps thou'st thought; for, by my country's wrongs, and by mine own, to-morrow's sun shall see thy death.

Elv. Hold!—Pizarro, hear me!—If not always justly, at least act always greatly. Name not thy country's wrongs—'tis plain they have no share in thy resentment. Thy fury 'gainst this youth is private hate, and deadly personal revenge; if this be so—and even now thy detected conscience in that look avows it—profane not the name of justice or thy country's cause, but let him arm, and bid him to the field on equal terms.

Piz. Officious advocate for treason—peace! Bear him hence—he knows his sentence.

[Retires back.]

Al. [To *Piz.*] Thy revenge is eager, and I'm thankful for it;—to me thy haste is mercy. [To *Elv.*] For thee, sweet pleader in misfortune's cause, accept my parting thanks. This camp is not thy proper sphere. Wert thou among yon savages, as they are called, thou'dst find companions more congenial to thy heart.

Piz. [Returns.]. Yes; she shall bear the tidings of thy death to Cora.

Al. Inhuman man! that pang at least might have been spared me: but thy malice shall not shake my constancy. I go to death—many shall bless, and none shall curse my memory. Thou still wilt live, and still wilt be—Pizarro. [Exit, guarded.]

Elv. Now, by the indignant scorn that burns upon my cheek, my soul is shamed and sickened at the meanness of thy vengeance.

Piz. What has thy romantic folly aimed at? He is mine enemy, and in my power.

Elv. He is in your power, and therefore is no more an enemy. Pizarro, I demand not of thee justice—I ask not from thee nobleness of mind—I require only just dealing to the fame thou hast acquired: be not the assassin of thine own renown. Do not act that which, howe'er thy present power may gloss it to the world, will make thee hateful to all future ages—accursed and scorned by posterity.

Piz. And should posterity applaud my deeds, think'st thou my mouldering bones would rattle then with transport in my tomb? This is renown for visionary boys to dream of—I understand it not. The fame I value shall uplift my living estimation—o'er-bear with popular support the envy of my foes—advance my purposes, and aid my power.

Elv. Pizarro, thou no longer lov'st me.

Piz. It is not so, *Elvira*. But what might I not suspect—this wondrous interest for a stranger! Take back thy reproach.

Elv. No, Pizarro; as yet I am not lost to thee—one string still remains, and binds me to thy fate. Do not, I conjure thee—do not, for mine own sake, tear it asunder—shed not Alonzo's blood!

Piz. My resolution is fixed.

Elv. Even though that moment lost thee *Elvira* for ever?

Piz. Even so.

Elv. Pizarro, if not to honour, if not to humanity, yet listen to affection; bear some memory of the sacrifices I have made for thy sake. Have I not for thee quitted my parents, my friends, my fame, my native land? When escaping, did I not risk, in rushing to thy arms, to bury myself in the bo-

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some of the deep? Have I not shared all thy perils—heavy storms at sea, and frightful 'scapes on shore? Even on this dreadful day, amid the rout of battle, who remained firm and constant at Pizarro's side? Who presented her bosom as his shield to the assailing foe?

Piz. 'Tis truly spoken all. In love thou art thy sex's miracle—in war the soldier's pattern—and therefore my whole heart and half my acquisitions are thy right.

Elv. Convince me I possess the first—I exchange all title to the latter, for—mercy to Alonzo.

Piz. No more! Had I intended to prolong his doom, each word thou utterest now would hasten on his fate.

Elv. Alonzo then at morn will die?

Piz. Think'st thou yon sun will set! as surely at his rising shall Alonzo die.

Elv. Then be it done—the string is cracked—sundered for ever. But mark me—thou hast heretofore had cause, 'tis true, to doubt my resolution, howe'er offended—but mark me now—the lips which, cold and jeering, barbing revenge with rancorous mockery, can insult a fallen enemy, shall never more receive the pledge of love: the arm which, unshaken by its bloody purpose, shall assign to needless torture the victim who avows his heart, never more shall press the hand of faith! Pizarro, scorn not my words—beware thou slightest them not! I feel how noble are the motives which now animate my thoughts—who could not feel as I do, I condemn: you, feeling so, yet would not act as I shall, I despise.

Piz. [With a smile of contempt.] I have heard thee, *Elvira*, and know well the noble motives which inspire thee, fit advocate in virtue's cause! Believe me, I pity thy tender feelings for the youth Alonzo! He dies at sunrise! [Exit.]

Elv. 'Tis well! 'tis just I should be humble—I had forgot myself, and in the cause of innocence assumed the tone of virtue. 'Twas fit I should be rebuked—and by Pizarro. Fall, fall, ye few reluctant drops of weakness—the last these eyes shall ever shed. How a woman can love, Pizarro, thou hast known too well—how she can hate, thou hast yet to learn. Yes, thou undaunted! Thou, whom yet no mortal hazard has appalled! Thou, who on Panama's brow didst make alliance with the raging elements, that tore the silence of that horrid night—when thou didst follow, as thy pioneer, the crashing thunder's drift, and, stalking o'er the trembling earth, didst plant thy banner by the red volcano's mouth! Thou, who when battling on the sea, and thy brave ship was blown to splinters, wast seen—as thou didst bestride a fragment of the smoking wreck—to wave thy glittering sword above thy head—as thou wouldst defy the world in that extremity! Come, fearless man—now meet the last and felldest peril of thy life:—meet, and survive—an injured woman's fury, if thou canst! [Exit.]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Dungeon.—ALONZO in chains.—A Sentinel walking near.

Al. For the last time, I have beheld the shadow'd ocean close upon the light. For the last time, through my cleft dungeon's roof, I now be-

hold the quivering lustre of the stars. For the last time, oh, Sun! (and soon the hour) I shall behold thy rising, and thy level beams melting the pale mists of morn to glittering dew-drops. Then comes my death, and in the morning of my day, I fall, which—No, Alonzo, date not the life which thou hast run, by the mean reck'ning of the hours and days which thou hast breathed: a life spent worthily should be measured by a nobler line; by deeds, not years. Then wouldst thou murmur not, but bless Providence, which in so short a span made thee the instrument of wide and spreading blessings, to the helpless and oppressed! Though sinking in decrepid age, he prematurely falls, whose memory records no benefit conferred by him on man. They only have lived long, who have lived virtuously.

Enter a Soldier—shows the Sentinel a passport, who withdraws.

Al. What bear you there?

Sol. These refreshments I was ordered to leave in your dungeon.

Al. By whom ordered?

Sol. By the Lady Elvira; she will be here herself before the dawn.

Al. Bear back to her my humblest thanks; and take thou the refreshments, friend. I need them not.

Sol. I have served under you, Don Alonzo. Pardon my saying, that my heart pities you. [*Exit.*]

Al. In Pizarro's camp, to pity the unfortunate, no doubt, requires forgiveness. [*Looking out.*] Surely, even now, thin streaks of glimmering light steal on the darkness of the east. If so, my life is but one hour more. I will not watch the coming dawn; but in the darkness of my cell, my last prayer to thee, Power Supreme! shall be for my wife and child! Grant them to dwell in innocence and peace; grant health and purity of mind—all else is worthless. [*Enters the cavern.*]

Sen. Who's there? answer quickly! who's there?

Rol. [*Within.*] A friar come to visit your prisoner.

Enters, disguised as a Monk.

Rol. Inform me, friend, is not Alonzo, the Spanish prisoner, confined in this dungeon?

Sen. He is.

Rol. I must speak with him.

Sen. You must not. [*Stopping him with his spear.*]

Rol. He is my friend.

Sen. Not if he were thy brother.

Rol. What is to be his fate?

Sen. He dies at sunrise.

Rol. Ha! Then I am come in time.

Sen. Just—to witness his death.

Rol. Soldier, I must speak to him.

Sen. Back, back.—It is impossible.

Rol. I do entreat thee, but for one moment.

Sen. Thou entreat'st in vain—my orders are most strict.

Rol. Even now, I saw a messenger go hence.

Sen. He brought a pass which we are all accustomed to obey.

Rol. Look on this wedge of massive gold—look on these precious gems. In thy own land they will be wealth for thee and thine—beyond thy hope or wish. Take them—they are thine. Let me but pass one minute with Alonzo.

Sen. Away!—wouldst thou corrupt me? Me! an old Castilian! I know my duty better.

Rol. Soldier!—hast thou a wife?

Sen. I have.

Rol. Hast thou children?

Sen. Four—honest, lovely boys.

Rol. Where didst thou leave them?

Sen. In my native village; even in the cot where myself was born.

Rol. Dost thou love thy children and thy wife?

Sen. Do I love them!—God knows my heart—I do.

Rol. Soldier! imagine thou wert doomed to die a cruel death in this strange land. What would be thy last request?

Sen. That some of my comrades should carry my dying blessing to my wife and children.

Rol. Oh! but if that comrade was at thy prison-gate, and should there be told—thy fellow-soldier dies at sunrise, yet thou shalt not for a moment see him, nor shalt thou bear his dying blessing to his poor children or his wretched wife, what wouldst thou think of him who thus could drive thy comrade from the door?

Sen. How!

Rol. Alonzo has a wife and child. I am come but to receive for her, and for her babe, the last blessing of my friend.

Sen. Go in. [*Shoulders his spear, and walks away.*]

Rol. Oh, holy Nature! thou dost never plead in vain. There is not, of our earth, a creature bearing form, and life, human or savage—native of the forest wild, of giddy air—around whose parent bosom, thou hast not a cord entwined of power to tie them to their offspring's claims, and at thy will to draw them back to thee. On iron pinions borne, the blood-stained vulture cleaves the storm, yet is the plumage closest to her breast, soft as the cygnet's down, and o'er her unshell'd brood the murm'ring ring-dove sits not more gently!—Yes, now he is beyond the porch, barring the outer gate! Alonzo! Alonzo! my friend! Ha! In gentle sleep! Alonzo—rise!

Al. How! is my hour elapsed? Well, I am ready.

Rol. Alonzo—know me.

Al. What voice is that?

Rol. 'Tis Rolla's.

Al. Rolla! my friend! [*Takes off his disguise. Embraces him.*] Heavens!—how couldst thou pass the guard? Did this habit—

Rol. There is not a moment to be lost in words: this disguise I tore from the dead body of a friar, as I pass'd our field of battle: it has gained me entrance to thy dungeon; now take it, thou, and fly.

Al. And Rolla—

Rol. Will remain here in thy place.

Al. And die for me? No! Rather eternal tortures rack me.

Rol. I shall not die, Alonzo. It is thy life Pizarro seeks, not Rolla's; and from my prison soon will thy arm deliver me; or, should it be otherwise, I am as a blighted plantain, standing alone amid the sandy desert. Nothing seeks or lives beneath my shelter. Thou art—a husband and a father—the being of a lovely wife and helpless infant hangs upon thy life. Go! go, Alonzo! Go, to save, not thyself, but Cora and thy child!

Al. Urge me not thus, my friend; I had prepared to die in peace.

Rol. To die in peace! devoting her thou'st sworn to live for, to madness, misery, and death! For be assured the state I left her in forbids all hope, but from thy quick return.

Al. Oh God!

Roll. If thou art yet irresolute, Alonzo, now heed me well. I think thou hast not known that Rolla ever pledg'd his word, and shrunk from its fulfilment. And by the heart of truth I swear, if thou art proudly obstinate to deny thy friend the transport of preserving Cora's life, in thee, no power that sways the will of man shall stir me hence; and thou't have the desperate triumph of seeing Rolla perish by thy side, with the assured conviction that Cora and thy child—are lost for ever!

Al. Oh, Rolla! thou distractest me!

Roll. Begone! A moment's further pause, and all is lost. The dawn approaches. Fear not for me; I will treat with Pizarro, as for surrender and submission; I shall gain time, doubt not, while thou, with a chosen band, passing the secret way, mayst at night return, release thy friend, and bear him back in triumph. Yes, hasten, dear Alonzo. Even now I hear the frantic Cora call thee! Haste, Alonzo!—Haste!—Haste!

Al. Rolla, I fear thy friendship drives me from honour, and from right.

Roll. Did Rolla ever counsel dishonour to his friend?

Al. Oh! my preserver!

[*Embracing him.*

Roll. I feel thy warm tears dropping on my cheek.—Go! I am rewarded. [*Throws the Friar's garment over Alonzo.*] There, conceal thy face; and, that they may not clank, hold fast thy chains. Now, God be with thee!

Al. At night we meet again. Then, so aid me Heaven! I return to save, or perish with thee!

[*Exit.*

Roll. [*Looking after him.*] He has passed the outer porch—he is safe! he will soon embrace his wife and child! Now, Cora, didst thou not wrong me? This is the first time throughout my life, I ever deceived man. Forgive me, God of Truth! if I am wrong. Alonzo flatters himself that we shall meet again! Yes—there!—[*Lifting his hands to heaven.*]—Assuredly we shall meet again; there possess, in peace, the joys of everlasting love and friendship—on earth, imperfect and embitter'd. I will retire, lest the guard return before Alonzo may have passed their lines.

[*Retires into the cavern.*

Enter ELVIRA.

Elv. No, not Pizarro's brutal taunts, not the glowing admiration which I feel for this noble youth, shall raise an interest in my harassed bosom, which honour would not sanction. If he reject the vengeance my heart has sworn against the tyrant, whose death alone can save this land, yet shall the delight be mine, to restore him to his Cora's arms, to his dear child, and to the unoffending people, whom his virtues guide, and valour guards. Alonzo, come forth!

Enter ROLLA.

Ha! who art thou? Where is Alonzo?

Roll. Alonzo's fled.

Elv. Fled!

Roll. Yes; and he must not be pursued. Pardon this roughness [*seizing her hand*], but a moment's precious to Alonzo's flight.

Elv. What if I call the guard?

Roll. Do so; Alonzo still gains time.

Elv. What if thus I free myself?

[*Shows a dagger.*

Roll. Strike it to my heart! Still, with the convulsive grasp of death I'll hold thee fast.

Elv. Release me! I give my faith, I never will alarm the guard, nor cause pursuit.

Roll. At once, I trust thy word. A feeling boldness in those eyes assures me that thy soul is noble.

Elv. What is thy name? speak freely; by my order the guard is remov'd beyond the outer porch.

Roll. My name is Rolla.

Elv. The Peruvian leader?

Roll. I was so yesterday. To-day, the Spaniard's captive.

Elv. And friendship for Alonzo moved thee to this act?

Roll. Alonzo is my friend. I am prepared to die for him. Yet is the cause a motive stronger far than friendship.

Elv. One only passion else could urge such generous rashness.

Roll. And that is—

Elv. Love?

Roll. True!

Elv. Gallant, ingenuous Rolla! Know that my purpose here was thine; and were I to save thy friend—

Roll. How! a woman blessed with gentleness and courage, and yet not Cora?

Elv. Does Rolla think so meanly of all female hearts?

Roll. Not so—you are worse and better than we are!

Elv. Were I to save thee, Rolla, from the tyrant's vengeance—restore thee to thy native land—and thy native land to peace—wouldst thou not rank Elvira with the good?

Roll. To judge the action I must know the means.

Elv. Take this dagger.

Roll. How to be used?

Elv. I will conduct thee to the tent where fell Pizarro sleeps; the scourge of innocence—the terror of thy race—the fiend that desolates thy afflicted country.

Roll. Hast thou not been injured by Pizarro?

Elv. Deeply as scorn and insult can inflame thy deadly venom.

Roll. And thou ask'st that I shall murder him in his sleep!

Elv. Would he not have murdered Alonzo in his chains? He that sleeps and he that's bound are equally defenceless. Hear me, Rolla: so may I prosper in this perilous act, as searching my full heart I have put by all rancorous motive of private vengeance there, and feel that I advance to my dread purpose in the cause of human nature, and at the call of sacred justice.

Roll. The God of justice sanctifies no evil as a step towards good. Great actions cannot be achieved by wicked means.

Elv. Then, Peruvian, since thou dost feel so coldly for thy country's wrongs, this hand, though it revolt my soul, shall strike the blow.

Roll. Then is thy destruction certain, and for Peru thou perishest! Give me the dagger!

Elv. Now follow me; but first—and dreadful is the hard necessity—thou must strike down the guard.

Roll. The soldier who was on duty here?

Elv. Yes, him; else, seeing thee, the alarm will be instant.

Roll. And I must stab that soldier as I pass?—Take back thy dagger.

Elv. Rolla!

Roll. That soldier, mark me, is a man! All are

not men that bear the human form. He refused my prayers—refused my gold—denying to admit me—till his own feelings bribed him. For my nation's safety, I would not harm that man.

Elv. Then he must with us. I will answer for his safety.

Rol. Be that plainly understood between us: for, whatever betide our enterprise, I will not risk a hair of that man's head, to save my heartstrings from consuming fire. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*The Inside of PIZARRO's Tent.*—

PIZARRO on a couch, at the back of stage.

Piz. [*In his sleep.*] No mercy, traitor. Now at his heart! Stand off there, you—let me see him bleed! Ha! ha! ha! Let me hear that groan again.

Enter ROLLA and ELVIRA.

Elv. There!—Now lose not a moment.

Rol. Thou must leave me now. This scene of blood fits not a woman's presence.

Elv. But a moment's pause may—

Rol. Go!—return to thy own tent, and return not here. I will come to thee. Be thou not known in this business, I implore thee!

Elv. I will withdraw the guard that waits.

[*Exit ELVIRA.*]

Rol. Now have I in my power the accursed destroyer of my country's peace: yet tranquilly he rests. God! can this man sleep?

Piz. [*In his sleep.*] Away! away! hideous fiends! Tear not my bosom thus!

Rol. No: I was in error—the balm of sweet repose he never more can know. Look here, ambition's fools! Ye, by whose inhuman pride the bleeding sacrifice of nations is held as nothing, behold the rest of the guilty! He is in my power; and one blow!—No! my heart and hand refuse the act: Rolla cannot be an assassin!—Yet Elvira must be saved.—[*Approaches the couch.*]
Pizarro! awake!

Piz. [*Starts up.*] Who?—Guard!—

Rol. Speak not—another word is thy death—call not for aid! this arm will be swifter than thy guard.

Piz. Who art thou? and what is thy will?

Rol. I am thine enemy! Peruvian Rolla! Thy death is not my will, or I could have slain thee sleeping.

Piz. Speak, what else?

Rol. Now thou art at my mercy, answer me! Did a Peruvian ever yet wrong or injure thee, or any of thy nation? Didst thou, or any of thy nation, ever yet show mercy to a Peruvian in thy power? Now shalt thou feel, and if thou hast a heart, thou'lt feel it keenly—a Peruvian's vengeance!—[*Drops the dagger at his feet.*]
—There!

Piz. Is it possible!

Rol. Can Pizarro be surprised at this? I thought, forgiveness of injuries had been the Christian's precept. Thou see'st, at least, it is the Peruvian's practice.

Piz. Rolla, thou hast indeed surpris'd—subdued me.

[*Retires.*]

Re-enter ELVIRA.

Elv. [*Not seeing PIZARRO.*] Is it done? Is he dead?—[*Sees PIZARRO.*] How! still living! Then I am lost! And for you, wretched Peruvians! mercy is no more! Oh, Rolla! treacherous or cowardly!

Piz. How can it be, that—

Rol. Away! Elvira speaks she knows not what!—Leave me [*to ELVIRA*], I conjure thee, with Pizarro.

Elv. How! Rolla, dost thou think I shall retract—or that I meanly will deny, that in thy hand I placed a poniard to be plunged into that tyrant's heart? No! my sole regret is, that I trusted to thy weakness, and did not strike the blow myself. Too soon thou'lt learn that mercy to that man is direct cruelty to all thy race!

Piz. Guard! quick! a guard, to seize this frantic woman.

Elv. Yes, a guard! I call them too! And soon I know they'll lead me to my death. But think not, Pizarro, the fury of thy flashing eyes shall awe me for a moment! Nor think that woman's anger, or the feelings of an injured heart, prompted me to this design. No! had I been only influenced so, thus failing, shame and remorse would weigh me down. But, though defeated and destroyed, as now I am, such is the greatness of the cause that urged me, I shall perish, glorying in the attempt, and my last breath of life shall speak the proud avowal of my purpose—to have rescued millions of innocents from the blood-thirsty tyranny of one—by ridding the insulted world of thee!

Rol. Had the act been noble as the motive, Rolla would not have shrunk from its performance.

Enter Guards.

Piz. Seize this discovered fiend, who sought to kill your leader.

Elv. Touch me not, at the peril of your souls; I am your prisoner, and will follow you. But thou, thy triumphant leader, first shalt hear me. Yet, first, for thee, Rolla, accept my forgiveness; even had I been the victim of thy nobleness of heart, I should have admired thee for it. But 'twas myself provoked my doom. Thou wouldst have shielded me. Let not thy contempt follow me to the grave. Didst thou but know the fiend-like arts by which this hypocrite first undermined the virtue of a guileless heart! how, even in the pious sanctuary wherein I dwelt, by corruption and by fraud he practised upon those in whom I most confided—till my distempered fancy led me, step by step, into the abyss of guilt—

Piz. Why am I not obeyed? Tear her hence!

Elv. 'Tis past—but didst thou know my story, Rolla, thou wouldst pity me.

Rol. From my soul I do pity thee.

Piz. Villains! drag her to the dungeon!—prepare the torture instantly.

Elv. Soldiers—but a moment more. 'Tis to applaud your general; it is to tell the astonished world, that, for once, Pizarro's sentence is an act of justice; yes, rack me with the sharpest tortures that ever agoniz'd the human frame; it will be justice. Yes, bid the minions of thy fury wrench forth the sinews of these arms that have caressed, and—even defended thee! Bid them pour burning metal into the bleeding cases of these eyes, that so oft, oh God! have hung with love and homage on thy look; then approach me, bound on the abhorred wheel, there glut thy savage eyes with the convulsive spasms of that dishonoured bosom, which was once thy pillow!—Yet will I bear it all; for it will be justice, all! And, when thou shalt bid them tear me to my death, hoping that thy unshrinking ears may at last be feasted with the music of my cries, I will not utter one shriek

or groan;—but to the last gasp, my body's patience shall deride thy vengeance, as my soul defies thy power.

Piz. Hear'st thou the wretch whose hands were even now prepared for murder?

Rol. Yes! And if her accusation's false, thou wilt not shrink from hearing her: if true, thy barbarity cannot make her suffer the pangs thy conscience will inflict on thee.

Elv. And now, farewell, world! Rolla, farewell! Farewell, thou condemned of Heaven! [*To Pizarro*] for repentance and remorse, I know, will never touch thy heart. We shall meet again. Ha! be it thy horror here, to know that we shall meet hereafter! And when thy parting hour approaches, hark to the knell, whose dreadful beat will strike to thy despairing soul. Then will vibrate on thy ear the curses of the cloister'd saint from whom thou stolest me. Then, the last shrieks which burst from my mother's breaking heart, as she died, appealing to her God against the seducer of her child! Then the blood-stifled groan of my murder'd brother, murdered by thee, fell monster, seeking atonement for his sister's ruined honour! I hear them now: To me the recollection's madness! At such an hour—what will it be to thee?

Piz. A moment's more delay, and at the peril of your lives—

Elv. I have spoken, and the last mortal frailty of my heart is past. And now, with an undaunted spirit and unshaken firmness, I go to meet my destiny. That I could not live nobly, has been Pizarro's act: that I will die nobly, shall be my own. [*Exit, guarded.*]

Piz. Rolla, I would not thou, a warrior, valiant and renowned, shouldst credit the vile tales of this frantic woman. The cause of all this fury—O! a wanton passion for the rebel youth Alonzo, now my prisoner.

Rol. Alonzo is not now thy prisoner.

Piz. How!

Rol. I came to rescue him, to deceive his guard. I have succeeded; I remain thy prisoner.

Piz. Alonzo fled! Is then the vengeance dearest to my heart never to be gratified?

Rol. Dismiss such passions from thy heart; then thou'lt consult its peace.

Piz. I can face all enemies that dare confront me—I cannot war against my nature.

Rol. Then, Pizarro, ask not to be deemed a hero. To triumph o'er ourselves is the only conquest, where fortune makes no claim. In battle chance may snatch the laurel from thee, or chance may place it on thy brow; but, in a contest with thyself, be resolute, and the virtuous impulse must be the victor.

Piz. Peruvian! thou shalt not find me to thee ungrateful or ungenerous. Return to thy countrymen—thou art at liberty.

Rol. Thou dost act in this, as honour, and as duty, bid thee.

Piz. I cannot but admire thee, Rolla; I would we might be friends.

Rol. Farewell! Pity Elvira!—Become the friend of virtue, and thou wilt be mine. [*Exit.*]

Piz. Ambition! tell me what is the phantom I have followed? where is the one delight which it has made my own? My fame is the mark of envy—my love, the dupe of treachery—my glory, eclipsed by the boy I taught—my revenge, defeated and rebuked by the rude honour of a savage foe—before whose native dignity of soul I have

sunk confounded and subdued! I would I could retrace my steps—I cannot. Would I could evade my own reflections! No! thought and memory are my hell. [*Exit.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A thick Forest.—A dreadful storm.—Corra has covered her Child on a bed of leaves and moss.*

Corra. [*Sitting on bank by Child.*] O, Nature, thou hast not the strength of love. My anxious spirit is untired in its march; my wearied shivering frame sinks under it. And for thee, my boy, when faint beneath thy lovely burden, could I refuse to give thy slumbers that poor bed of rest! O, my child! were I assured thy father breathes no more, how quickly would I lay me down by thy dear side—but down—down for ever. [*Thunder and lightning.*] I ask thee not, un pitying storm! to abate thy rage, in mercy to poor Corra's misery; nor while thy thunders spare his slumbers, will I disturb my sleeping cherub; though Heaven knows I wish to hear the voice of life, and feel that life is near me. But I will endure all, while what I have of reason holds. [*Thunder and lightning.*] Still, still implacable!—unfeeling elements! yet still dost thou sleep, my smiling innocent! O, Death! when wilt thou grant to this babe's mother such repose?—Sure I may shield thee better from the storm; my veil may—

Al. [*Without.*] Corra!

Corra. [*Runs.*] Hah!

Al. Corra!

Corra. O, my heart! Sweet Heaven, deceive me not! Is it not Alonzo's voice?

Al. [*Louder.*] Corra!

Corra. It is—it is Alonzo!

Al. [*Very loud.*] Corra! my beloved!

Corra. Alonzo? Here!—here!—Alonzo!

[*Runs out.*]

Enter two Spanish Soldiers.

1st Sol. I tell you we are near our outposts, and the word we heard just now was the countersign.

2d Sol. Well, in our escape from the enemy, to have discovered their secret passage through the rocks, will prove a lucky chance to us—Pizarro will reward us.

1st Sol. This way. The sun, though clouded, is on our left. [*Perceives the Child.*] What have we here? A child! as I'm a soldier.

2d Sol. 'Tis a sweet little babe. Now would it be a great charity to take this infant from its pagan mother's power.

1st Sol. It would so. I have one at home shall play with it. Come along. [*Takes the Child.*]

[*Exeunt.*]

Re-enter Corra and Alonzo.

Corra. [*Speaking without.*] This way, dear Alonzo. Now am I right—there—there—under that tree. Was it possible the instinct of a mother's heart could mistake the spot! Now, wilt thou look at him as he sleeps, or shall I bring him waking with

his full blue laughing eyes to welcome thee at once! Yes—yes. Stand thou there; I'll snatch him from his rosy slumber, blushing like the perfum'd morn.

[Finding only the mantle and veil, which she tears from the ground, and the Child gone, she screams.

Al. [Running to her.] Cora! my heart's beloved! Cora. He is gone!

Al. Eternal God!

Cora. He is gone!—my child! my child!

Al. Where didst thou leave him?

Cora. [Dashing herself on the spot.] Here!

Al. Be calm, beloved Cora! he has awak'd and crept to a little distance—we shall find him. Are you assured this was the spot you left him in?

Cora. Did not these hands make that bed, and shelter for him? And is not this the veil that covered him? O, unnatural mother that I was. I left my child—I forsook my innocent—but I will fly to the earth's brink, but I will find him.

[Runs out, takes up mantle, followed by ALONZO.]

SCENE II.—The Outpost of the Spanish Camp, and a Bridge.—[Trumpets sound without.]

ALMAGRO—[Without].

Bear him along—his story must be false.

[Entering.]

ROLLA in chains, brought in by Soldiers.

Rol. False! Rolla utter falsehood! I would I had thee in a desert with a troop around thee; and I but with my sword in this unshackled hand!

[Trumpets without.]

Alm. Is it to be credited that Rolla, the renown'd Peruvian hero, should be detected like a spy, skulking through our camp?

Rol. Skulking!

Alm. But answer to the general—he is here.

Enter PIZARRO.

Piz. What do I see! Rolla!

Rol. Oh! to thy surprise, no doubt.

Piz. And bound too!

Rol. So fast, thou need'st not fear approaching me.

Alm. The guards surpris'd him passing our outpost.

Piz. Release him instantly. Believe me, I regret this insult.

Rol. Thou feel'st then as thou ought'st.

Piz. Nor can I brook to see a warrior of Rolla's fame disarm'd. Accept this, though it has been thy enemy's. [Gives a sword.] The Spaniards know the courtesy that's due to valour.

Rol. And the Peruvians how to forget offences.

Piz. May not Rolla and Pizarro cease to be foes?

Rol. When the sea divides us; yes! May I now depart?

Piz. Freely.

Rol. And shall I not again be intercepted?

Piz. No!—let the word be given that Rolla passes freely.

Enter DAVILLA and Soldiers, with the Child.

Dav. Here are two soldiers, captiv'd yesterday, who have escap'd from the Peruvian hold, and by the secret way we have so long endeavoured to discover.

Piz. Silence!—imprudent! Seest thou not—?

[Pointing to ROLLA.]

Dav. In their way, they found a Peruvian child, who seems—

Piz. What is the imp to me? Bid them toss it into the sea.

Rol. Gracious Heaven! it is Alonzo's child!—give it to me.

Piz. Ha! Alonzo's child! [Takes the Child.] Welcome, thou pretty hostage. Now Alonzo is again my prisoner!

Rol. Thou wilt not keep the infant from its mother?

Piz. Will I not? What, when I shall meet Alonzo in the heat of the victorious fight, think'st thou I shall not have a check upon the valour of his heart, when he is reminded, that a word of mine is this child's death?

Rol. I do not understand thee.

Piz. My vengeance has a long arrear of hate to settle with Alonzo! and this pledge may help to settle the account. [Gives the Child to a Soldier.]

Rol. Man! Man! Art thou a man! Couldst thou hurt that innocent! By Heaven! it's smiling in thy face.

Piz. Tell me, does it resemble Cora?

Rol. Pizarro! thou hast set my heart on fire. If thou dost harm that child, think not his blood will sink into the barren sand. No! faithful to the eager hope that now trembles in this indignant heart, 'twill rise to the common God of nature and humanity, and cry aloud for vengeance on his accurs'd destroyer's head.

Piz. Be that peril mine.

Rol. [Throwing himself at his feet.] Behold me at thy feet. Me, Rolla!—Me, the preserver of thy life!—Me, that have never yet bent or bow'd before created man!—In humble agony I sue to thee—prostrate I implore thee—but spare that child, and I will be thy slave.

Piz. Rolla! still art thou free to go—this boy remains with me.

Rol. [Rises.] Then was this sword Heaven's gift, not thine! [Seizes the Child.] Who moves one step to follow me, dies upon the spot.

[Exit, with the Child.]

Piz. Pursue him instantly—but spare his life. [Exit ALMAGRO and Soldiers.] With what fury he defends himself! Ha! he tells them to the ground—and now—

Enter ALMAGRO.

Alm. Three of thy brave soldiers are already victims to thy command to spare this madman's life; and if he once gain the thicket—

Piz. Spare him no longer. [Exit ALMAGRO.] Their guns must reach him—he'll yet escape—holloa to those horse—the Peruvian sees them—and now he turns among the rocks—then is his retreat cut off.

[ROLLA crosses the wooden-bridge, pursued by the Soldiers—they fire at him—a shot strikes him.]

Piz. Now!—quick! quick! seize the child!

[ROLLA retreats by the background, bearing off the Child.]

Re-enter ALMAGRO.

Alm. By hell! he has escaped! and with the child unhurt.

Dav. No—he bears his death with him.—Believe me, I saw him struck upon the side.

Piz. But the child is sav'd—Alonzo's child! Oh! the furies of disappointed vengeance.

Alm. Away with the revenge of words—let us to deeds. Forget not we have acquired the knowledge of the secret pass, which through the rocky cavern's gloom brings thee at once to the strong hold, where are lodged their women and their treasures.

Piz. Right, Almagro! Swift as thy thought, draw forth a daring and a chosen band—I will not wait for numbers. Stay, Almagro!—Valverde is informed Elvira dies to day?

Alm. He is—and one request alone she—

Piz. I'll hear of none!

Alm. The boon is small—'tis but for the novice habit which you first beheld her in. She wishes not to suffer in the gaudy trappings which remind her of her shame.

Piz. Well, do as thou wilt—but tell Valverde, that, at our return, as his life shall answer it, to let me hear that she is dead. [Exeunt.

SCENE III.—Ataliba's Tent.

Enter ATALIBA, followed by CORA and ALONZO.

Cora. Oh! avoid me not, Ataliba! To whom but to her king is the wretched mother to address her griefs? The gods refuse to hear my prayers. Did not my Alonzo fight for thee?—And will not my sweet boy, if thou'lt but restore him to me, one day fight thy battles too?

At. Oh! my suffering love—my poor heart-broken Cora!—thou but wound'st our sovereign's feeling soul and not relief'st thy own.

Cora. Is he our sovereign, and has he not the power to give me back my child?

Ata. When I reward desert or can relieve my people, I feel what is the real glory of a king; when I hear them suffer, and cannot aid them, I mourn the impotence of all mortal power.

[Voices behind.] Rolla! Rolla! Kolla!

Enter ROLLA, his countenance ghastly and bleeding, with the Child, followed by Peruvians.

Rol. Thy child!

[Gives the Child into CORA's arms, and falls.

Cora. O God! there is blood upon him!

Rol. 'Tis my blood, Cora!

At. Rolla, thou diest.

Rol. For thee and Cora. [Dies.

Enter ORANO.

Ora. Treachery has revealed our asylum in the rocks. Even now the foe assails the peaceful band retired for protection there.

Al. Lose not a moment! Swords, be quick! Your wives and children cry to you. Bear our lov'd hero's body in the van; 'twill raise the fury of our men to madness.—Now, fell Pizarro! the death of one of us is near!—Away! be the word of assault, Revenge and Rolla.

[Exeunt ALONZO and ATALIBA.—Soldiers take up the body, and bear it off, followed by CORA and Child, and army.—Charge.

SCENE IV.—A Recess among the Rocks.

Enter PIZARRO, ALMAGRO, VALVERDE, and Spanish Soldiers.

Piz. Well!—if surrounded, we must perish in the centre of them. Where do Rolla and Alonzo hide their heads?

Enter ALONZO, ORANO, and Peruvians.

Al. Alonzo answers thee, and Alonzo's sword shall speak for Rolla.

Piz. Thou know'st the advantage of thy numbers. Thou dar'st not singly face Pizarro.

Al. Peruvians, stir not a man! Be this contest only ours.

Piz. Spaniards!—observe ye the same.

[They fight.—ALONZO is disarmed, and is beat down.

Piz. Now, traitor, to thy heart.

[ELVIRA enters in black.—PIZARRO, appalled, staggers back—ALONZO recovers his sword, renews the fight, and slays him.

ATALIBA enters, and embraces ALONZO.

Ata. My brave Alonzo!

Alm. Alonzo, we submit. Spare us! we will embark, and leave the coast.

Val. Elvira will confess I sav'd her life; she has sav'd thine.

Al. Fear not. You are safe.

[Spaniards ground their arms.

Elv. Valverde speaks the truth; nor could he think to meet me here. An awful impulse, which my soul could not resist, impelled me hither.

Al. Noble Elvira! my preserver! How can I speak what I, Ataliba, and his rescued country, owe to thee! If amid this grateful nation thou wouldst remain—

Elv. Alonzo, no! the destination of my future life is fix'd. Humbled in penitence I will endeavour to atone the guilty errors, which, however mask'd by shallow cheerfulness, have long consumed my secret heart. When, by my sufferings purified and penitence sincere, my soul shall dare address the Throne of Mercy in behalf of others, for thee, Alonzo, for thy Cora, and thy child—for thee, thou virtuous monarch, and the innocent race thou reign'st over, shall Elvira's prayers address the God of Nature.—Valverde, thou hast preserved my life. Cherish humanity, avoid the foul examples thou hast view'd. Spaniards, returning to your native home, assure your rulers they mistake the road to glory or to power. Tell them that the pursuits of avarice, conquest, and ambition, never yet made a people happy, or a nation great. [Exit.

At. Ataliba, think not I wish to check the voice of triumph, when I entreat we first may pay the tribute due to our loved Rolla's memory. [Exeunt.

DIRGE.—Priests and Priestesses.

Let tears of gratitude and woe
For the brave Rolla ever flow!

[Curtain slowly descends.

VENICE PRESERVED.

A TRAGEDY.

BY THOMAS OTWAY.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

Duke of Venice.

PRIU LI.

BEDAMAR.

JAFFIER.

PIERRE.

RENAULT.

SPINOSA.

ELLIOT.

THEODORE.

MEZZANA.

DURAND.

Captain of the Guard.

Officer.

BELVIDERA.

Ladies, Guards, Executioners, &c.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*St. Mark's.*

Enter PRIULI and JAFFIER.

Pri. No more! I'll hear no more! begone, and leave me!

Jaff. Not hear me! by my sufferings, but you shall!

My lord—my lord! I'm not that abject wretch
You think me. Patience! where's the distance
throws

Me back so far, but I may boldly speak
In right, though proud oppression will not hear
me?

Pri. Have you not wrong'd me?

Jaff. Could my nature e'er
Have brook'd injustice, or the doing wrongs,
I need not now thus low have bent myself
To gain a hearing from a cruel father.—
Wrong'd you?

Pri. Yes, wrong'd me! in the nicest point,
The honour of my house, you've done me wrong.

You may remember (for I now will speak,
And urge its baseness), when you first came home
From travel, with such hopes as made you look'd
on

By all men's eyes, a youth of expectation;
Pleas'd with your growing virtue, I receiv'd you;
Court'd, and sought to raise you to your merits;
My house, my table—nay, my fortune, too,
My very self was yours; you might have us'd me
To your best service; like an open friend
I treated, trusted you, and thought you mine;
When, in requital of my best endeavours,
You treacherously practis'd to undo me;
Seduc'd the weakness of my age's darling,
My only child, and stole her from my bosom.
Oh! Belvidera!

Jaff. 'Tis to me you owe her:
Childless had you been else, and in the grave
Your name extinct; no more Priuli heard of.
You may remember, scarce five years are past,
Since in your brigantine you sail'd to see
The Adriatic wedded by our duke;
And I was with you; your unskilful pilot
Dash'd us upon a rock; when to your boat
You made for safety: entered first yourself;
Th' affrighted Belvidera, following next,
As she stood trembling on the vessel's side,
Was by a wave wash'd off into the deep;
When instantly I plung'd into the sea,
And, buffeting the billows to her rescue,
Redeem'd her life with half the loss of mine:
Like a rich conquest, in one hand I bore her,
And with the other dash'd the saucy waves,
That throng'd and press'd to rob me of my prize.
I brought her, gave her to your despairing arms;
Indeed, you thank'd me; but a nobler gratitude
Rose in her soul; for from that hour she lov'd me,
Till for her life she paid me with herself.

Pri. You stole her from me; like a thief you
stole her,

At dead of night; that cursed hour you chose
To rifle me of all my heart held dear.
May all your joys in her prove false, like mine!
A sterile fortune, and a barren bed,
Attend you both; continual discord make
Your days and nights bitter, and grievous still:
May the hard hand of a vexatious need

Oppress and grind you ; till at last you find
The curse of disobedience all your portion.

Jaff. Half of your curse you have bestow'd in
vain.

Heav'n has already crown'd our faithful loves
With a young boy, sweet as his mother's beauty :
May he live to prove more gentle than his grand-
sire,

And happier than his father.

Pri. Rather live
To bait thee for his bread, and din your ears
With hungry cries ; whilst his unhappy mother
Sits down and weeps in bitterness of want.

Jaff. You talk as if 'twould please you.

Pri. 'Twould, by Heaven !

Jaff. Would I were in my grave !

Pri. And she, too, with thee ;

For, living here, you're but my curs'd remem-
brances—

I once was happy !

Jaff. You use me thus, because you know my
soul

Is fond of Belvidera. You perceive
My life feeds on her, therefore thus you treat me.
Were I that thief, the doer of such wrongs
As you upbraid me with, what hinders me
But I might send her back to you with contumely,
And court my fortune where she would be kinder ?

Pri. You dare not do't.

Jaff. Indeed, my lord, I dare not.

My heart, that awes me, is too much my master :
Three years are past since first our vows were
plighted,

During which time, the world must bear me wit-
ness,

I've treated Belvidera like your daughter,
The daughter of a senator of Venice :
Distinction, place, attendance, and observance,
Due to her birth, she always has commanded :
Out of my little fortune I've done this ;
Because (though hopeless e'er to win your nature)
The world might see I lov'd her for herself ;
Not as the heiress of the great Priuli.

Pri. No more.

Jaff. Yes, all, and then adieu for ever !

[*Pausing, with clasped hands.*]

There's not a wretch, that lives on common charity,
But's happier than I : for I have known
The luscious sweets of plenty ; every night
Have slept with soft content about my head,
And never wak'd but to a joyful morning :
Yet now must fall, like a full ear of corn,
Whose blossom 'scap'd, yet's wither'd in the
rip'ning.

Pri. Home, and be humble ; study to retrench ;
Discharge the lazy vermin of thy hall,
Those pageants of thy folly :
Reduce the glittering trappings of thy wife
To humble weeds, fit for thy little state : [*Going.*]
Then to some suburb cottage both retire ;
Drudge to feed loathsome life ; get brats and
starve—

Home, home, I say !

Jaff. Yes, if my heart would let me— [*Exit.*]

This proud, this swelling heart : home I would go,
But that my doors are hateful to my eyes,
Fill'd and damm'd up with gaping creditors :
I've now not fifty ducats in the world,
Yet still I am in love, and pleas'd with ruin.
Oh, Belvidera ! oh ! she is my wife—
And we will bear our wayward fate together,
But ne'er know comfort more.

ACT. DRAMA.—NO. XV.

Enter PIERRE.

Pie. My friend, good morrow ;
How fares the honest partner of my heart ?
What, melancholy ! not a word to spare !

Jaff. I'm thinking, Pierre, how that damn'd
starving quality,

Call'd honesty, got footing in the world.

Pie. Why, powerful villany first set it up,
For its own ease and safety. Honest men
Are the soft easy cushions on which knaves
Repose and fatten. Were all mankind villains,
They'd starve each other ; lawyers would want
practice,

Cut-throats reward ; each man would kill his brother
Himself ; none would be paid or hang'd for murder.

Honesty ! 'twas a cheat, invented first

To bind the hands of bold deserving rogues,
That fools and cowards might sit safe in power,
And lord it uncontroll'd above their betters.

Jaff. Then honesty is but a notion ?

Pie. Nothing else ;

Like wit, much talk'd of, not to be defin'd :
He that pretends to most, too, has least share in't.
'Tis a ragged virtue. Honesty ! no more on't.

Jaff. Sure, thou art honest ?

Pie. So, indeed, men think me ;

But they are mistaken, Jaffier : I am a rogue
As well as they :

A fine, gay, bold-faced villain, as thou seest me.
'Tis true, I pay my debts, when they're contracted ;

I steal from no man ; would not cut a throat

To gain admission to a great man's purse,

Or a whore's bed ; I'd not betray my friend,

To get his place or fortune ; I scorn to flatter

A blown-up fool above me, or crush the wretch
beneath me ;

Yet, Jaffier, for all this I am a villain.

Jaff. A villain !

Pie. Yes, a most notorious villain ;

To see the sufferings of my fellow-creatures,

And own myself a man ; to see our senators

Cheat the deluded people with a show

Of liberty, which yet they ne'er must taste of.

They say by them our hands are free from fetters ;

Yet whom they please they lay in basest bonds ;

Bring whom they please to infamy and sorrow ;

Drive us, like wrecks, down the rough tide of
power,

Whilst no hold's left to save us from destruction.

All that bear this are villains, and I one,

Not to rouse up at the great call of nature,

And check the growth of these domestic spoilers,

That make us slaves, and tell us 'tis our charter.

Jaff. I think no safety can be here for virtue,

And grieve, my friend, as much as thou, to live

In such a wretched state as this of Venice,

Where all agree to spoil the public good,

And villains fatten with the brave man's labours.

Pie. We've neither safety,

Unity, nor peace, my friend,

For the foundation's lost of common good ;

Justice is lame, as well as blind, amongst us ;

The laws (corrupted to their ends that make
them)

Serve but for instruments of some new tyranny,

That every day starts up, t'enslave us deeper.

Now [*Lays his hand on JAFFIER'S arm.*] could this
glorious cause but find out friends

To do it right, oh, Jaffier ! then might'st thou

Not wear those seals of woe upon thy face ;

The proud Priuli should be taught humanity,

Q

And learn to value such a son as thou art.

I dare not speak, but my heart bleeds this moment.

Jaff. Curs'd be the cause, though I, my friend,
be part on't :

Let me partake the troubles of thy bosom,

For I am us'd to misery, and perhaps

May find a way to sweeten't to thy spirit.

Pie. Too soon 'twill reach thy knowledge——

Jaff. Then from thee

Let it proceed. There's virtue, in thy friendship,

Would make the saddest tale of sorrow pleasing,

Strengthen my constancy, and welcome ruin.

Pie. Then thou art ruined !

Jaff. That I long since knew ;

I and ill-fortune have been long acquainted.

Pie. I pass'd this very moment by thy doors,

And found them guarded by a troop of villains ;

The sons of public rapine were destroying.

They told me, by the sentence of the law,

They had commission to seize all thy fortune :

Nay, more, Priuli's cruel hand had sign'd it.

Here stood a ruffian, with an horrid face,

Lording it o'er a pile of massy plate,

Tumbled into a heap for public sale :

There was another making villanous jests

At thy undoing : he had ta'en possession

Of all thy ancient, most domestic ornaments ;—

The very bed, which, on thy wedding night,

Received thee to the arms of Belvidera,

The scene of all thy joys, was violated

By the coarse hands of filthy dungeon-villains,

And thrown amongst the common lumber.

Jaff. Now, thank Heaven !

Pie. Thank Heaven ! for what ?

Jaff. That I'm not worth a ducat.

Pie. Curse thy dull stars, and the worse fate of
Venice,

Where brothers, friends, and fathers, all are false ;

Where there's no truth, no trust ; where innocence

Stoops under vile oppression, and vice lords it.

Hadst thou but seen, as I did, how, at last,

Thy beauteous Belvidera, like a wretch

That's doom'd to banishment, came weeping forth,

Whilst two young virgins, on whose arm she lean'd,

Kindly look'd up, and at her grief grew sad,

As if they catch'd the sorrows that fell from her :

E'en the lewd rabble, that were gather'd round

To see the sight, stood mute when they beheld her ;

Govern'd their roaring throats, and grumbled pity :

I could have hugg'd the greasy rogues—they
pleas'd me.

Jaff. I thank thee for this story, from my soul ;

Since now I know the worst that can befall me.

Ah, Pierre ! I have a heart that could have borne

The roughest wrong my fortune could have done
me ;

But, when I think what Belvidera feels,

The bitterness her tender spirits taste of,

I own myself a coward : bear my weakness ;

If, throwing thus my arms about thy neck, [*Embrace.*]

I play the boy, and blubber in thy bosom.

Oh, I shall drown thee with my sorrows.

Pie. Burn,

First burn and level Venice to thy ruin.

What ! starve, like beggars' brats in frosty weather,

Under a hedge, and whine ourselves to death !

Thou, or thy cause, shall never want assistance,

Whilst I have blood or fortune fit to serve thee :

Command my heart, thou't every way its master.

Jaff. No ; there's a secret pride in bravely dying.

Pie. Rats die in holes and corners, dogs run mad ;

Man knows a braver remedy for sorrow—

Revenge, the attribute of gods ; they stamp'd it,

With their great image, on our natures. Die !

Consider well the cause that calls upon thee ;

And, if thou'rt base enough, die then. Remember

Thy Belvidera suffers ; Belvidera !

Die !—damn first !—What ! be decently interr'd

In a church-yard, and mingle thy brave dust

With stinking rogues, that rot in winding-sheets,

Surfeit-slain fools, the common dung o' th' soil !

Jaff. Oh !

Pie. Well said, out with't—swear a little——

Jaff. Swear ! By sea and air ; by earth, by
heav'n and hell,

I will revenge my Belvidera's tears !

Hark thee, my friend—Priuli—is—a senator !

Pie. A dog !

Jaff. Agreed.

Pie. Shoot him !

Jaff. With all my heart !

No more—where shall we meet at night ?

Pie. I'll tell thee :

On the Rialto, every night at twelve,

I take my evening's walk of meditation :

There we two will meet, and talk of precious

Mischief—— [*Shake hands.*]

Jaff. Farewell !

Pie. At twelve.

Jaff. At any hour ; my plagues

Will keep me waking. [*Exit PIERRE.*]

Tell me why, good Heaven,

Thou mad'st me what I am, with all the spirit,

Aspiring thoughts, and elegant desires,

That fill the happiest man ? Ah, rather why,

Base-minded, dull, and fit to carry burdens !

Didst thou not form me sordid as my fate ?

Why have I sense to know the curse that's on me ?

Is this just dealing, nature ? Belvidera !

Poor Belvidera !

Bel. [*Without.*] Lead me, lead me, my virgins,

To that kind voice.

Enter BELVIDERA.

Bel. My lord, my love, my refuge !

[*Leans on JAFFIER.*]

Happy my eyes, when they behold thy face !

My heavy heart will leave its doleful beating

At sight of thee, and bound with sprightly joys.

Oh, smile ! as when our loves were in their spring,

And cheer my fainting soul !

Jaff. As when our loves

Were in their spring ! Has, then, my fortune

chang'd thee ?

Art thou not, Belvidera, still the same—

Kind, good, and tender, as my arms first found

thee ?

If thou art alter'd, where shall I have harbour ?

Where ease my loaded heart ? [*Part.*] Oh, where

complain ?

Bel. Does this appear like change, or love de-
caying,

When thus I throw myself into thy bosom,

[*Leans on JAFFIER.*]

With all the resolution of strong truth ?

I joy more in thee

Than did thy mother, when she hugg'd thee first,

And bless'd the gods for all her travail past.

Jaff. Can there in woman be such glorious faith ?

Sure, all ill stories of thy sex are false !

Oh, woman ! lovely woman ! Nature made thee

To temper man : we had been brutes without you !

Angels are painted fair, to look like you :

There's in you all that we believe of Heav'n ;

Amazing brightness, purity, and truth,
Eternal joy, and everlasting love! [*Embrace.*]

Bel. If love be treasure, we'll be wondrous rich;
Oh! lead me to some desert, wide and wild,
Barren as our misfortunes, where my soul
May have its vent, where I may tell aloud
To the high heavens, and every list'ning planet,
With what a boundless stock my bosom's fraught.

Jaff. [*Taking her hand.*] Oh, Belvidera! doubly
I'm a beggar;

Undone by fortune, and in debt to thee.
Want, worldly want, that hungry meagre fiend,
Is at my heels, and chases me in view.
Canst thou bear cold and hunger? Can these limbs,
Fram'd for the tender offices of love,
Endure the bitter gripes of smarting poverty?
When banished by our miseries abroad
(As suddenly we shall be), to seek out,
In some far climate, where our names are strangers,
For charitable succour, wilt thou then,
When, in a bed of straw we shrink together,
And the bleak winds shall whistle round our heads,
Wilt thou then talk thus to me? Wilt thou then
Hush my cares thus, and shelter me with love?

Bel. Oh! I will love, even in madness, love thee!
Though my distracted senses should forsake me,
I'd find some intervals when my poor heart
Should 'suage itself, and be let loose to thine.
Though the bare earth be all our resting-place,
Its roots our food, some cliff our habitation,
I'll make this arm a pillow for thine head;
And, as thou sighing liest, and swelled with sor-
row,

Creep to thy bosom, pour the balm of love
Into thy soul, and kiss thee to thy rest;
Then praise our God, and watch thee till the morn-
ing.

Jaff. Hear this, you heav'ns, and wonder how
you made her!

Reign, reign, ye monarchs, that divide the world;
Busy rebellion ne'er will let you know
Tranquillity and happiness like mine;
Like gaudy ships, the obsequious billows fall,
And rise again, to lift you in your pride;
They wait but for a storm, and then devour you.
I, in my private bark already wreck'd,
Like a poor merchant, driven to unknown land,
That had, by chance, pack'd up his choicest treasure
In one dear casket, and sav'd only that;
Since I must wander farther on the shore,
Thus [*Taking her arm*] hug my little, but my pre-
cious store,

Resolv'd to scorn, and trust my fate no more.
[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Rialto.*

Enter JAFFIER.

Jaff. I'm here; and thus, the shades of night
around me,

I look as if all hell were in my heart,
And I in hell. Nay, surely, 'tis so with me!
For every step I tread, methinks some fiend
Knocks at my breast, and bids it not be quiet.
I've heard how desperate wretches, like myself,

Have wander'd out at this dead time of night,
To meet the foe of mankind in his walk.
Sure I'm so curs'd, that, though of Heav'n forsaken,
No minister of darkness cares to tempt me.
Hell! hell! why sleep'st thou?

Enter PIERRE.

Pie. Sure, I've stay'd too long: [*Coming forward.*
The clock has struck, and I may lose my proselyte.
Speak [*seeing JAFFIER*], who goes there?

Jaff. A dog, that comes to howl
At yonder moon. What's he, that asks the question?

Pie. A friend to dogs, for they are honest crea-
tures,

And ne'er betray their masters; never fawn
On any that they love not. Well met, friend
Jaffier!

Jaff. The same.

Pie. Where's Belvidera?

Jaff. For a day or two,
I've lodged her privately, till I see farther
What fortune will do with me. Prithee, friend,
If thou wouldst have me sit to hear good counsel,
Speak not of Belvidera.

Pie. Speak not of her?

Jaff. Oh, no! nor name her!

Pie. May be I wish her well.

Jaff. Whom well?

Pie. Thy wife; thy lovely Belvidera.
I hope a man may wish his friend's wife well,
And no harm done.

Jaff. [*Retiring.*] You're merry, Pierre.

Pie. [*Following.*] I am so;
Thou shalt smile, too, and Belvidera smile:
We'll all rejoice. Here's something to buy pins;
Marriage is chargeable. [*Gives him a purse.*]

Jaff. I but half wish'd
To see the devil, and he's here already! Well!
What must this buy? Rebellion, murder, treason?
Tell me which way I must be damn'd for
this.

Pie. When last we parted, we had no qualms
like these,

But entertain'd each other's thoughts, like men
Whose souls were well acquainted. Is the world
Reform'd since our last meeting? What new
miracles

Have happen'd? Has Priuli's heart relented?
Can he be honest?

Jaff. Kind Heav'n, let heavy curses
Gall his old age, till life become his burden;
Let him groan under't long, linger an age
In the worst agonies and pangs of death,
And find its ease but late!

Pie. Nay, couldst thou not
As well, my friend, have stretch'd the curse to all
The senate round, as to one single villain?

Jaff. But curses stick not; could I kill with
cursing,

By Heav'n, I know not thirty heads in Venice
Should not be blasted! Senators should rot,
Like dogs, on dunghills. Oh, for a curse
To kill with!

Pie. Daggers! daggers! are much better.

Jaff. Ha!

Pie. Daggers.

Jaff. But where are they?

Pie. Oh! a thousand

May be dispos'd, in honest hands, in Venice.

Jaff. Thou talk'st in clouds.

Pie. But yet a heart, half wrong'd
As thine has been, would find the meaning, Jaffier!

Jaff. A thousand daggers, all in honest hands !
And have not I a friend will stick one here ?

Pie. Yes, if I thought thou wert not to be cherish'd

To a nobler purpose, I would be that friend.

[*Lays his hand on JAFFIER's arm.*
But thou hast better friends—friends, whom thy wrongs

Have made thy friends ; friends, worthy to be call'd so.

I'll trust thee with a secret. There are spirits
This hour at work. But, as thou'rt a man
Whom I have pick'd and chosen from the world,
Swear that thou wilt be true to what I utter ;
And when I've told thee that, which only gods,
And men like gods, are privy to, then swear,
No chance, or change, shall wrest it from thy bosom.

Jaff. When thou wouldst bind me, is there need of oaths ?

Is coward, fool, or villain, in my face ?

If I seem none of these, I dare believe
Thou wouldst not use me in a little cause ;
For I am fit for honour's toughest task ;
Nor ever yet found fooling was my province :
And, for a villainous, inglorious enterprise,
I know thy heart so well, I dare lay mine
Before thee, set it to what point thou wilt.

Pie. 'Tis a cause thou wilt be fond of, Jaffier ;
For it is founded on the noblest basis :
Our liberties, our natural inheritance !
We'll do the business, and ne'er fast and pray for't ;

Openly act a deed, the world may gaze
With wonder at, and envy when 'tis done.

Jaff. For liberty !

Pie. For liberty, my friend.

Thou shalt be freed from base Piuli's tyranny,
And thy sequester'd fortunes heal'd again :
I shall be free from those opprobrious wrongs
That press me now, and bend my spirit downward ;
All Venice free, and every growing merit
Succeed to its just right ; fools shall be pull'd
From wisdom's seat ; those baleful, unclean birds,
Those lazy owls, who, perch'd near fortune's top,
Sit only watchful with their heavy wings
To cuff down new-fledg'd virtues, that would rise
To nobler heights, and make the grove harmonious.

Jaff. What can I do ?

Pie. Canst thou not kill a senator ?

Jaff. By all my wrongs, thou talk'st as if revenge
Were to be had ! and the brave story warms me.

Pie. Swear, then.

Jaff. I do [*Kneels*], by all those glittering stars,
And you great planet of the ruling night !
By all good spirits above, and ill below !

By love and friendship, dearer than my life,
Nor power, nor death, shall make me false to thee !

Pie. Here we embrace, and I'll unlock my heart.
A counsel's held hard by, where the destruction
Of this great empire's hatching ; there I'll lead thee.

But be a man ; for thou'rt to mix with men
Fit to disturb the peace of all the world,
And rule it when 'tis wildest.

Jaff. I give thee thanks
For this kind warning. Yes, I'll be a man,
And charge thee, Pierre, whene'er thou see'st my fears

Betray me less, to rip this heart of mine
Out of my breast, and show it for a coward's.

Come, let's begone, for from this hour I chase
All little thoughts, all tender human follies,
Out of my bosom : vengeance shall have room !
Revenge !

Pie. And liberty !

Jaff. Revenge ! revenge !

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—A Room in the House of AQUILINA.

Enter RENAULT.

Ren. Why was my choice ambition ? The worst ground
A wretch can build on ? 'Tis, indeed, at distance,
A goodly prospect, tempting to the view ;
The height delights us, and the mountain-top
Looks beautiful, because 'tis high to heav'n ;
But we ne'er think how sandy 's the foundation,
What storm will batter, and what tempest shake us.
Who's there ?

Enter SPINOSA.

Spi. Renault, good morrow, for by this time,
I think, the scale of night has turn'd the balance,
And weighs up morning : has the clock struck twelve ?

Ren. Yes ; clocks will go as they are set : but, man,
Irregular man's ne'er constant, never certain.
I've spent at least three precious hours of darkness
In waiting dull attendance ; 'tis the curse
Of diligent virtue to be mix'd, like mine,
With giddy tempers, souls but half resolved.

Spi. Hell seize that soul amongst us it can frighten !

Ren. What's then the cause that I am here alone ?

Why are we not together ?

Enter ELLIOT.

O, sir, welcome !

You are an Englishman : when treason's hatching,
One might have thought you'd not have been behind-hand.

In what whore's lap have you been lolling ?
Give but an Englishman his whore and ease,
Beef and a sea-coal fire, he's yours for ever.

Ell. Frenchman, you are saucy.

Ren. How ! [*Puts his hand to his sword.*]

Enter BEDAMAR, MEZZANA, DURAND, and THEODORE—MEZZANA, DURAND, and THEODORE, stand back.

Bed. At difference ? Fie !

Is this a time for quarrels ? Thieves and rogues
Fall out and brawl : should men of your high calling—

Men, separated by the choice of Providence
From the gross heap of mankind, and set here
In this assembly, as in one great jewel,
To adorn the bravest purpose it e'er smil'd on ;
Should you, like boys, wrangle for trifles ?

Ren. Boys !

Bed. Renault, thy hand.

Ren. I thought I'd given my heart,
Long since, to every man that mingles here ;
But grieve to find it trusted with such tempers,
That can't forgive my forward age its weakness.

Bed. Elliot, thou once hadst virtue. I have seen
Thy stubborn temper bend with godlike goodness,
Not half thus courted : 'tis thy nation's glory,
To hug the foe that offers brave alliance.

Once more, embrace, my friends—
United thus, we are the mighty engine.
Must twist this rooted empire from its basis.
Totters it not already?

Ell. 'Would 'twere tumbling!

Bed. Nay, it shall down: this night we seal its ruin.

Enter PIERRE.

O, Pierre! thou art welcome.
Come to my breast; for, by its hopes, thou look'st
Lovely dreadfull; and the fate of Venice
Seems on thy sword already. O, my Mars!
The poets that first feign'd a god of war,
Surely prophesied of thee!

Pie. Friends, was not Brutus
(I mean that Brutus, who, in open senate,
Stabb'd the first Cæsar that usurp'd the world)
A gallant man?

Ren. Yes: and Cataline, too,
Though story wrong his fame, for he conspir'd
To prop the reeling glory of his country;
His cause was good.

Bed. And ours as much above it,
As, Renault, thou'rt superior to Cethegus,
Or Pierre to Cassius.

Pie. Then to what we aim at.
When do we start? Or must we talk for ever?

Bed. No, Pierre, the deed's near birth: fate
seems to have set

The business up, and given it to our care.
I hope there's not a heart or hand amongst us,
But what is firm and ready.

Ell. All.

We'll die with Bedamar.

Bed. O, men,
Matchless, as will your glory be hereafter:
The game is for a matchless prize, if won—
If lost, disgraceful ruin.

Pie. Ten thousand men are armed at your nod,
Commanded all by leaders fit to guide
A battle for the freedom of the world:
This wretched state has starv'd them in its service,
And, by your bounty quicken'd, they've resolved
To serve your glory, and revenge their own:
They've all their different quarters in this city,
Watch for the alarm, and grumble, 'tis so tardy.

Bed. I doubt not, friend, but thy unwearied di-
ligence

Has still kept waking, and it shall have ease;
After this night, it is resolved, we meet
No more, till Venice owns us for her lords.

Pie. How lovely the Adriatic, then,
Dress'd in her flames, will shine! Devouring
flames,

Such as shall burn her to the watery bottom,
And hiss in her foundation.

Bed. Now, if any
Amongst us, that owns this glorious cause,
Have friends or int'rest he would wish to save,
Let it be told—the general doom is seal'd;
But I'd forego the hopes of a world's empire,
Rather than wound the bowels of my friend.

Pie. I must confess you there have touch'd my
weakness.

I have a friend—hear it; and such a friend!
My heart was ne'er shut to him. Nay, I'll tell you,
He knows the very business of this hour;

[*All start.*]

But he rejoices in the cause, and loves it:
We've changed a vow to live and die together,
And he's at hand, to ratify it here.

Ren. How! all betray'd!

Pie. No; I've dealt nobly with you.—
I've brought my all into the public stock:
I'd but one friend, and him I'll share amongst you:
Receive and cherish him; or if, when seen
And search'd, you find him worthless—as my
tongue

Has lodg'd this secret in his faithful breast,
To ease your fears, I wear a dagger here,
Shall rip it out again, and give you rest.
Come forth, thou only good I e'er could boast of.

Enter JAFFIER, with a dagger in his hand.

Bed. His presence bears the show of manly
virtue.

Jaff. I know you'll wonder all, that, thus un-
call'd,

I dare approach this place of fatal councils;
But I'm amongst you, and, by Heav'n, it glads me
To see so many virtues thus united
To restore justice, and dethrone oppression.
Command this steel, if you would have it quiet,
Into this breast: but, if you think it worthy
To cut the throats of reverend rogues in robes,
Send me into the curs'd assembled senate:
It shrinks not, though I meet a father there.
Would you behold the city flaming? here's
A hand, shall bear a lighted torch at noon
To th' arsenal, and set its gates on fire!

Ren. You talk this well, sir.

Jaff. Nay, by Heaven, I'll do this!
Come, come, I read distrust in all your faces:
You fear me villain, and, indeed, 'tis odd
To hear a stranger talk thus, at first meeting,
Of matters that have been so well debated;
But I come ripe with wrongs, as you with counsels.
I hate this senate—am a foe to Venice;
A friend to none, but men resolved like me
To push on mischief. Oh, did you but know me,
I need not talk thus!

Bed. Pierre, I must embrace him;
My heart beats to this man, as if it knew him.

Ren. I never lov'd these huggers.

Jaff. Still, I see
The cause delights me not. Your friends survey
me,

As I were dangerous. But I come arm'd
Against all doubts, and to your trusts will give
A pledge, worth more than all the world can pay
for.

My Belvidera! Ho! my Belvidera! [*Calls.*]

Bed. What wonder next?

Jaff. Let me entreat you, sirs,
As I have henceforth hope to call you friends,
That all but the ambassador, and this
Grave guide of councils, with my friend, that
owns me,

Withdraw awhile, to spare a woman's blushes.

[*Exeunt all but BEDAMAR, RENAULT, JAF-
FIER, and PIERRE, who stand back.*]

Bed. Pierre, whither will this ceremony lead us?

Jaff. My Belvidera! Belvidera! [*Calling.*]

Bel. [*Within.*] Who,
Who calls so loud, at this late peaceful hour?
That voice was wont to come in gentle whispers,
And fill my ears with the soft breath of love.

Enter BELVIDERA.

Bel. Thou hourly image of my thoughts, where
art thou?

Jaff. Indeed, 'tis late.

Bel. Alas! where am I? whither is't you lead me?

Methinks I read distraction in your face—
You shake and tremble too! your blood runs cold!
Heav'n's guard my love, and bless his heart with patience!

Jaff. That I have patience, let our fate bear witness,

Who has ordained it so, that thou and I
(Thou, the divinest good man e'er possess'd,
And I, the wretched'st of the race of man),
This very hour, without one tear, must part.

Bel. Part! must we part? Oh! am I then forsaken?

Why drag you from me? whither are you going?
My dear! my life! my love!

Jaff. Oh, friends! [To RENAULT, &c.]

Bel. Speak to me! [To JAFFIER.]

Jaff. Take her from my heart—

She'll gain such hold else, I shall ne'er get loose.
I charge you, take her, but with tenderest care
Relieve her troubles, and assuage her sorrows.

Ren. [Advancing to her.] Rise, madam, and command among your servants—

Jaff. To you, sirs, and your honours, I bequeath her, [They lay hold of her.]

And with her this: Whene'er I prove unworthy—
[Gives a dagger to RENAULT.]

You know the rest—Then strike it to her heart;
And tell her, he, who three whole happy years
Lay in her arms, and each kind night repeated
The passionate vows of still increasing love,
Sent that reward, for all her truth and sufferings.

Bel. [Held between BEDAMAR and RENAULT.] Oh, thou unkind one!

Have I deserted this from you?

Look on me—tell me—speak, thou dear deceiver,—
If I am false, accuse me; but, if true,

Don't, prithee don't, in poverty forsake me,

[She breaks away, and runs to JAFFIER.]

But pity the sad heart that's torn with parting.

[They retake her.]

Yet, hear me; yet, recall me. Jaffier, Jaffier!

[Exit BEDAMAR, &c. dragging her. JAFFIER and PIERRE.]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Room in the House of AQUELINA.

Enter BELVIDERA.

Bel. I'm sacrificed! I'm sold! betray'd to shame!
Inevitable ruin has enclos'd me!
He, that should guard my virtue, has betray'd it;—
Left me—undone me! Oh, that I could hate him!—
Where shall I go? Oh, whither, whither wander?

Enter JAFFIER.

Jaff. Can Belvidera want a resting-place,
When these poor arms are open to receive her?
There was a time—

Bel. Yes, yes, there was a time,
When Belvidera's tears, her cries and sorrows,
Were not despis'd; when, if she chanced to sigh,
Or look but sad—there was, indeed, a time,
When Jaffier would have ta'en her in his arms,
Eas'd her declining head upon his breast,
And never left her, till he found the cause.

But well I know why you forsake me thus;

I am no longer fit to bear a share

In your concerns: my weak female virtue
Must not be trusted; 'tis too frail and tender.

Jaff. O, Portia, Portia, what a soul was thine!

Bel. That Portia was a woman; and when Brutus,
Big with the fate of Rome (Heav'n guard thy safety!)

Conceal'd from her the labours of his mind,

She let him see her blood was great as his,
Flow'd from a spring as noble, and a heart
Fit to partake his troubles, as his love.

Fetch, fetch that dagger back, the dreadful dower
Thou gav'st last night, in parting with me; strike it
Here to my heart; and, as the blood flows from it,
Judge if it run not pure as Cato's daughter's.

Jaff. O, Belvidera!

Bel. Why was I last night deliver'd to a villain?

Jaff. Ha! a villain?

Bel. Yes, to a villain! Why, at such an hour,
Meets that assembly, all made up of wretches,
That look as hell had drawn them into league?

Why, I in this hand, and in that a dagger,
Was I deliver'd with such dreadful ceremonies?

"To you, sirs, and your honours, I bequeath her,
And with her this: Whene'er I prove unworthy—

You know the rest—Then strike it to her heart."

Oh! why's that rest conceal'd from me? Must I

Be made the hostage of a hellish trust?

For such I know I am; that's all my value.

But, by the love and loyalty I owe thee,

I'll free thee from the bondage of these slaves!

Straight to the senate—tell them all I know, [Going.]

All that I think, all that my fears inform me.

Jaff. Is this the Roman virtue? this the blood

That boasts its purity with Cato's daughter?

Would she have e'er betray'd her Brutus?

[Going to her.]

Bel. No;

For Brutus trusted her. [Leans on him.] Wert thou
so kind,

What would not Belvidera suffer for thee?

Jaff. I shall undo myself, and tell thee all—

Yet think a little, ere thou tempt me further;

Think I've a tale to tell will shake thy nature,

Melt all this boasted constancy thou talk'st of

Into vile tears and despicable sorrows:

Then, if thou should'st betray me—

Bel. Shall I swear?

Jaff. No, do not swear: I would not violate

Thy tender nature with so rude a bond;

But, as thou hop'st to see me live my days,

And love thee long, lock this within thy breast:

I've bound myself, by all the strictest sacraments,
Divine and human—

Bel. Speak!

Jaff. To kill thy father—

Bel. My father!

Jaff. Nay, the throats of the whole senate

Shall bleed, my Belvidera. He, amongst us,

That spares his father, brother, or his friend,

Is damn'd.

Bel. Oh!

Jaff. Have a care, and shrink not, even in
thought:

For, if thou dost—

Bel. I know it; thou wilt kill me.

Do, strike thy sword into this bosom: lay me

Dead on the earth, and then thou wilt be safe.

Murder my father! though his cruel nature

Has persecuted me to my undoing,

Driven me to basest wants, can I behold him,
With smiles of vengeance, butcher'd in his age?
The sacred fountain of my life destroy'd!
And canst thou shed the blood that gave me being?

[Leans on him.

Nay, be a traitor, too, and sell thy country!
Can thy great heart descend so vilely low,
Mix with hir'd slaves, bravoës, and common stab-
bers,
Join with such a crew, and take a ruffian's wages,
To cut the throats of wretches as they sleep?

[They part.

Jaff. Thou wrong'st me, Belvidera! I've en-
gag'd

With men of souls, fit to reform the ills
Of all mankind: there's not a heart amongst them
But's stout as death, yet honest as the nature
Of man first made, ere fraud and vice were fashions.

Bel. What's he, to whose curs'd hands last night
thou gav'st me?

Was that well done? Oh! I could tell a story,
Would rouse thy lion heart out of its den,
And make it rage with terrifying fury!

Jaff. Speak on, I charge thee!

Bel. O my love! [Leaning on him] if e'er
Thy Belvidera's peace deserved thy care,
Remove me from this place. Last night! last
night!

Jaff. Distract me not, but give me all the truth!

Bel. No sooner wert thou gone, and I alone,
Left in the power of that old son of mischief:
No sooner was I laid on my sad bed,
But that vile wretch approach'd me.

Oh, how I wept and sigh'd,
And shrunk, and trembled! wish'd, in vain, for
him

That should protect me! Thou, alas, wast gone!

Jaff. Patience, sweet Heaven, till I make ven-
geance sure!

Bel. He drew the hideous dagger forth, thou
gav'st him,

And, with upbraiding smiles, he said, "Behold it:
This is the pledge of a false husband's love;"
And in my arms then press'd, and would have
clasp'd me;

But with my cries I scar'd his coward heart,
Till he withdrew, and mutter'd vows to hell.

[They rush into each other's arms.

These are thy friends! [They part] with these thy
life, thy honour,
Thy love, all stak'd, and all will go to ruin.

Jaff. No more; I charge thee, keep this secret
close.

Clear up thy sorrows; look as if thy wrongs
Were all forgot, and treat him like a friend,
As no complaint were made. No more; retire,
Retire, my life, and doubt not of my honour;
I'll heal thy failings, and de erve thy love.

Bel. Oh! should I part with thee, I fear thou
wilt

In anger leave me, and return no more.

Jaff. Return no more! I would not live without
thee

Another night, to purchase the creation.

Bel. When shall we meet again?

Jaff. Anon, at twelve,

I'll steal myself to thy expecting arms:
Come, like the travell'd dove, and bring thee
peace.

Bel. Indeed!

Jaff. By all our loves!

Bel. 'Tis hard to part:

But sure no falsehood ever look'd so fairly.

Farewell! remember twelve.

[Exit.

Jaff. Let Heav'n forget me,
When I remember not thy truth, thy love!

Enter PIERRE.

Pie. Jaffier!

Jaff. Who calls?

Pie. A friend, that could have wish'd
T' have found thee otherwise employ'd. What,
hunt

A wife, on the dull foil! Sure, a stanch husband,
Of all hounds, is the dullest. Wilt thou never,
Never be wean'd from caudles and confections?
What feminine tales hast thou been list'n'ing to,
Of unair'd shirts? catarrhs, and tooth-ache, got
By thin-soled shoes? Damnation! that a fellow,
Chosen to be a sharer in the destruction
Of a whole people, should sneak thus in corners,
To waste his time, and fool his mind with love!

Jaff. May not a man, then, trifle out an hour
With a kind woman, and not wrong his calling?

Pie. Not in a cause like ours.

Jaff. Then, friend, our cause
Is in a damn'd condition: for I'll tell thee,
That canker-worm, call'd lechery, has touch'd it;
'Tis tainted vilely. Wouldst thou think it?

Renault

(That mortify'd old wither'd winter rogue)
Loves simple fornication like a priest;
I found him out for watering at my wife;
He visited her last night, like a kind guardian:
Faith! she has some temptations, that's the truth
on't.

Pie. He durst not wrong his trust!

Jaff. 'Twas something late, though,
To take the freedom of a lady's chamber.

Pie. Was she in bed?

Jaff. Yes, 'faith! in virgin sheets,
White as her bosom, Pierre; dish'd neatly up,—
Might tempt a weaker appetite to taste.

Pie. Patience guide me!

He us'd no violence?

Jaff. No, no: out on't, violence!

Play'd with her neck; brush'd her with his gray
beard;
Struggled and touz'd; tickled her till she squeak'd
a little,

May be, or so—but not a jot of violence—

Pie. Damn him!

Jaff. Ay, so say I: but, hush, no more on't!
Sure it is near the hour

We all should meet for our concluding orders:

Will the ambassador be here in person?

Pie. No, he has sent commission to that villain,
Renault,

To give the executing charge:

I'd have thee be a man, if possible,
And keep thy temper: for a brave revenge
Ne'er comes too late.

Jaff. Fear not, I am as cool as patience.

Pie. He's yonder, coming this way, through the
hall;

His thoughts seem full.

Jaff. Prithee retire, and leave me

With him alone: I'll put him to some trial;
See how his rotten part will bear the touching.

Pie. Be careful, then.

Jaff. Nay, never doubt, but trust me.

[Exit PIERRE.

What! be a devil, and take a damning oath

For shedding native blood ! Can there be sin
In merciful repentance ? Oh, this villain !

[Retires.]

Enter RENAULT.

Ren. Perverse and peevish : what a slave is
man,
To let his itching flesh thus get the better of him !
Despatch the fool, her husband—that were well—
Who's there ?

Jaff. A man.

[Advancing.]

Ren. My friend, my near ally,
The hostage of your faith, my beauteous charge, is
very well.

Jaff. Sir, are you sure of that ?
Stands she in perfect health ? Beats her pulse
even ?

Neither too hot nor cold ?

Ren. What means that question ?

Jaff. Oh ! women have fantastic constitutions,
Inconstant in their wishes, always wavering,
And never fix'd. Was it not boldly done,
Ev'n at first sight, to trust the thing I lov'd
(A tempting treasure too) with youth, so fierce
And vigorous as thine ? But thou art honest.

Ren. Who dares accuse me ?

Jaff. Curs'd be he that doubts
Thy virtue ! I have try'd it, and declare,
Were I to choose a guardian of my honour,
I'd put it into thy keeping ; for I know thee.

Ren. Know me !

Jaff. Ay, know thee.—There's no falsehood in
thee ;

Thou look'st just as thou art. Let us embrace.
Now, wouldst thou cut my throat, or I cut thine.

Ren. You dare not do't !

Jaff. You lie, sir !

Ren. How !

Jaff. No more—

'Tis a base world, and must reform, that's all.

Enter SPINOSA, ELLIOT, THEODORE, DURAND, and
MEZZANA.

Ren. Spinosa, Theodore, you are welcome.

Spi. You are trembling, sir.

Ren. 'Tis a cold night, indeed ; I am aged ;
Full of decay, and natural infirmities.
We shall be warm, my friends, I hope, to-morrow,
[RENAULT and the Conspirators retire and confer.]

Enter PIERRE.

Pie. [To JAFFIER.] 'Twas not well done ; thou
shouldst have strok'd him,
And not have gall'd him. [Retires to the others.]

Jaff. Damn him, let him chew on't !
Heaven ! where am I ? Beset with cursed fiends,
That wait to damn me ! what a devil's man,
When he forgets his nature !—Hush, my heart.

[RENAULT and the Conspirators advance.]

Ren. My friends, 'tis late : are we assembled all ?

Spi. All—all !

Ren. Oh ! you're men, I find,
Fit to behold your fate, and meet her summons.
To-morrow's rising sun must see you all
Deck'd in your honours. Are the soldiers ready ?

Pie. All—all !

Ren. You, Durand, with your thousand, must
possess
St. Mark's ; you, captain, know your charge al-
ready ;

'Tis to secure the ducal palace :

Be all this done with the least tumult possible,
Till in each place you post sufficient guards ;

Then sheathe your swords in every breast you
meet.

Jaff. [Aside.] Oh, reverend cruelty ! damn'd
bloody villain !

Ren. During this execution, Durand, you
Must in the midst keep your battalia fast :
And, Theodore, be sure to plant the cannon
That may command the streets ;
This done, we'll give the general alarm,
Apply petards, and force the arsenal gates ;
Then fire the city round in several places,
Or with our cannon, if it dare resist,
Batter to ruin. But, above all, I charge you,
Shed blood enough ; spare neither sex nor age,
Name nor condition : if there lives a senator
After to-morrow, though the dullest rogue
That e'er said nothing, we have lost our ends.
If possible, let's kill the very name
Of senator, and bury it in blood.

Jaff. [Aside.] Merciless, horrid slave ! Ay, blood
enough !

Shed blood enough, old Renault ! how thou charm'st
me !

Ren. But one thing more, and then farewell, till
fate

Join us again, or separate us ever :

But let us all remember,

We wear no common cause upon our swords.

Let each man think that on his single virtue

Depends the good and fame of all the rest :—

Eternal honour, or perpetual infamy.

You droop, sir.

[To JAFFIER.]

Jaff. No : with the most profound attention
I've heard it all, and wonder at thy virtue.

Ren. Let's consider,

That we destroy oppression—avarice ;

A people nurs'd up equally with vices

And loathsome lusts, which nature most abhors,

And such as, without shame, she cannot suffer.

Jaff. [Aside.] Oh, Belvidera, take me to thy
arms,

And show me where's my peace, for I have lost it.

[Exit.]

Ren. Without the least remorse, then, let's re-
solve

With fire and sword t'exterminate these tyrants,
Under whose weight this wretched country labours.

Pie. And may those powers above, that are pro-
pitious

To gallant minds, record this cause, and bless it.

Ren. Thus happy, thus secure of all we wish for,
Should there, my friends, be found among us one
False to this glorious enterprise, what fate,
What vengeance, were enough for such a villain !

Ell. Death here, without repentance, hell here-
after.

Ren. Let that be my lot, if, as here I stand,

Listed by fate among her darling sons,

Though I had one only brother, dear by all

The strictest ties of nature,

Join'd in this cause, and had but ground for fear
He meant foul play, may this right hand drop from
me,

If I'd not hazard all my future peace,
And stab him to the heart before you ? Who,
Who would do less ? Wouldst thou not, Pierre, the
same !

Pie. You've singled me, sir, out for this hard
question,

As if 'twere started only for my sake ;

Am I the thing you fear ? Here, here's my bosom :
Search it with all your swords. Am I a traitor ?

Ren. No; but I fear your late commended friend

Is little less. Come, sirs, 'tis now no time
To trifle with our safety. Where's this Jaffier?

Spil. He left the room just now, in strange disorder.

Ren. Nay, there is danger in him: I observ'd him:

During the time I took for explanation,
He was transported from most deep attention
To a confusion which he could not smother.
What's the requisite for safety, must be done
With speedy execution; he remains
Yet in our power; I, for my own part, wear
A dagger—

Pie. Well? [Goes to RENAULT.

Ren. And I could wish it—

Pie. Where?

Ren. Buried in his heart.

Pie. Away! we're yet all friends.—

No more of this; 'twill breed ill blood among us.

Spil. Let us all draw our swords, and search the house;

Pull him from the dark hold, where he sits brooding
O'er his cold fears, and each man kill his share of him.

Pie. Who talks of killing? Who's he'll shed the blood

That's dear to me? Is't you, or you, sir?

What! not one speak? How you stand gaping all
On your grave oracle, your wooden god there!

Yet not a word? Then, sir, I'll tell you a secret:
Suspicion's but at best a coward's virtue.

[To RENAULT.

Ren. A coward!

Pie. Put—put up thy sword, old man;

Thy hand shakes at it. Come, let's heal this breach;

I am too hot: we may yet all live friends.

Spil. Till we are safe, our friendship cannot be so.

Pie. Again? Who's that?

Spil. 'Twas I.

The. And I.

Ren. And I.

Spil. And all.

Let's die like men, and not be sold like slaves.

Pie. One such word more, by Heaven, I'll to the senate,

And hang ye all like dogs, in clusters.

Why peep your coward swords half out their sheaths?

Why do you not all brandish them like mine?

You fear to die, and yet dare talk of killing.

[Going.

Ren. Go to the senate, and betray us—haste!

Secure thy wretched life; we fear to die
Less than thou dar'st be honest.

Pie. That's rank falsehood.

Fear'st thou not death? Fie, there's a knavish itch
In that salt blood, an utter foe to smarting!

Had Jaffier's wife prov'd kind, he'd still been true.

Faugh—how that stinks! [Exit RENAULT.

Away, disperse all to your several charges,

And meet to-morrow, where your honour calls you.

I'll bring that man, whose blood you so much thirst for,

And you shall see him venture for you fairly—

Hence, hence, I say!

Spil. I fear we have been to blame,

And done too much.

The. 'Twas too far urg'd against the man you love.

Ell. Forgive us, gallant friend.

Pie. Nay, now you've found

The way to melt and cast me as you will.

I'll fetch this friend, and give him to your mercy;

Nay, he shall die, if you will take him from me!

For your repose, I'll quit my heart's best jewel,

But would not have him torn away by villains

And spiteful villany.

Spil. No: may ye both

For ever live, and fill the world with fame!

Pie. Now you're too kind. Whence rose all this discord?

Oh! what a dangerous precipice have we 'scap'd!

How near a fall was all we'd long been building!

What an eternal blot had stain'd our glories,

If one, the bravest and the best of men,

Had fall'n a sacrifice to rash suspicion,

Butcher'd by those whose cause he came to cherish!

Oh, could you know him all, as I have known him—

How good he is, how just, how true, how brave,

You would not leave this place till you had seen him,

And gained remission for the worst of follies.

Come but to-morrow, all your doubts shall end,

And to your loves me better recommend,

That I've preserved your fame, and sav'd my friend. [Exit.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Street.

Enter BELVIDERA and JAFFIER.

Jaff. Where dost thou lead me? Every step I move,

Methinks I tread upon some mangled limb

Of a rack'd friend. Oh, my dear, charming ruin!

Where are we wandering?

Bel. To eternal honour.

To do a deed, shall chronicle thy name

Among the glorious legends of those few

That have sav'd sinking nations. Every street

Shall be adorn'd with statues to thy honour:

And, at thy feet, this great inscription written—

“Remember him that propp'd the fall of Venice!”

Jaff. Rather, remember him, who, after all

The sacred bonds of oaths, and holier friendship,

In fond compassion to a woman's tears,

Forgot his manhood, virtue, truth, and honour,

To sacrifice the bosom that reliev'd him.

Why wilt thou damn me?

Bel. O, inconstant man!

How wilt you promise! how will you deceive!

Do, return back, replace me in my bondage,

Tell all thy friends how dangerously thou lov'st me,

And let thy dagger do its bloody office.

Or, if thou think'st it nobler, let me live

Till I'm a victim to the hateful will

Of that infernal devil!

Last night, my love!

Jaff. Name, name it not again:

Destruction, swift destruction, fall on my coward head,

If I forgive him!

Bel. Delay no longer, then, but to the senate,
And tell the dismal'st story ever utter'd:
Tell them what bloodshed, rapines, desolations,
Have been prepar'd;—how near's the fatal hour.
Save thy poor country, save the rev'rend blood
Of all its nobles, which to-morrow's dawn
Must else see shed!

Jaff. Oh!

Bel. Think what then may prove
My lot: the ravisher may then come safe,
And, 'midst the terror of the public ruin,
Do a damn'd deed.

Jaff. By all Heaven's pow'rs, prophetic truth
dwells in thee!

For every word thou speak'st strikes through my
heart,

Like a new light, and shows it how't has wan-
der'd—

Just what thou'st made me, take me, *Belvidera*,
And lead me to the place, where I'm to say
This bitter lesson; where I must betray
My truth, my virtue, constancy, and friends.
Must I betray my friends? Ah! take me quickly,
Secure me well before that thought's renew'd:
If I relapse once more, all's lost for ever.

Bel. Hast thou a friend more dear than *Belvi-
dera*?

Jaff. No: thou'rt my life itself; wealth, friend-
ship, honour,
All present joys, and earnest of all future,
Are summ'd in thee. [Going.]

Enter Captain and Guards.

Cap. Stand! who goes there?

Bel. Friends.

Cap. But what friends are you?

Bel. Friends to the senate, and the state of
Venice.

Cap. My orders are to seize on all I find
At this late hour, and bring them to the council,
Who now are sitting.

Jaff. Sir, you shall be obey'd.

Now the lot's cast, and, fate, do what thou wilt.
[*Exeunt JAFFIER and BELVIDERA, guarded.*]

SCENE II.—*The Senate-House.*

*The Duke of Venice, PRIULI, and other Senators,
discovered sitting.*

Duke. Antony, Priuli, senators of Venice,
Speak—Why are we assembled here this night?
What have you to inform us of, concerns
The state of Venice' honour or its safety?

Pri. Could words express the story I've to tell
you,

Fathers, these tears were useless—these sad tears
That fall from my old eyes; but there is a cause
We all should weep,
And wrap ourselves in sackcloth, sitting down
On the sad earth, and cry aloud to Heaven:
Heav'n knows, if yet there be an hour to come,
Ere Venice be no more.

Duke. How!

Pri. Nay, we stand
Upon the very brink of gaping ruin.
Within this city's form'd a dark conspiracy
To massacre us all, our wives and children,
Kindred and friends: our palaces and temples
To lay in ashes: nay, the hour, too, fix'd;
The swords, for aught I know, drawn e'en this
moment,
And the wild waste begun. From unknown hands

I had this warning; but, if we are men,
Let's not be tamely butcher'd, but do something
That may inform the world, in after ages,
Our virtue was not ruin'd, though we were.

[*A noise within.*]

Cap. [Within.] Room, room! make room for
some prisoners!

Enter Officer.

Duke. Speak, there! what disturbance?

Off. A prisoner have the guards seized in the
street,

Who says he comes to inform this rev'rend council
About the present danger.

Enter Officer, JAFFIER, Captain, and Guards.

All. Give him entrance. [*Exit Officer.*] Well,
who are you?

Jaff. A villain!

Would every man that hears me
Would deal so honestly, and own his title!

Duke. 'Tis rumour'd that a plot has been con-
triv'd

Against the state, and you've a share in't, too.

If you're a villain, to redeem your honour,
Unfold the truth, and be restor'd with mercy.

Jaff. Think not, that I to save my life came
hither;

I know it's value better: but in pity
To all those wretches, whose unhappy dooms
Are fix'd and seal'd. You see me here before you,
The sworn and covenanted foe of Venice;
But use me as my dealings may deserve,
And I may prove a friend.

Duke. The slave capitulates;
Give him the tortures.

Jaff. That you dare not do—
Your fears won't let you, nor the longing itch
To hear a story, which you dread the truth of:
Truth, which the fear of smart shall ne'er get from
me.

Cowards are scar'd with threat'nings; boys are
whipp'd

Into confessions: but a steady mind
Acts of itself, ne'er asks the body counsel.
Give him the tortures!—name but such a thing
Again, by Heav'n, I'll shut these lips for ever!
Nor all your racks, your engines, or your wheels,
Shall force a groan away, that you may guess at!

Duke. Name your conditions.

Jaff. For myself full pardon,
Besides the lives of two-and-twenty friends,
Whose names I have enrolled—Nay, let their
crimes

Be ne'er so monstrous, I must have the oaths,
And sacred promise, of this rev'rend council,
That, in a full assembly of the senate,
The thing I ask be ratify'd. Swear this,
And I'll unfold the secrets of your danger.

Duke. Propose the oath.

Jaff. By all the hopes
You have of peace and happiness hereafter,
Swear!

Duke. We swear.

Jaff. And, as ye keep the oath,
May you and your posterity be bless'd
Or curs'd, for ever!

Duke. Else be curs'd for ever!

Jaff. [*Delivers two papers to the Officer, who de-
livers them to the Duke.*] Then here's the list, and
with it the full disclosure.

Of all that threaten you.

Now, Fate, thou hast caught me !

Duke. Give order, that all diligent search be made

To seize these men, their characters are public.

The paper intimates their rendezvous

To be at the house of the fam'd Grecian courtesan,

Call'd Aquilina ; see the place secur'd.

You, Jaffier, must with patience bear till morning

To be our prisoner.

Jaff. Would the chains of death

Had bound me fast, ere I had known this minute !

Duke. Captain, withdraw your prisoner.

Jaff. Sir, [*To Officer*] if possible,

Lead me where my own thoughts themselves may lose me ;

Where I may doze out what I've left of life.—

Forget myself, and this day's guilt and falsehood.

Cruel remembrance ! how shall I appease thee ?

[*Exit, guarded.*]

Offi. [*Without.*] More traitors ! room, room, make room, there !

Duke. How's this ?

The treason's

Already at the doors !

Enter Officer and Captain.

Offi. My lords, more traitors !

Seiz'd in the very act of consultation ;

* Furnish'd with arms and instruments of mischief.—

Bring in the prisoners !

Enter SPINOSA, ELLIOT, THEODORE, DURAND, MEZZANA, RENAULT, and PIERRE, in chains.

Pie. You, my lords and fathers

(As you are pleas'd to call yourselves) of Venice,

If you sit here to guide the course of justice,

Why those disgraceful chains upon the limbs

That have so often labour'd in your service ?

Are these the wreaths of triumph you bestow

On those that bring you conquest home, and honours ?

Duke. Go on ! you shall be heard, sir.

Pie. Are these the trophies I've deserv'd for fighting

Your battles with confederated powers ?

When winds and seas conspired to overthrow you,

And brought the fleets of Spain to your own harbours ;

When you, great duke, shrunk trembling in your palace,

Stipp'd not I forth, and taught your loose Venetians

The task of honour, and the way to greatness ?

Rais'd you from your capitulating fears

To stipulate the terms of sued-for peace ?

And this my recompense ! If I'm a traitor,

Produce my charge ; or show the wretch that's base

And brave enough to tell me I'm a traitor !

[*Goes to the table.*]

Duke. Know you one Jaffier ?

Pie. Yes, and know his virtue.

His justice, truth, his general worth and sufferings

From a hard father, taught me first to love him.

Duke. See him brought forth.

Enter Captain, with JAFFIER in chains.

Pie. My friend, too, bound ! nay, then,
Our fate has conquer'd us, and we must fall,

Why droops the man, whose welfare's so much mine,

They're but one thing. These rev'rend tyrants Jaffier,

Call us traitors. Art thou one, my brother ?

Jaff. To thee I am the falsest, veriest slave,

That e'er betray'd a gen'rous, trusting friend,

And gave up honour to be sure of ruin.

All our fair hopes, which morning was t' have crown'd,

Has this curs'd tongue o'erthrown.

Pie. So, then, all's over :

Venice has lost her freedom, I my life.

No more !

Duke. Say, will you make confession

Of your vile deeds, and trust the senate's mercy ?

Pie. Curs'd be your senate, curs'd your constitution !

The curse of growing factions and divisions

Still vex your councils, shake your public safety,

And make the robes of government you wear

Hateful to you, as these base chains to me.

Duke. Pardon, or death !

Pie. Death ! honourable death !

Ren. Death's the best thing we ask, or you can give.

No shameful bonds, but honourable death !

Duke. Break up the council. Captain, guard your prisoners.

Jaffier, you're free, but these must wait for judgment.

[*Exeunt Duke, Senators, Conspirators, and Officer.*]

Pie. Come, where's my dungeon ? Lead me to my straw :

It will not be the first time I've lodged hard,

To do your senate service.

Jaff. Hold one moment.

Pie. Who's he disputes the judgment of the senate ?

Presumptuous rebel !—on—— [*Strikes JAFFIER.*]

Jaff. By Heaven, you stir not !

[*Exeunt Captain and Guards.*]

I must be heard ! I must have leave to speak.

Thou hast disgrac'd me, Pierre, by a vile blow :

Had not a dagger done thee nobler justice ?

But use me as thou wilt, thou canst not wrong me,

For I am fallen beneath the basest injuries ;

Yet, look upon me with an eye of mercy,

And, as there dwells a godlike nature in thee,

Listen with mildness to my supplications.

Pie. What whining monk art thou ? what holy cheat,

That wouldst encroach upon my credulous ears,
And cant'st thus vilely ? Hence ! I know thee not !

Jaff. Not know me, Pierre ?

Pie. No, know thee not. What art thou ?

Jaff. Jaffier, thy friend,—thy once-lov'd, valued friend !

Though now deservedly scorn'd, and us'd most hardly.

Pie. Thou, Jaffier ! thou, my once-lov'd, valu'd friend !

By Heavens, thou lyest ! the man so call'd my friend

Was generous, honest, faithful, just, and valiant ;
Noble in mind, and in his person lovely ;

Dear to my eyes, and tender to my heart ;

But thou, a wretched, base, false, worthless coward,
Poor, even in soul, loathsome in thy aspect :

All eyes must shun thee, and all hearts detest thee !

Prithee, avoid, nor longer cling thus round me;
Like something baneful, that my nature's chill'd at.

Jaff. I have not wrong'd thee; by these tears, I have not.

Pie. Hast thou not wrong'd me? dar'st thou call thyself

That once-lov'd, honest, valu'd friend of mine,
And swear thou hast not wrong'd me? Whence these chains?

Whence the vile death which I may meet this moment?

Whence this dishonour, but from thee, thou false one?

Jaff. All's true; yet grant one thing, and I've done asking.

Pie. What's that?

Jaff. To take thy life on such conditions
The council have propos'd: thou and thy friends
May yet live long, and to be better treated.

Pie. Life! ask my life! confess! record myself
A villain, for the privilege to breathe,
And carry up and down this cursed city
A discontented and repining spirit,
Burdensome to itself, a few years longer!
To lose it, may be, at last, in a lewd quarrel
For some new friend, treacherous and false as thou art!

No: this vile world and I have long been jangling,
And cannot part on better terms than now,
When only men like thee are fit to live in't.

Jaff. By all that's just—

Pie. Swear by some other power,
For thou hast broke that sacred oath too lately.

Jaff. Then by that hell I merit, I'll not leave thee
Till, to thyself, at last, thou'rt reconciled,
However thy resentments deal with me.

Pie. Not leave me!

Jaff. No; thou shalt not force me from thee.
Use me reproachfully, and like a slave;
Tread on me, buffet me, heap wrongs on wrongs
On my poor head; I'll bear it all with patience,
Shall weary out thy most unfriendly cruelty;
Lie at thy feet [*Falls on his knees*] and kiss them
though they spurn me;
Till, wounded by my sufferings, thou relent,
And raise me to thy arms with dear forgiveness.

Pie. Art thou not—

Jaff. What?

Pie. A traitor!

Jaff. Yes.

Pie. A villain?

Jaff. Granted.

Pie. A coward, a most scandalous coward;
Spiritless, void of honour; one who has sold
Thy everlasting fame, for shameless life!

Jaff. [*Rising.*] All, all, and more, much more;
my faults are numberless.

Pie. And wouldst thou have me live on terms
like thine?

Base, as thou'rt false—

Jaff. No, 'tis to me that's granted;
The safety of thy life was all I aim'd at,
In recompense for faith and trust so broken.

Pie. I scorn it more, because preserved by thee;
And, as when first my foolish heart took pity
On thy misfortunes, sought thee in thy miseries,
Reliev'd thy wants, and rais'd thee from the state
Of wretchedness, in which thy fate had plunged
thee,

To rank thee in my list of noble friends;
All I receiv'd, in surety for thy truth,
Were unregarded oaths, and this, this dagger,

Given with a worthless pledge, thou since hast stol'n:

So I restore it back to thee again.

Swearing by all those powers which thou hast violated,

Never, from this cursed hour, to hold communion,
Friendship, or interest, with thee, though our years
Were to exceed those limited the world.

Take it. [*Throws down the dagger.*] Farewell, for now I owe thee nothing.

Jaff. Say thou wilt live, then,

Pie. For my life, dispose it

Just as thou wilt, because 'tis what I'm tired with.

Jaff. O, Pierre!

Pie. No more.

Jaff. My eyes won't lose the sight of thee,
But languish after thine, and ake with gazing.

Pie. Leave me. Nay, then, thus, thus I throw
thee from me;

And curses, great as is thy falsehood, catch thee!

[*Drives him from him and exit.*]

Jaff. He's gone—my father, friend, preserver!
And here's the portion he has left me—

[*Takes up the dagger.*]

This dagger! Well remembered! with this dagger,
I gave a solemn vow of dire importance;

Parted with this and Belyvidera together;—
Have a care, mem'ry,—drive that thought no farther,—

No, I'll esteem it, as a friend's last legacy—
Treasure it up, within this wretched bosom,
Where it may grow acquainted with my heart,
That when they meet they start not from each other.

So, now for thinking—a blow, call'd traitor, villain,
Coward, dishonourable coward: faugh!

Oh, for a long round sleep, and so forget it!
Down, busy devil!

Enter BELVIDERA.

Bel. Whither shall I fly?

Where hide me and my miseries together?
Where's now the Roman constancy I boasted?
Sunk into trembling fears and desperation,
Not daring to look up to that dear face,
Which us'd to smile, even on my faults; but,
down,

Bending those miserable eyes to earth,
Must move in penance, and implore much mercy,

Jaff. Mercy! kind heaven has surely endless stores

Hoarded for thee, of blessings yet untasted:
Let wretches, loaded hard with guilt as I am,
Bow with the weight, and groan beneath the burden,

Before the footstool of that heav'n they've injured.
O, Belvidera! I'm the wretched'st creature
E'er crawl'd on earth!

Bel. Alas! I know thy sorrows are most mighty.

Jaff. My friend, too, Belvidera—that dear friend,
Who, next to thee, was all my heart rejoic'd in,
Has us'd me like a slave, shamefully us'd me:

'Twould break thy pitying heart to hear the story.

Bel. What has he done?

Jaff. O, my dear angel! in that friend, I've lost
All my soul's peace; for every thought of him
Strikes my sense hard, and deadens it in my brains!
Wouldst thou believe it?

Before we parted,
Ere yet his guards had led him to his prison,
Full of severest sorrows for his sufferings,
As at his feet I kneel'd, and sued for mercy,

With a reproachful hand he dash'd a blow :
He struck me, Belvidera ! by Heaven, he struck me !
Buffetted, call'd me traitor, villain, coward.
Am I a coward ? am I a villain ? tell me :
Thou'rt the best judge, and mad'st me, if I am so ?
Damnation ! coward !

Bel. Oh ! forgive him, Jaffier :
And, if his sufferings wound thy heart already,
What will they do to-morrow ?

Jaff. Ah !
Bel. To-morrow,
When thou shalt see him stretch'd in all the agonies
Of a tormenting and a shameful death,
What will thy heart do, then ? Oh ! sure 'twill
stream,

Like my eyes now.
Jaff. What means thy dreadful story ?
Death, and to-morrow ?

Bel. The faithless senators, 'tis they've decreed.
They say, according to our friends' request,
They shall have death, and not ignoble bondage ;
Declare their promised mercy all as forfeited :
False to their oaths, and deaf to intercession—
Warrants are pass'd for public death to-morrow.

Jaff. Death ! doom'd to die ! condemn'd unheard ! unpleaded !

Bel. Nay, cruel'st racks and torments are preparing

To force confession from their dying pangs.
Oh ! do not look so terribly upon me !
How your lips shake, and all your face disorder'd !
What means my love ?

Jaff. Leave me, I charge thee, leave me ! Strong
temptations

Wake in my heart.

Bel. For what ?
Jaff. No more, but leave me.

Bel. Why ?
Jaff. Oh ! by Heav'n, I love thee with that
fondness,

I would not have thee stay a moment longer
Near these cursed hands.

[Pulls the dagger half out of his bosom, and puts
it back again.

Art thou not terrified ?

Bel. No.
Jaff. Call to mind
What thou hast done, and whither thou hast brought
me.

Bel. Ha !
Jaff. Where's my friend ? my friend, thou
smiling mischief !

Nay, shrink not, now 'tis too late, for dire revenge
Is up, and raging for my friend. He groans !
Hark, how he groans ! his screams are in my ears !
Already, see, they've fix'd him on the wheel !
And now they tear him—murder ! perjur'd senate !
Murder ! Oh ! hark thee, traitress, thou hast
done this !

Thanks to thy tears, thou false persuading love.
How her eyes speak ! oh, thou bewitching creature !
Madness can't hurt thee. Come, thou little trembler,
Creep even into my heart, and there lie safe ;
'Tis thy own citadel. 'Hah ! yet stand off ! [Going.
Heav'n must have justice, and my broken vows
Will sink me else beneath its reaching mercy.
I'll wink, and then 'tis done.

Bel. What means the lord
Of me, my life, and love ? What's in thy bosom,
Thou grasp'st at so ?

[Jaffier draws the dagger, and offers to stab her.
Ah ! do not kill me, Jaffier. [Falls on her knees.

Jaff. Know, Belvidera, when we parted last,
I gave this dagger with thee, as in trust,
To be thy portion if I e'er proved false.
On such condition was my truth believed :
But now 'tis forfeited, and must be paid for.
[Offers to stab her again.

Bel. Oh ! mercy !
Jaff. Nay, no struggling.
Bel. Now, then, kill me !
[Leaps on his neck, and kisses him.

While thus I cling about thy cruel neck,
Kiss thy revengeful lips, and die in joys
Greater than any I can guess hereafter.

Jaff. I am, I am a coward—witness, Heav'n,
Witness it, earth, and ev'ry being witness :
'Tis but one blow ! yet, by immortal love,
I cannot longer bear a thought to harm thee !

[He throws away the dagger, and embraces her.

The seal of Providence is sure upon thee ;
And thou wast born for yet unheard-of wonders.
Oh ! thou wast either born to save or damn me !
By all the power that's given thee o'er my soul—
By thy resistless tears and conquering smiles—
By thy victorious love, that still waits on thee—
Fly to thy cruel father, save my friend,
Or all our future quiet's lost for ever.

Fall at his feet, cling round his rev'rend knees,
Speak to him with thy eyes, and with thy tears
Melt his hard heart, and wake dead nature in him ;
Nor, till thy prayers are granted, set him free,
But conquer him, as thou hast vanquish'd me.
[Exeunt.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—An Apartment in Priuli's House.

Enter PRIULI.

Pri. Why, cruel Heav'n, have my unhappy days
Been lengthen'd to this sad one ? Oh ! dishonour,
And deathless infamy, have fall'n upon me.
Was it my fault ? Am I a traitor ? No.
But then, my only child, my daughter wedded !
There my best blood runs foul, and a disease
Incurable has seiz'd upon my memory.

Enter BELVIDERA, in a mourning veil.

Bel. [Speaking aside, as she enters.] He's there,
my father, my inhuman father,
That, for three years, has left an only child
Expos'd to all the outrages of fate,
And cruel ruin ? Oh !

Pri. What child of sorrow
Art thou, that com'st, wrapt up in weeds of sadness,
And mov'st as if thy steps were towards a grave ?

Bel. A wretch, who, from the very top of hap-
piness,

Am fallen into the lowest depths of misery,
And want your pitying hand to raise me up again.

Pri. What wouldst thou beg for ?

Bel. Pity and forgiveness. [Throws up her veil.
By the kind tender names of child and father,
Hear my complaints, and take me to your love.

[Kneels.

Pri. My daughter !
Bel. Yes, your daughter ; and you've oft told me,

With smiles of love, and chaste paternal kisses,
I'd much resemblance of my mother.

Pri. Don't talk thus.

Bel. Yes, I must: and you must hear, too.

I have a husband.

Pri. Damn him!

Bel. Oh, do not curse him!

He would not speak so hard a word towards you,
On any terms, howe'er he deal with me.

Pri. Ah! what means my child?

Bel. Oh! my husband, my dear husband,
Carries a dagger in his once kind bosom,

To pierce the heart of your poor Belvidera!

Pri. Kill thee!

Bel. Yes, kill me. When he passed his faith

And covenant against your state and senate,
He gave me up a hostage for his truth:

With me a dagger, and a dire commission,
Whene'er he fail'd, to plunge it through this bosom.

I learnt the danger, chose the hour of love
T' attempt his heart, and bring it back to honour.

Great love prevail'd, and bless'd me with success!
He came, confess'd, betray'd his dearest friends,

For promis'd mercy. Now, they're doom'd to suffer!
Gall'd with remembrance of what then was sworn,

If they are lost, he vows t' appease the gods
With this poor life, and make my blood th' atone-
ment.

Pri. Heavens!

Bel. If I was ever, then, your care, now hear me:
Fly to the senate, save the promis'd lives.

Of his dear friends, ere mine be made the sacrifice.

Pri. Oh, my heart's comfort!

Bel. Will you not, my father?

Weep not, but answer me.

Pri. By Heav'n I will!

Not one of them but what shall be immortal!

Canst thou forgive me all my follies past?

I'll henceforth be indeed a father! never,

Never more, thus expose, but cherish thee,

Dear as the vital warmth that feeds my life;

Dear as these eyes, that weep in fondness o'er thee:
Peace to thy heart. Farewell!

Bel. Go, and remember,

'Tis Belvidera's life her father pleads for! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*The Rialto.*

Enter Captain—Muffled Drums—Guards—Executioner, with axe—RENAULT—SPINOSA—ELLIOT—THEODORE—DURAND—MEZZANA—PIERRE—Officer—Guards.—They all pass over the stage, and exeunt.

SCENE III.—*A Street.*

Enter JAFFIER.

Jaft. Final destruction seize on all the world!
Bend down, ye heav'ns, and, shutting round this earth,
Crush the vile globe into its first confusion!

Enter BELVIDERA:

Bel. My life! —

Jaft. My plague! —

Bel. Nay, then, I see my ruin.

If I must die —

Jaft. No, death's this day too busy;
Thy father's ill-timed mercy came too late.
I thank thee for thy labours, though, and him, too;
But all my poor, betray'd, unhappy friends,
Have summons to prepare for fate's black hour.

Yet, Belvidera, do not fear my cruelty,
Nor let the thoughts of death perplex thy fancy:
But answer me to what I shall demand,
With a firm temper and unshaken spirit.

Bel. I will, when I've done weeping —

Jaft. Fie, no more on't!

How long is't since the miserable day

We wedded first?

Bel. Oh! oh!

[*Weeps.*]

Jaft. Nay, keep in thy tears,

Least they unman me, too.

Bel. Heaven knows I cannot!

The words you utter sound so very sadly,

The streams will follow —

Jaft. Come, I'll kiss them dry, then.

Bel. [*Hanging on him.*] But wasn't a miserable day?

Jaft. A curs'd one!

Bel. I thought it otherwise; and you have often sworn,

When sure you spoke the truth, you've sworn, you bless'd it.

Jaft. 'Twas a rash oath.

Bel. Then why am I not curs'd, too?

Jaft. No, Belvidera; by th' eternal truth,

I dote with too much fondness.

Bel. Still so kind?

Still, then, do you love me?

Jaft. Man ne'er was bless'd,

Since the first pair met, as I have been.

Bel. Then sure you will not curse me?

Jaft. No, I'll bless thee.

I came on purpose, Belvidera, to bless thee.

'Tis now, I think, three years, we've liv'd together.

Bel. And may no fatal minute ever part us,

Till reverend grown, for age and love, we go

Down to one grave, as our last bed, together;

There sleep in peace till an eternal morning.

Jaft. Did not I say, I came to bless thee?

Bel. You did.

[*Part.*]

Jaft. Then hear me, bounteous Heaven. [*Kneeling.*]

Pour down your blessings on this beauteous head,

Where everlasting sweets are always springing,

With a continual giving hand: let peace,

Honour, and safety, always hover round her:

Feed her with plenty; let her eyes ne'er see

A sight of sorrow, nor her heart know mourning;

Crown all her days with joy, her nights with rest,

Harmless as her own thoughts; and prop her virtue

To bear the loss of one that too much lov'd;

And comfort her with patience in our parting!

Bel. How? parting, parting!

Jaft. Yes, for ever parting!

I have sworn, Belvidera, by yon heav'n,

That best can tell how much I lose to leave thee,

We part this hour for ever!

Bel. Oh! call back

Your cruel blessing; stay with me, and curse me.

Jaft. Now hold, heart, or never!

Bel. By all the tender days we've lived together,

Pity my sad condition; speak, but speak.

Jaft. Murder! unhold me;

Or by th' immortal destiny that doom'd me

[*Draws his dagger.*]

To this curs'd minute, I'll not live one longer!

Resolve to let me go, or see me fall —

Hark! the dismal bell

[*Passing bell tolls.*]

Tolls out for death! I must attend its call, too,

For my poor friend, my dying Pierre, expects me;

He sent a message to require I'd see him

Before he died, and take his last forgiveness.

Farewell for ever!

[*Going.*]

Bel. Leave thy dagger with me;
Bequeath me something—not one kiss at parting!
Oh, my poor heart! when wilt thou break?

Jaff. [Returning—she runs into his arms.] Yet stay:

We have a child, as yet a tender infant;
Be a kind mother to him when I'm gone;
Breed him in virtue, and the paths of honour,
But never let him know his father's story:
I charge thee, guard him from the wrongs my fate
May do his future fortune or his name.

Now—nearer yet—
Oh, that my arms were riveted
Thus round thee ever! But my friends! my oath!
This, and more! [Kisses her.]

Bel. Another, sure another
For that poor little one, you've ta'en such care of.
I'll giv' him truly.

Jaff. So—now, farewell!

Bel. For ever!

Jaff. Heav'n knows, for ever! all good angels
guard thee! [Exit.]

Bel. All ill ones, sure, had charge of me this
moment!

Oh, give me daggers, fire, or water!
How I could bleed, how burn, how drown, the
waves

Huzzing and foaming round my sinking head,
Till I descended to the peaceful bottom!
Oh! there's all quiet—here, all rage and fury!
The air's too thin, and pierces my weak brain;
I long for thick substantial sleep: hell! hell!
Burst from the centre, rage and roar aloud,
If thou art half so hot, so mad as I am. [Exit.]

SCENE IV.—*St. Mark's Place.—A Scaffold in the background, and a Wheel, prepared for the Execution of PIERRE.*

Enter Captain, PIERRE, Guards, Executioner, and Rabble.

Pie. My friend not yet come?

Enter JAFFIER.

Jaff. Oh, Pierre! [Falling on his knees.]

Pie. Dear to my arms, though thou'st undone
my fame,

I can't forget to love thee. Prithee, Jaffier,
Forgive that filthy blow my passion dealt thee;
I am now preparing for the land of peace,
And fain would have the charitable wishes
Of all good men, like thee, to bless my journey.

Cap. The time grows short; your friends are
dead already.

Jaff. Dead!

Pie. Yes, dead, Jaffier! they've all died like
men, too

Worthy their character.

Jaff. And what must I do?

Pie. Oh, Jaffier!

Jaff. Speak aloud thy burden'd soul.

And tell thy troubles to thy tortur'd friend.

Pie. Friend! Couldst thou yet be a friend, a
generous friend,

I might hope comfort from thy noble sorrows.

Heaven knows, I want a friend!

Jaff. And I a kind one,

That would not thus scorn my repenting virtue,

Or think, when he's to die, my thoughts are idle.

Pie. No! live, I charge thee, Jaffier.

Jaff. Yes, I will live:

But it shall be to see thy fall reveng'd
At such a rate as Venice long shall groan for.

Pie. Wilt thou?

Jaff. I will, by Heaven!

Pie. Then still thou'rt noble.

And I forgive thee. [Embraces.] Oh!—Yet—
shall I trust thee?

Jaff. No; I've been false already.

Pie. Dost thou love me?

Jaff. Rip up my heart, and satisfy thy doubt-
ings.

Pie. Curse on this weakness!

Jaff. Tears! Amazement! Tears!

I never saw thee melted thus before;
And know there's something labouring in thy
bosom,

That must have vent; though I'm a villain, tell
me.

Pie. Seest thou that engine?

[Pointing to the wheel.]

Jaff. Why?

Pie. Is't fit a soldier, who has liv'd with honour,
Fought nations' quarrels, and been crown'd with
conquest,

Be exposed, a common carcass, on a wheel!

Jaff. Hah!

Pie. Speak! is't fitting?

Jaff. Fitting!

Pie. I'd have thee undertake

Something that's noble, to preserve my memory

From the disgrace that's ready to attain it.

Cap. The day grows late, sir.

Pie. I'll make haste. Oh Jaffier!

Though thou'st betray'd me, do me some way
justice.

Jaff. What's to be done?

Pie. This and no more. [He whispers JAFFIER.]

Jaff. Hah! is't then so?

Pie. Most certainly.

Jaff. I'll do't.

Pie. Remember.

Cap. Sir—

Pie. Come, now I'm ready.

Captain, you should be a gentleman of honour;

Keep off the rabble, that I may have room

To entertain my fate, and die with decency.

You'll think on't! [To JAFFIER.]

Jaff. 'Twont grow stale before to-morrow.

[PIERRE and JAFFIER ascend the Scaffold.—
Executioner binds PIERRE.]

Pie. Now, Jaffier! now I'm going! Now—

Jaff. Have at thee,

Thou honest heart, then!—there— [Stabs him.]

And this is well, too. [Stabs himself.]

Pie. Now thou hast indeed been faithful!

This was done nobly!—We have deceived
senate,

Jaff. Bravely!

Pie. Ha! ha!—oh! oh!

[Falls down on the Scaffold, and dies.]

Jaff. Now, ye curs'd rulers,

Thus of the blood ye've shed, I make libation,

And sprinkle it. Mingling, may it rest upon
you,

And all your race! Oh, poor Belvidera!

Sir, [To Officer,] I have a wife; bear this in safety
to her,

A token that, with my dying breath, I bless'd
her,

And the dear little infant left behind me.

I'm sick—I'm quiet.

[Dies.]

SCENE V.—*An Apartment in PRIULI's House.*

Enter PRIULI; BELVIDERA, distracted; and two of her Women.

Pri. Strengthen her heart with patience, pitying Heav'n!

Bel. Come, come, come, come, come; nay, come to bed,

Pri. Thee, my love. The winds! hark, how they whistle!

And the rain beats! Oh, how the weather shrinks me!

I say you shall not go, you shall not:

Whip your ill-nature; get you gone then. Oh!

Are you return'd? See, father, here he's come again!

Am I to blame to love him? O, thou dear one!

Why do you fly me? Are you angry still, then?

Jaffier, where art thou? Father, why do you do thus?

Stand off! don't hide him from me! He's there somewhere.

Stand off, I say! What, gone! Remember, tyrant, I may revenge myself for this trick, one day.

Enter Captain of the Guard, and whispers PRIULI.

Pri. News! what news?

Cap. Most sad, sir:

Jaffier, upon the scaffold, to prevent

A shameful death, stabb'd *Pierre*, and next himself;

Both fell together.

Bel. Ha! look there!

My husband bloody, and his friend too! Murder!

Who has done this? Speak to me, thou sad vision;

On these poor trembling knees, I beg it. Vanished:—

Here they went down.—Oh, I'll dig, dig the den up!

Hoa, *Jaffier*, *Jaffier*!

Peep up, and give me but a look. I have him!

I have got him, father! Oh!

My love! my dear! my blessing! Help me! help me!

They have hold of me, and drag me to the bottom!

Nay—now they pull so hard—farewell— [*Dies.*]

Pri. [*Bending over her.*] Oh! lead me into some place that's fit for mourning;

Where the free air, light, and the cheerful sun,

May never enter; hang it round with black;

Set up one taper, that may light a day,

As long as I've to live; and there all leave me:

Sparing no tears when you this tale relate,

But bid all cruel fathers dread my fate.

THE REVENGE.

A TRAGEDY.

BY EDWARD YOUNG, LL.D.

REVISED BY J. P. KEMBLE.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

ALONSO.

CARLOS.

ALVAREZ.

MANUEL.

ZANGA.

LEONORA.

ISABELLA.

Attendants on ALONSO.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Palace Garden. A Storm, with thunder and lightning. Stage dark.*

Enter ZANGA, through Archway.

Zan. Whether first nature, or long want of peace,
Has wrought my mind to this, I cannot tell;
But horrors now are not displeasing to me.

[*Thunder.*]

I like this rocking of the battlements.

Enter ISABELLA, through Archway.

Rage on, ye winds, burst clouds, and waters roar!
You bear a just resemblance to my fortune,
And suit the gloomy habit of my soul. [*Advances.*]
Who's there? My love!

Isa. Why have you left my bed?
Your absence more affrights me than the storm.

[*Thunder.*]

Zan. The dead alone in such a night can rest,
And I indulge my meditation here.

Woman, away! I choose to be alone.

Isa. I know you do; and therefore will not
leave you,—

Excuse me, Zanga,—therefore dare not leave you.

Is this a night for walks of contemplation?

Something unusual hangs upon your heart,

And I will know it; by our loves, I will.

To you I sacrific'd my virgin fame;

Ask I too much, to share in your distress?

ACT, DRAMA,—NO. XVII.

Zan. In tears? Thou fool! Then hear me, and
be plung'd

In hell's abyss, if ever it escape thee.

To strike thee with astonishment at once,

I hate Alonso. First, recover that,

And then thou shalt hear further.

Isa. Hate Alonso!

I own, I thought Alonso most your friend,

And that he lost the master in that name.

Zan. Hear then.—'Tis twice three years since
that great man,—

Great let me call him for he conquer'd me,—

Made me the captive of his arm in fight;

He slew my father, and threw chains o'er me,

While I with pious rage pursu'd revenge.

I then was young; he plac'd me near his person,

And thought me not dishonoured by his service.

One day—may that returning day be night!

The stain, the curse of each succeeding year!—

For something, or for nothing, in his pride,

He struck me—while I tell it, do I live?—

He smote me on the cheek. I did not stab him;

For that were poor revenge. E'er since, his folly

Has striven to bury it beneath a heap

Of kindnesses, and thinks it is forgot.

Insolent thought! and like a second blow!

Affronts are innocent, where men are worthless;

And such alone can wisely drop revenge.

Isa. But with more temper, Zanga, tell your
story;

To see your strong emotion, startles me.

Zan. Yes, woman, with the temper that befits it.

Has the dark adder venom? So have I,

When trod upon. Proud Spaniard, thou shalt feel
me!

For, from that day, that day of my dishonour,

I from that day have curs'd the rising sun,

Which never fail'd to tell me of my shame;

I from that day have bless'd the coming night,

Which promis'd to conceal it; but in vain;

The blow return'd for ever in my dream.

Yet on I toil'd, and groan'd for an occasion

Of ample vengeance; none is yet arriv'd.

Howe'er, at present, I conceive warm hopes

Of what may wound him sore in his ambition.

Life of his life, and dearer than his soul.

[*Stage becomes gradually lighter.*]

By nightly march he purpos'd to surprise
The Moorish camp:—but I have taken care,
They shall be ready to receive his favour:—
Failing in this, a cast of utmost moment,
Would darken all the conquests he has won.

Isa. Just as I entered, an express arriv'd.

Zan. To whom?

Isa. His friend Don Carlos.

Zan. Be propitious,

O Mahomet, on this important hour,
And give at length my famished soul revenge!
What is revenge, but courage to call in
Our honour's debts, and wisdom to convert
Other's self-love into our own protection?
But see the morning ray breaks in upon us:
I'll seek Don Carlos, and inquire my fate. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—A Hall in the Palace.

Enter CARLOS, with a letter, and MANUEL.

Man. My lord Don Carlos, what brings your express?

Car. Alonso's glory, and the Moors' defeat.
The field is strow'd with twice ten thousand slain:
Though, he suspects, his measures were betray'd.
He'll soon arrive. O, how I long to embrace
The first of heroes, and the best of friends!
I lov'd fair Leonora long before
The chance of battle gave me to the Moors;
And, while I groan'd in bondage, I deputed
This great Alonso, whom her father honours,
To be my gentle advocate in love.

Man. And what success?

Car. Alas, the cruel maid!

Indeed, her father—who, though high at court
And powerful with the king, has wealth at heart,
To heal his devastations from the Moors,—
Knowing I'm richly freighted from the East,
My fleet now sailing in the sight of Spain,—
Heaven guard it safe through such a dreadful
storm!—

Caresses me and urges her to wed.

Man. Her aged father
Leads her this way.

Car. She looks like radiant Truth
Brought forward by the hand of hoary Time.
You to the port with speed; 'tis possible,
Some vessel has arriv'd. [*Exit MANUEL.*]
Heaven grant it bring
Tidings which Carlos may receive with joy!

Enter ALVAREZ and LEONORA.

Alv. Don Carlos, I am labouring in your favour
With all a parent's soft authority,
And earnest counsel.

Car. Angels second you!
For all my bliss or misery hangs on it.

Alv. Daughter, the happiness of life depends
On our discretion, and a prudent choice.
Don Carlos is of ancient, noble blood;
And then, his wealth might mend a prince's fortune:
For him the sun is labouring in the mines,
A faithful slave, and turning earth to gold:
His keels are freighted with that sacred power
By which even kings and emperors are made.
Sir, you have my good wishes, and, I hope,
My daughter is not indispos'd to hear you.

[*Exit ALVAREZ.*]

Car. O, Leonora, why art thou in tears?
Because I am less wretched than I was?
Before your father gave me leave to woo you,
Hush'd was your bosom and your eye serene,

Leon. Think you my father too indulgent to me,
That he claims no dominion o'er my tears?

A daughter, sure, may be right dutiful,
Whose tears alone are free from a restraint.

Car. Ah, my torn heart!

Leon. Regard not me, my lord;
I shall obey my father.

Car. Disobey him,
Rather than come thus coldly—than come thus,
With absent eyes and alienated mien,
Suffering address, the victim of my love.
Love calls for love: Not all the pride of beauty,
Those eyes that tell us what the sun is made of,
Those lips whose touch is to be bought with life,
Those hills of driven snow, which seen are felt,—
All these possess'd are nought, but as they are
The proof, the substance, of an inward passion,
And the rich plunder of a taken heart.

Leon. I pray, my lord, no more.

Car. Must I despair, then? Do not shake me thus.

Heavens! what a proof I gave but two nights past
Of matchless love! To fling me at thy feet,
I slighted friendship, and I flew from fame,
Nor heard the summons of the next day's battle;
But, darting headlong to thy arms, I left
The promis'd fight—I left Alonso too
To stand the war, and quell a world alone.

[*Trumpets sound.*]

Leon. The victor comes. My lord, I must withdraw.

Car. And must you go?

Leon. Why should you wish me to stay?
Your friend's arrival will bring comfort to you,
My presence none; it pains you and myself:
For both our sakes, permit me to withdraw.

[*Exit LEONORA.—Trumpets sound.*]

Enter ALONSO, with eight Attendants.

Car. Alonso!

Alon. Carlos, I am whole again;
Clasp'd in thy arms, it makes my heart entire.

Car. Whom dare I thus embrace—the conqueror
of Africk?

Alon. Yes, much more: Don Carlos' friend:
The conquest of the world would cost me dear,
Should it beget one thought of distance in thee.
'Twas Carlos conquer'd, 'twas his cruel chains
Inflam'd me to a rage unknown till then,
And threw my former actions far behind.

Car. I love fair Leonora!—how I love her!
Yet still I find, I know not how it is,
Another heart, another soul, for thee.
Thy friendship warms, it raises, it transports;
Like music, pure the joy without alloy,
Whose very rapture is tranquillity:
While love, like wine, gives a tumultuous bliss,
Heighten'd indeed beyond all mortal pleasures;
But mingles pangs and madness in the bowl.

Enter ZANGA.

Zan. Manuel, my lord, returning from the port,
On business, both of moment and of haste,
Humbly begs leave to speak in private with you.

[*Retires.*]

Car. In private?—Ha!—Alonso, I'll return;
No business can detain me long from thee.

[*Exit CARLOS.*]

Zan. My lord Alonso, I obey'd your orders.

Alon. Will the fair Leonora pass this way?

Zan. She will, my lord, and soon.

Alon. Come near me, Zanga; [*ZANGA advances.*]

For I dare open all my heart to thee.
 Never was such a day of triumph known:
 There's not a wounded captive in my train,
 That slowly follow'd my proud chariot wheels
 With half a life, and beggary, and chains,
 But is a god to me: I am most wretched.
 In his captivity, thou know'st, Don Carlos,
 My friend—and never was a friend more dear—
 Deputed me his advocate in love.
 What did I do? I lov'd myself. Indeed,
 One thing there is might lessen my offence,—
 If such offence admits of being lessen'd!—
 I thought him dead; for, by what fate I know not,
 His letters never reach'd me.

Zan. [*Aside.*] Thanks to Zanga,
 Who thence contriv'd that evil which has happen'd.
 Alon. Yes,—curs'd of Heav'n!—I lov'd myself;
 and now,

In a late action rescu'd from the Moors,
 I have brought home my rival in my friend.

Zan. We hear, my lord, that in that action too
 Your interposing arm preserv'd his life.

Alon. It did,—with more than the expense of
 mine;

For oh! this day is mention'd for their nuptials.

Zan. My lord, she comes.

Alon. I'll take my leave, and die. [*Exit ALONSO.*]

Zan. Had'st thou a thousand lives, thy death
 would please me.

Unhappy fate! My country overcome!

My six years' hope of vengeance quite expir'd!—
 Would nature were!—I will not fall alone:
 But others' groans shall tell the world my death.

[*Exit.*]

Enter LEONORA and ALONSO.

Alon. When nature ends, with anguish like to
 this,

Sinners shall take their last leave of the sun,
 And bid his light adieu.

Leon. The mighty conqueror
 Dismay'd? I thought you gave the foe your sor-
 rows.

Alon. O cruel insult! are those tears your sport,
 Which nothing but a love for you could draw?
 Africk I quell'd, in hope by that to purchase
 Your leave to sigh unscorn'd:—but I complain not;
 'Twas but a world, and you are—Leonora.

Leon. That passion which you boast of, is your
 guilt,

A treason to your friend.

Alon. O Leonora!

What could I do! In duty to my friend,

I saw you; and to see, is to admire.

For Carlos did I plead, and most sincerely;

You know I did: I sought but your esteem;

If that is guilt, an angel had been guilty.

Leon. If from your guilt none suffer'd but your-
 self,

It might be so:—Farewell. [*Going.*]

Alon. Who suffers with me? [*Takes her hand.*]

Leon. [*Weeps.*] Enjoy your ignorance, and let
 me go.

Alon. What mean these tears?

Leon. I weep by chance; nor have my tears a
 meaning;—

But O! when first I saw Alonso's tears,
 I knew their meaning well.

Alon. Heavens! what is this?

Leon. Alonso, pardon me the injury
 Of loving you. I've struggled with my passion,
 And struggled long; let that be some excuse.

You well may wonder at such words as these,
 I start at them myself; they fright my nature.
 Great is my fault: but name not me alone;
 Give him a little blame, who took such pains
 To make me guilty.

Alon. Blame you! You know, I think your love
 a blessing

Beyond all human blessings; 'tis the price
 Of sighs and groans, and a whole year of dying:—
 But O,—the curse of curses!—O my friend!

Leon. Was it for you, my lord, to be so quick
 In finding out objections to our love?

Think you so strong my love, or weak my virtue,
 It was unsafe to leave that part to me?

Alon. Is not the day then fix'd for your espousals?

Leon. Iudeed, my father, once had thought that
 way;

Yet, marking how the marriage pain'd my heart,
 Long he stood doubtful; but at last resolv'd,
 Your counsel, which determines him in all,
 Should finish the debate.

Alon. O agony!

Must I not only lose her,—but be made
 Myself the instrument?—Not only die,
 But plunge the dagger in my heart myself?

Leon. What! do you tremble lest you should be
 mine?

For what else can you tremble? Not for that,
 My father places in your power to alter.

Alon. What's in my power?—O yes, to stab my
 friend.

Leon. To stab your friend were barbarous indeed:
 Spare him,—and murder me.

Alon. First perish all!

No, Leonora! I am thine for ever:
 The groans of friendship shall be heard no more.
 For whatsoever crimes I can commit,
 I've felt the pangs already.

Leon. Hold, Alonso;

And hear a maid whom doubly thou hast conquered.

I love thy virtue, as I love thy person,

And I adore thee for the pains it gave me:

But, as I felt the pains, I'll reap the fruit.

I'll shine out in my turn, and show the world,

Thy great example was not lost upon me:

Thus then I tear me from thy hopes for ever.

Shall I contribute to Alonso's crimes?

No; though the life-blood gushes from my heart,

You shall not be ashamed of Leonora.

Nay, never shrink: take back the bright example

You lately lent—O take it while you may,

While I can give it you, and be immortal.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

The SCENE continues.

Enter MANUEL and ZANGA.

Zan. If this be true, I cannot blame your pain
 For wretched Carlos: 'tis but human in you.
 But when arriv'd your dismal news?

Man. This hour.

Zan. What, not a vessel sav'd?—And is Alvarez
 Determin'd to deny his daughter to him?
 That treasure was on shore:—Must that too join
 The common wreck?

Man. Alvarez pleads, indeed,
That Leonora's heart is disinclin'd,
And pleads that only : so it was this morning,
When he concurred : the tempest broke the match ;
And sunk his favour, when it sunk the gold.
The love of gold is double in his heart,
The vice of age, and of Alvarez too.

Zan. How does Don Carlos bear it ?

Man. Like a man
Whose heart feels most a human heart can feel.
And reasons best a human heart can reason.

Zan. But is he then in absolute despair ?—

Man. Never to see his Leonora more :—
And, quite to quench all future hope, Alvarez
Urges Alonso to espouse his daughter
This very day ; for he has learnt their loves.

Zan. Ha !—Was not that receiv'd with ecstasy
By Don Alonso ?

Man. Yes, at first ; but soon
A damp came o'er him,—it would kill his friend.

Zan. Not, if his friend consented ; and, since
now

He can't himself espouse her,—

Man. Yet, to ask it
Has something shocking to a generous mind ;
At least, Alonso's spirit startles at it.
But I must leave you : Carlos wants support
In his severe affliction. [Exit MANUEL.]

Zan. Ha ! it dawns,—
It rises to me like a new-found world
“ To mariners long time distress'd at
sea, } Out
“ Sore from a storm, and all their } sometimes.
viands spent.”

Ho ! Isabella !

Enter ISABELLA.

I thought of dying ; better things come forward :
Vengeance is still alive ; from her dark covert,
With all her snakes erect upon her crest,
She stalks in view, and fires me with her charms.—
When, Isabella, arriv'd Don Carlos here ?

Isa. Two nights ago.

Zan. That was the very night
Before the battle.—Memory, set down that :
It has the essence of a crocodile,
Though yet but in the shell : I'll give it birth.
What time did he return ?

Isa. At midnight.

Zan. So !—

Say, did he see that night his Leonora ?

Isa. No, my good lord.

Zan. No matter.

Go, and fetch my tablets hither. [Exit ISABELLA.]
Two nights ago, my father's sacred shade
Thrice stalk'd around my bed, and smil'd upon me :
He smil'd !—a joy then little understood.

Enter ISABELLA, with the Tablets.

It must be so :—and if so, it is vengeance
Worth waking of the dead for.

[ZANGA takes the Tablets ; writes ; then
reads, as to himself.]

Thus it stands :
The father's fix'd ;—Don Carlos cannot wed ;—
Alonso may ;—but that will hurt his friend ;—
Nor can he ask his leave ;—or, if he did,
He might not gain it.—It is hard, to give
Our own consent to ills, though we must bear them.
Were it not then a masterpiece, worth all
The wisdom I can boast,—first to persuade
Alonso to request it of his friend ;

His friend to grant : then from that very grant,—
The strongest proof of friendship man can give,—
To work out a cause

Of jealousy, to rack Alonso's peace ?—
I have turn'd o'er the catalogue of woes
Which sting the heart of man, and find none equal ;
It is the hydra of calamities,
The seven-fold death : the jealous are the damn'd.

Isa. Alonso comes this way.

Zan. Most opportunely.

Withdraw.

[Exit ISABELLA.]

Ye subtle demons which reside
In courts, and do your work with bows and smiles,—
That little enginry more mischievous
Than fleets and armies, and the cannon's murder,—
Teach me to look a lie !—give me your maze
Of gloomy thought and intricate design,
To catch the man I hate, and then devour !

Enter ALONSO.

My lord, I give you joy.

Alon. Of what, good Zanga !

Zan. Is not the lovely Leonora yours ?

Alon. What will become of Carlos ?

Zan. He's your friend ;

And since he can't espouse the fair himself,
Will take some comfort from Alonso's fortune.

Alon. Alas ! thou little know'st the force of love ;
Love reigns, a sultan, with unrival'd sway,
Puts all relations, friendship's self, to death,
If once he's jealous of it. I love Carlos ;
Yet well I know what pangs I felt this morning
At his intended nuptials : for myself
I then felt pains, which now for him I feel.

Zan. You will not wed her then ?

Alon. Not instantly :

Insult his broken heart the very moment !

Zan. I understand you : But you'll wed here-
after,

When your friend's gone, and his first pain as-
suag'd ?

Alon. Am I to blame for that ?

Zan. My lord, I love

Your very errors, they are born from virtue.
Your friendship—and what nobler passion claims
The heart !—does lead you blindfold to your ruin :
Consider,—wherefore did Alvarez break
Don Carlos' match, and wherefore urge Alonso's ?
'Twas the same cause, the love of wealth : To-
morrow

May see Alonso in Don Carlos' fortune :

A higher bidder is a better friend ;

And there are princes sigh for Leonora.

When your friend's gone, you'll wed ? Why then
the cause,

Which gives you Leonora now, will cease,
Carlos has lost her ; should you lose her too,
Why then you heap new torments on your friend
By that respect which labour'd to relieve him.

[Aside.] 'Tis well : he is disturb'd ; it makes him
pause.

Alon. Think'st thou, my Zanga, should I ask
Don Carlos,
His goodness would consent that I should wed
her ?

Zan. I know, it would.

Alon. But then, the cruelty
To ask it, and for me to ask it of him !

Zan. Methinks you are severe upon your friend.
Who was it gave him liberty and life ?

Alon. That is the very reason which forbids it.
Were I a stranger, I could freely speak :

In me it so resembles a demand,
Exact of a debt; it shocks my nature.

Zan. My lord, you know the sad alternative.
Is Leonora worth one pang, or not?
Warily as you, I wish Don Carlos well:
But I am likewise Don Alonso's friend:
There all the difference lies between us two.
In me, my lord, you hear another self,—
And, give me leave to add, a better too,
Clear'd from those errors which, though caus'd by
virtue,

Are such as may hereafter give you pain.
Don Lopez of Castile would not demur thus.

Alon. Perish the name! What! sacrifice the fair
To age and illness, because set in gold?
I'll to Don Carlos, if my heart will let me:
I have not seen him since his sore affliction;
But shunn'd it, as too terrible to bear.
How shall I bear it now? I'm struck already.

[Exit Alonso.]

Zan. Half of my work is done. I must secure
Don Carlos, ere Alonso speaks with him.

[ZANGA beckons to MANUEL, who enters;

ZANGA whispers him.—Exit MANUEL.

Proud, hated Spain, oft drench'd in Moorish blood,
Dost thou not feel a deadly foe within thee?
Shake not thy towers where'er I pass along,
Conscious of ruin, and their great destroyer?
Shake to their centre, if Alonso's dear.
Look down, O holy prophet! see me torture
This Christian dog, this infidel, which dares
To smite thy votaries, and spurn thy law;
And yet hopes pleasure from two radiant eyes,
That look as they were lighted up for thee.
Shall he enjoy thy paradise below?
Blast the cold thought, and curse him with her
charms!—

But see the melancholy lover comes. [Retires.]

Enter CARLOS.

* Car. Hope, thou hast told me lies from day to day
For more than twenty years: Vile promiser!
None here are happy, but the very fool,
Or very wise: and I want fool enough,
To smile in vanities, and hug a shadow;
Nor have I wisdom, to elaborate
An artificial happiness from pains:
Even joys are pains, because they cannot last.
How many lift the head, look gay, and smile
Against their consciences!—and this we know,
Yet knowing disbelief: and try again
What we have tried, and struggle with conviction:
Each new experience gives the former credit,
And reverend grey threescore is but a voucher
That thirty told us true.

Zan. My noble lord,— [Advances.]
I mourn your fate: But are no hopes surviving?

Car. No hopes: Alvarez has a heart of steel:
'Tis fix'd, 'tis past, 'tis absolute despair.

Zan. You wanted not to have your heart made
tender

By your own pains, to feel a friend's distress.

Car. I understand you well: Alonso loves;
I pity him.

Zan. I dare be sworn, you do;
Yet he has other thoughts.

Car. What canst thou mean?

Zan. Indeed, he has; and fears to ask a favour,
A stranger from a stranger might request;
What costs you nothing, yet is all to him;
Nay, what, indeed, will to your glory add,
For nothing more than wishing your friend well.

Car. I pray be plain: his happiness is mine.

Zan. He loves to death; but so reveres his
friend,

He can't persuade his heart to wed the maid
Without your leave, and that he fears to ask;
In perfect tenderness, I urg'd him to it,
Knowing the deadly sickness of his heart,
Your overflowing goodness to your friend,
Your wisdom, and despair yourself to wed her.
I wrung a promise from him he would try:
And now I come, a mutual friend to both,
Without his privity, to let you know it,
And to prepare you kindly to receive him.

Car. Ha! if he weds, I am undone indeed;
Not Don Alvarez' self can then relieve me.

Zan. Alas! my lord, you know—his heart is
steel

'Tis fix'd, 'tis past, 'tis absolute despair.

Car. O cruel Heaven! and is it not enough

That I must never, never see her more?

Ask my consent!—Must I then give her to him?

Lead to his nuptial sheets the blushing maid?
Oh!—Leonora!—never, never, never! [Crosses.]

Zan. [Aside.] A storm of plagues upon him! he
refuses.

Car. What! wed her!—and to-day!

Zan. To-day, or never.

To-morrow may some wealthier lover bring,

And then Alonso is thrown out, like you:

Then whom shall he condemn for his misfortune?

Carlos is an Alvarez to his love.

Car. O torment! Whither shall I turn?

Zan. To peace.

Car. Which is the way?

Zan. His happiness is yours:

I dare not disbelieve you.

Car. Kill my friend:

Or worse!—Alas, and can there be a worse?

A worse there is; nor can my nature bear it.

Zan. You have convinc'd me, 'tis a dreadful task

I find, Alonso's quitting her this morning

For Carlos' sake, in tenderness to you,

Betray'd me to believe it less severe

Than I perceive it is.

Car. Thou dost upbraid me.

Zan. No, my good lord:—But, since you can't
comply,

'Tis my misfortune that I mention'd it;

For, had I not, Alonso would indeed

Have died, as now; but not by your decree.

Car. By my decree! Do I decree his death?

I do.—Shall I then lead her to his arms?

O!—Which side shall I take?—Be stabb'd—or
stab!

'Tis equal death, a choice of agonies.

Go, Zanga, go; defer the dreadful trial,

[Puts ZANGA by him.]

Though but a day; something, perchance, may
happen

To soften all to friendship and to love:

Go, stop my friend; let me not see him now,

But save us from an interview of duty.

Zan. My lord, I'm bound in duty to obey
you.

[Aside.] If I do not bring him, may Alonso prosper!
[Exit ZANGA.]

Car. What is this world?—Thy school, O
misery!

Our only lesson is to learn to suffer;

And he who knows not that, was born for nothing.

Though deep my pangs, and heavy at my heart,

My comfort is, each moment takes away

A grain, at least, from the dead load that's on me,
 And gives it a nearer prospect of the grave.
 But,—put it most severely,—should I live,
 Live long?—Alas! there is no length in time;
 Not in thy time, O man! What's fourscore years?
 Nay, what indeed the age of time itself,
 Since cut from out eternity's wide round?
 Yet, Leonora,—she can make time long,
 Its nature alter, as she alter'd mine.
 While in the lustre of her charms I lay,
 Whole summer suns roll'd unperceiv'd away;
 I years for days, and days for moments told,
 And was surpris'd, to hear that I grew old.
 Now fate does rigidly its dues regain,
 And every moment is an age of pain. [Going.]

Enter ZANGA and ALONSO.

[ZANGA stops CARLOS, who is going.]

Zan. Is this Don Carlos? this the boasted friend?
 How can you turn your back upon his sadness?
 Look on him; and then leave him, if you can.
 Whose sorrows thus depress him? Not his own;
 This moment he could wed, without your leave.

Car. I cannot yield; nor can I bear his griefs.
 Alonso!—[Crossing to him, and taking his hand.]
 Alon. O Carlos!

Car. Pray, forbear. [ZANGA gets next ALONSO.
 Alon. Art thou undone, and shall ALONSO smile?—
 Alonso!—who, perhaps, in some degree
 Contributed to cause thy dreadful fate.

I was deputed guardian of thy love:
 But O! I lov'd myself.—Pour down afflictions
 On this devoted head! Make me your mark!
 And be the world by my example taught,
 How sacred it should hold the name of friend.

Car. You charge yourself unjustly:
 The crime was mine,
 Who plac'd thee there, where only thou could'st
 fail.

Alon. You cast in shades the failures of a friend,
 And soften all; but think not you deceive me:
 I know my guilt, and I implore your pardon,
 As the sole glimpse I can obtain of peace.

Car. Pardon for him who but this morning threw
 Fair Leonora from his heart, all bath'd
 In ceaseless tears, and blushing with her love?
 Yes 'twas in thee, through fondness to thy friend,
 To shut thy bosom against ecstasies:
 For which, while this pulse beats, it beats to thee,
 While this blood flows, it flows for my Alonso,
 And every wish is levell'd at thy joy.

Zan. [Aside to ALONSO.] My lord, my lord, this
 is your time to speak.

Alon. Because he's kind; it therefore is the
 worst.

Do I not see him quite possess'd with anguish,
 And shall I pour in new? No, fond desire;
 No, love:—one pang at parting, and farewell!
 I have no other love but Carlos now.

[Runs to CARLOS.

Car. Alas! my friend, why with such eager
 grasp

Dost press my hand?

Alon. If after death our forms
 Shall be transparent, naked every thought,
 And friends meet friends, and read each other's
 hearts,

Thou'lt know one day that thou wast held most
 dear,

Farewell!

[Going.]

Car. [Holds him.] Alonso, stay.—He cannot
 speak,

Least it should grieve me. Shall I be outdone,
 And lose in glory, as I lose in love?
 I take it much unkindly, my Alonso,
 You think so meanly of me, not to speak,
 When well I know your heart is near to bursting.
 Have you forgot how you have bound me to you?
 Your smallest friendship's liberty and life.

Alon. There, there it is, my friend; it cuts me
 there.

How dreadful is it to a generous mind
 To ask, when sure he cannot be denied!

Car. How greatly thought! In all, he towers
 above me.

Then you confess, you would ask something of me.

Alon. No, on my soul.

Zan. [Aside to ALONSO.] Then lose her.

Car. [Aside.] Glorious spirit!

Why, what a pang has he run through for this!
 By Heaven, I envy him his agonies.

Why was not mine the most illustrious lot
 Of starting at one action from below,
 And flaming up into consummate greatness?
 Ha!—Angels, strengthen me!—It shall be so.

My Alonso,
 Since thy great soul disdains to make request,
 Receive with favour that I make to thee.

Alon. What means my Carlos?

Car. Pray, observe me well.

Fate and Alvarez tore her from my heart,
 And, plucking up my love, they had well nigh
 Pluck'd up life too; for they were twin'd together.
 Of that no more.—What now does reason bid?
 I cannot wed:—Farewell my happiness!
 But, O my soul, with care provide for hers.
 In life how weak, how helpless is a woman!
 So properly the object of affliction,
 That heav'n is pleas'd to make mistress become her,
 And dresses her most amiably in tears.
 Take then my heart in dowry with the fair;
 Be thou her guardian, and thou must be mine:
 Shut out the thousand pressing ills of life
 With thy surrounding arms:—Do this; and then
 Set down the liberty and life thou gav'st me
 As little things, as essays of thy goodness,
 And rudiments of friendship so divine.

Alon. There is a grandeur in thy goodness to me
 Which, with thy foes, would render thee ador'd.
 And canst thou, canst thou part with Leonora?

Car. I do not part with her,—I give her thee.

Alon. Carlos! [Runs and embraces him.]

But think not words were ever made
 For such occasions;—silence, tears, embraces
 Are languid eloquence.—I'll seek relief
 In absence, from the pain of so much goodness;
 There thank the blest above, thy sole superiors,
 Adore, and raise my thoughts of them by thee.

[Cross and exit ALONSO.]

Zan. [Aside.] Thus far success has crown'd my
 boldest hope.

My next care is, to hasten these new nuptials;
 And then my master-works begin to play.

[Exit ZANGA.]

Car. He's gone; and now
 I must unslunge my overburthen'd heart,
 And let it flow. I would not grieve my friend
 With tears, nor interrupt my great design:
 Great, sure, as ever human breast durst think of:
 But now my sorrows, long with pain suppress'd,
 Burst their confinement with impetuous sway,
 O'erwhelm all bounds, and bear even life away.

So, till the day was won, the Greek renown'd
With anguish wore the arrow in his wound ;
Then drew the shaft from out his tortur'd side,
Let gush the torrent of his blood, and died.

[Exit.

ACT III.

SCENE.—A Corridor in the Palace.

Enter ZANGA.

Zan. O Joy,—thou welcome stranger!—twice
three years

I have not felt thy vital beam ; but now
It warms my veins, and plays around my heart.
A fiery instinct lifts me from the ground,
And I could mount !—The spirits numberless
Of my dear countrymen, which yesterday
Left their poor bleeding bodies on the field,
Are all assembled here, and o'er-inform me.—
My Isabella !

Enter ISABELLA.

Isa. What commands my Moor ?

Zan. My fair ally ! my lovely minister !
'Twas well Alvarez, by my arts impell'd,
To plunge Don Carlos in the last despair,
And so prevent all future molestation,
Finish'd the nuptials soon as he resolv'd them.
This conduct ripen'd all for me, and ruin.
Scarce had the priest the holy rite perform'd,
When I, by sacred inspiration, forg'd
That letter which I trusted to thy hand ;
That letter, which in glowing terms conveys
From happy Carlos to fair Leonora
The most profound acknowledgment of heart,
For wondrous transports which he never knew.
This is a good subservient artifice,
To aid the nobler workings of my brain.

Isa. I quickly dropt it in the bride's apartment,
As you commanded.

Zan. With a lucky hand ;
For soon Alonso found it : I observ'd him
From out my secret stand : He took it up ;
But scarce was it unfolded to his sight,
When he, as if an arrow pierc'd his eye,
Started, and trembling dropt it on the ground.
Pale and aghast awhile my victim stood,
Disguis'd a sigh or two, and puff'd them from him ;
Then rubb'd his brow, and took it up again :
At first, he look'd as if he meant to read it ;
But, check'd by rising fears, he crush'd it thus,
And thrust it, like an adder, in his bosom.

Isa. But if he read it not, it cannot sting him,
At least not mortally.

Zan. At first, I thought so ;
But further thought informs me otherwise,
And turns this disappointment to account :
He more shall credit it, because unseen,
If 'tis unseen ; as thou anon may'st find.

Isa. That would, indeed, commend my Zanga's
skill.

Zan. This, Isabella, is Don Carlos' picture :
Take it ; and so dispose of it, that, found,
It may rise up a witness of her love ;
Under her pillow, in her cabinet,
Or elsewhere, as shall best promote our end.

Isa. I'll weigh it as its consequence requires ;
Then do my utmost to deserve your smile.

[Exit ISABELLA.

Zan. Is that Alonso prostrate on the ground ?
Now he starts up, like flame from sleeping embers,
And wild distraction glares from either eye.
If thus a slight surmise can work his soul,
How will the fulness of the tempest tear him !

[Retires.

Enter ALONSO, with a Letter.

Alon. And yet, it cannot be :—I am deceiv'd :—
I injure her :—She wears the face of heaven.

Zan. [Aside.] He doubts.

Alon. I dare not look on this again :
If the first glance, which gave suspicion only,
Had such effect, so smote my heart and brain,
The certainty would dash me all in pieces.
It cannot—Ha ! it must, it must be true.

Zan. [Aside.] Hold there, and we succeed.—

[ALONSO sees him, and starts.

He has descried me.

I'll seem to go, to make my stay more sure.

Alon. Hold, Zanga, turn.

Zan. My lord !

Alon. Shut close the doors,
That not a spirit find an entrance here.

Zan. [Shuts the door.] My lord's obey'd.

Alon. I see that thou art frightened :
If thou dost love me, I shall fill thy heart
With scorpion's stings.

Zan. If I do love my lord !

Alon. Come near me : Let me rest upon thy
bosom.

What pillow like the bosom of a friend !
And I am sick at heart.

Zan. Speak, sir, O speak,
And take me from the rack !

Alon. I am most happy : mine is victory,
Mine the king's favour, mine the nation's shout,
And great men make their fortunes of my smiles.
O curse of curses ! in the lap of blessing
To be most curs'd ! My Leonora's false !

Zan. Save me, my lord !

Alon. My Leonora's false. [Gives him the letter.

Zan. Then Heaven has lost its image here on
earth.

[ZANGA, while reading the letter, trembles, and
shows the utmost concern.]

Alon. Good-natur'd man ! he makes my pains his
own.

I durst not read it ; but I read it now
In thy concern.

Zan. Did you not read it, then ?

Alon. Mine eye just touch'd it, and could bear
no more.

Zan. [Tears the letter.] Thus perish all that gives
Alonso pain !

Alon. Why didst thou tear it ?

Zan. Think of it no more :

'Twas your mistake, and groundless are your fears.
Alon. And didst thou tremble then for my mis-
take ?

Or give the whole contents ; or, by the pangs
That feed upon my heart, thy life's in danger.

[Drawing his sword.

Zan. Is this Alonso's language to his Zanga ?
Draw forth your sword, and find the secret here.
For whose sake is it, think you, I conceal it ?
Wherefore this rage ? Because I seek your peace ?
I have no interest in suppressing it,
But what good-natur'd tenderness for you

Obliges me to have: Not mine the heart
That will be rent in two, not mine the fame
That will be damn'd, though all the world should
know it.

Alon. Then my worst fears are true, and life is
past.

Zan. What has the rashness of my passion
utter'd!

I know not what.—But, grant I did confess,
What is a letter? Letters may be forg'd.
For Heaven's sweet sake, my lord, lift up your
heart:

Some foe to your repose—

Alon. So Heaven look on me,
As I can't find the man I have offended.

Zan. [*Aside.*] Indeed!—Our innocence is not
our shield:

They take offence who have not been offended;
They seek our ruin too, who speak us fair,
And death is often ambush'd in their smiles:
We know not whom we have to fear. 'Tis certain,
A letter may be forg'd; and, in a point
Of such dreadful consequence as this,
One would rely on nought that might be false.
Think, have you any other cause to doubt her?
Away, you can find none. Resume your spirit;
All's well again.

Alon. Oh that it were!

Zan. It is;

For who would credit that which, credited,
Makes hell superfluous by superior pains,
Without such proofs as cannot be withstood?
Has she not ever been to virtue train'd?
Is not her fame as spotless as the sun,
Her sex's envy, and the boast of Spain?

Alon. O Zanga, it is that confounds me most;
That, full in opposition to appearance,—

Zan. No more, my lord; for you condemn
yourself.

What is absurdity, but to believe
Against appearance?—you can't yet, I find,
Subdue your passion to your better sense;
And, truth to tell, it does not much displease me.
'Tis fit, our indiscretions should be check'd
With some degree of pain.

Alon. What indiscretion?

Zan. Come, you must bear to hear your faults
from me:

Had you not sent Don Carlos to the court
The night before the battle, that foul slave
Who forg'd the senseless scroll which gives you
pain,

Had wanted footing for his villany.

Alon. I sent him not.

Zan. Not sent him?—Ha!—That strikes me.

I thought he came on message to the king.
Is there another cause could justify
His shunning danger, and the promis'd fight?
But I, perhaps, may think too rigidly;
So long an absence, and impatient love.—

Alon. In my confusion, that had quite escap'd me.
'Tis clear as day:—for Carlos is so brave,
He lives not but on fame; he hunts for danger,
And is enamour'd of the face of death:
How then could he decline the next day's battle,
But for the transports—O, it must be so!—
Inhuman! by the loss of his own honour,
To buy the ruin of his friend!

Zan. You wrong him;

He knew not of your love.

Alon. [*Starts.*] Ha!

Zan. [*Aside.*] That stings home.

Alon. Indeed, he knew not of my treacherous
love.

Proofs rise on proofs, and still the last the strongest:
The eternal law of things declares it true,
Which calls for judgments on distinguish'd guilt,
And loves to make our crime our punishment.
Love is my torture; love was first my crime;
For she was his, my friend's; and he—O horror!
Confided all in me. O, sacred faith,
How dearly I abide thy violation!

Zan. Were then their loves far gone?

Alon. The father's will

There bore a total sway; and he, as soon
As news arriv'd that Carlos' fleet was seen
From off our coast, fir'd with the love of gold,
Determin'd that the very sun which saw
Carlos return, should see his daughter wed.

Zan. Indeed, my lord, then you must pardon me,
If I presume to mitigate the crime.

Consider, strong allurements soften guilt;
Long was his absence, ardent was his love,
At midnight his return, the next day destin'd
For his espousals,—'twas a strong temptation.

Alon. Temptation!

Zan. 'Twas but gaining of one night.

Alon. One night!

Zan. That crime could ne'er return again.

Alon. Again! By Heaven, thou dost insult thy
lord.

Temptation! one night gain'd! O stings and death!
And am I then undone? Alas, my Zanga,
And dost thou own it too? Deny it still,
And rescue me one moment from distraction.

Zan. My lord, I hope the best.

Alon. False, foolish hope,
And insolent to me! Thou know'st it false:
It is as glaring as the noontide sun.

Devil! this morning, after three years' coldness,
To rush at once into a passion for me!

'Twas time to feign, 'twas time to get another,
When her first fool was sated with her beauties.

Zan. What says my lord? Did Leonora then
Never before disclose her passion for you?

Alon. Never.

Zan. Throughout the whole three years?

Alon. O never, never!

Why, Zanga, should'st thou strive? It is all in
vain;

Though thy soul labours, it can find no reed
For hope to catch at. Ah! I'm plunging down
Ten thousand thousand fathoms in despair.

Zan. Hold, sir, I'll break your fall:—Wave
every fear,

And be a man again:—Had he enjoyed her,
Be most assur'd, he had resign'd her to you
With less reluctance.

Alon. Ha! resign her to me!

Resign her!—Who resign'd her!—Double death!—
How could I doubt so long?—my heart is broke.
First love her to distraction! then resign her!

Zan. But was it not with utmost agony?

Alon. Grant that: he still resign'd her; that's
enough.

Would he pluck out his eye to give it me?
Tear out his heart?—She was his heart no more.—
Nor was it with reluctance he resign'd her;
By Heaven, he ask'd, he courted me, to wed:
I thought it strange; 'tis now no longer so.

Zan. Was 't his request? Are you right sure of
that?—

I fear, the letter was not all a tale.

Alon. A tale! There's proof equivalent to sight.

Zan. I should distrust my sight on this occasion.

Alon. And so should I, by Heaven, I think, I should.

What! Leonora, the divine? by whom
We guess'd at angels! O! I'm all confusion.

Zan. You now are too much ruffled, to think clearly.

Since bliss and horror, life and death, hang on it,
Go to your chamber, there maturely weigh
Each circumstance; consider, above all,
That it is jealousy's peculiar nature,
To swell small things to great; nay, out of nought
To conjure much; and then to lose its reason
Amid the hideous phantoms it has form'd.

Alon. Had I ten thousand lives, I'd give them all
To be deceiv'd. I fear, 'tis doomday with me:
And yet, she seem'd so pure, that I thought Heaven
Borrow'd her form for virtue's self to wear,
To gain her lovers with the sons of men.
O Leonora! Leonora!— [Exit ALONSO.

Enter ISABELLA.

Zan. Thus far it works auspiciously: My patient
Thrives underneath my hand in misery:
He's gone to think;—that is, to be distracted.

Isa. I overheard your conference; and saw you,
To my amazement, tear the letter.

Zan. There,
There, Isabella, I outdid myself:
For, tearing it, I not secure it only
In its first force, but superadd a new;
For after tearing it, as loath to show
The foul contents, if I should swear it now
A forgery, my lord would disbelieve me;
Nay, more would disbelieve, the more I swore.—
But, is the picture happily dispos'd of?

Isa. It is.

Zan. That's well.— [Exit ISABELLA.

Ah! what is well? O pang to think!
O dire necessity! Is this my province?
Whither, my soul, ah! whither art thou sunk
Beneath thy sphere!—
Does this become a soldier? This become
Whom armies follow'd, and a people lov'd?
My martial glory withers at the thought.
But, great my end; and, since there are no other,
These means are just: they shine with borrow'd
light,

Illustrious from the purpose they pursue:
And greater, sure, my merit, who, to gain
A point sublime, can such a task sustain.
Late time shall wonder; that my joys will raise;
For wonder is involuntary praise. [Exit.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—Alonso's Apartment in the Palace.—
Chairs, a Sofa, and a Table.

Enter ALONSO and ZANGA.

Alon. O, what a pain to think, when every
thought,
Perplexing thought, in intricacies runs,
And reason knits the inextricable toil
In which herself is taken!—
No more I'll bear this battle of the mind,
This inward anarchy; but find my way,

ACT. DRAMA.—NO. XVIII.

And, to her trembling heart presenting death,
Force all the secret from her. [Going.

Zan. O forbear!—

You totter on the very brink of ruin.

Alon. What dost thou mean?

Zan. [Aside.] That will discover all,
And kill my hopes. What can I think or do?

Alon. What dost thou murmur?

Zan. Force the secret from her!

What's perjury, to such a crime as this?
Will she confess it then? O groundless hope!
But, rest assur'd, she'll make this accusation,
Or false or true, your ruin with the king;
Such is her father's power.

Alon. No more; I care not;

Rather than groan beneath this load, I'll die.

Zan. But, for what better will you change this
load?

Grant, you should know it:—Would not that be
worse?

Alon. No; it would cure me of my mortal pangs
By hatred and contempt; I should despise her;
And all my love-bred agonies would vanish.

Zan. Ah! were I sure of that, my lord,—

Alon. What then?

Zan. You should not hazard life to gain the
secret.

Alon. What dost thou mean? Thou know'st
I'm on the rack;

I'll not be play'd with! speak, if thou hast aught,
Or I this instant fly to Leonora. [Going.

Zan. That is, to death. My lord, I am not yet
Quite so far gone in guilt, to suffer it;
Though gone too far, Heaven knows.—'Tis I am
guilty:—

I have ta'en pains, as you I know observ'd,
To hinder you from diving in the secret,
And turn'd aside your thoughts from the detection.

Alon. Thou dost confound me.

Zan. I confound myself;

And frankly own, though to my shame I own it,
Nought but your life in danger could have torn
The secret out, and made me own my crime.

Alon. Speak quickly, Zanga, speak.

Zan. Not yet, dread sir:

First, I must be convinc'd that, if you find
The fair one guilty, scorn, as you assur'd me,
Shall conquer love and rage, and heal your soul.

Alon. O, 't will, by Heaven!

Alon. Alas! I fear it much,

And scarce can hope so far:—but I of this
Exact your solemn oath, that you'll abstain
From all self-violence, and save my lord.

Alon. I trebly swear.

Zan. You'll bear it like a man?

Alon. A god.

Zan. Such have you been to me,
And pour'd forth miracles of kindness on me:
And what return is now within my power,
But to confess, expose myself to justice,
And as a blessing claim my punishment?
Know then, Don Carlos—

Alon. O!

Zan. You cannot bear it.

Alon. Go on; I'll have it, though it blast man-
kind;

I'll have it all, and instantly: Go on.

Zan. Don Carlos did return at dead of night,—
[Retires.

Enter LEONORA.

Leon. My Lord Alonso, you are absent from us,
And quite undo our joy.

Alon. I'll come, my love :

Be not our friends deserted by us both ;
I'll follow you this moment.

Leon. My good lord,

I do observe severity of thought

Upon your brow :—aught hear you from the Moors ?

Alon. No, my delight.

Leon. What then employ'd your mind ?

Alon. Thou, love, and only thou :—so Heaven
befriend me,

As other thought can find no entrance here !

Leon. How good in you, my lord, whom nations'
cares

Solicit, and a world in arms obeys,
To drop one thought on me !

[He shows the utmost impatience.]

Alon. Know then, to thy comfort,

Thou hast me all, my throbbing heart is full
With thee alone ; I've thought of nothing else ;
Nor shall, I from my soul believe, till death.—
My life, our friends expect thee.

Leon. I obey.

[Exit LEONORA.]

Alon. Is that the face of curs'd hypocrisy ?

If she is guilty, stars are made of darkness,
And beauty shall no more belong to Heaven.—
Don Carlos did return at dead of night,—
Proceed, good Zanga,—so thy tale began.

Zan. [Advances.] Don Carlos did return at dead
of night :

That night, by chance,—ill chance for me !—did I
Command the watch that guards the palace-gate :
He told me, he had letters for the king,
Despatch'd from you :—

Alon. The villain lied.

Zan. My lord,

I pray forbear.—Transported at his sight,
After so long a bondage, and your friend,—
Who could suspect him of an artifice—
No further I inquir'd, but let him pass ;
False to my trust, at least imprudent in it.
Our watch reliev'd, I went into the garden
As is my custom when the night's serene,
And took a moonlight walk : When soon I heard
A rustling in an arbour that was near me,
And saw two lovers in each other's arms
Embracing and embrac'd. Anon, the man
Arose ; and, falling back some paces from her,
Gaz'd ardently awhile, then rush'd at once,
And throwing all himself into her bosom,
There softly sigh'd,—O night of ecstasy !
When shall we meet again ?—Don Carlos then
led Leonora forth.

Alon. O ! O ! my heart !—[He sinks on to a sofa.]

Zan. [Aside.] Groan on, and with the sound re-
fresh my soul !—

'Tis through his brain, his eyeballs roll in anguish.—
My lord, my lord, why will you rack me thus ?

[Goes to the sofa, and raises ALONSO.]

Speak to me, let me know that you still live :—
I'm your own Zanga,

So lov'd, so cherish'd, and so faithful to you.

Alon. O she was all !

My fame, my friendship, and my love of arms,
All stoop'd to her ; my blood was her possession ;
Deep in the secret foldings of my heart
She liv'd with life, and far the dearer she.
To think on't 'tis the torment of the damn'd,
And not to think on't 'tis impossible.

How fair the cheek that first alarm'd my soul !

How bright the eye that set it on a flame !

How soft the breast on which I laid my peace

For years to slumber, unawak'd by care !

How fierce the transport ! how sublime the bliss !

How deep, how black, the horror and despair

Zan. You said, you'd bear it like a man.

Alon. I do :

Am I not most distracted ?

Zan. Pray, be calm.

Alon. As hurricanes,—be thou assur'd of that.

Zan. Is this the wise Alonso ?

Alon. Villain, no ;

He died in the arbour, he was murder'd there :

I am his demon though.—My wife !—My wife !

Zan. [Aside.] He weeps, he weeps.

Alon. [Seizes him.] O villain, most accurs'd !

If thou didst know it, why didst let me wed ?

Zan. Hear me, my lord, your anger will abate.

I knew it not : I saw them in the garden ;

But saw no more than you might well expect

To see in lovers destin'd for each other.

By Heaven, I thought their meeting innocent :

Who could suspect fair Leonora's virtue,

Till after-proofs conspir'd to blacken it ;

Sad proofs ! which came too late, which broke not
out,—

Eternal curses on Alvarez' haste !—

Till holy rites had made the wanton yours :

And then, I own, I labour'd to conceal it,

In duty and compassion to your peace.

Alon. Live now ;—be damn'd hereafter ;—for I
want thee.—

O night of ecstasy !—Ha ! was't not so ?—

I will enjoy this murder.—Let me think,—

The jasmine bower ;—'tis secret and remote ;—

Go, wait me there :—and take thy dagger with
thee. [Exit ZANGA.]

How the sweet sound still sings within my ear !

When shall we meet again ? To-night, in hell.—

Enter LEONORA.

Ha ! I'm surpris'd,—I stagger at her charms.

Leon. My lord, excuse me : See, a second time

I come in embassy from all your friends,

Whose joys are languid, uninspir'd by you.

Alon. This moment, Leonora, I was coming

To thee, and all.—But, sure, or I mistake,

Or thou canst well inspire my friends with joy.

Leon. Why sighs my lord ?

Alon. I sigh'd not, Leonora.

Leon. I thought you did : Your sighs are mine,
my lord,

And I shall feel them all.

Alon. Dost flatter me ?

Leon. If my regards for you are flattery,
Full far indeed I stretch'd the compliment
In this day's solemn rite.

Alon. What rite ?

Leon. You sport me.

Alon. Indeed, I do ; my heart is full of mirth.

Leon. And so is mine :—I look on cheerfulness,
As on the health of virtue.

Alon. Virtue !—Damn—

Leon. What says my lord ?

Alon. Thou art exceeding fair.

Leon. Beauty alone is but of little worth

But when the soul and body, of a piece,

Both shine alike, then they obtain a price,

And are a fit reward for gallant actions,
Heaven's pay on earth for such great souls as
yours ;—

If fair and innocent, I am your due.

Alon. [Aside.] Innocent !

Leon. How !—My lord, I interrupt you. [Going.]

Alon. [*Holds her.*] No, my best life, I must not part with thee;—

This hand is mine: O, what a hand is here!
So soft, souls sink into it and are lost!

Leon. In tears, my lord?

Alon. What less can speak my joy?—

[*Starts from her.*]

O, I could gaze upon thy looks for ever,
And drink in all my being from thine eyes!
And I could snatch a flaming thunderbolt,
And hurl destruction—

Leon. My lord, you fright me.

Is this the fondness of your nuptial hour?—

[*Approaches him:—he turns from her.*]

Why, when I woo your hand, is it denied me?
Your very eyes, why are they taught to shun me?
Acquaint me with the secret of your heart,
That heart, which I have purchas'd with my own;
Lay it before me then, it is my due:
Unkind Alonso!—though I might demand it,
Behold, I kneel: See, Leonora kneels;
The bride foregoes the homage of her day,
And deigns to be a beggar for her own!

[*She catches hold of him.*]

Speak then, I charge you, speak; or I expire,
And load you with my death. My lord!—my lord!

Alon. Ha! ha! ha!

[*He breaks from her, and throws himself into a chair at the back of the stage; LEONORA sinks upon the floor.*]

Leon. [*Rising.*] Are these the joys which fondly I conceiv'd?

And is it thus a wedded life begins?
What did I part with when I gave my heart?
The maid that loves,
Goes out to sea upon a shatter'd plank,
And puts her trust in miracles for safety.
Where shall I sigh? Where pour out my complaints?

He that should hear, should succour, should redress,
He is the source of all.

Alon. [*Advances.*] Go to thy chamber:

I soon will follow: that which now disturbs thee
Shall be clear'd up, and thou shalt not condemn me.

[*Exit LEONORA.*]

O, how like innocence she looks!—What! stab her,
And rush into her blood!—I never can.

Mine is the guilt,—mine,—to supplant my friend:
How then? Why thus: No more; it is determin'd.

Enter ZANGA.

Zan. [*Aside.*] I fear'd his heart would fail him:
—She must die.—

Can I not rouse the snake that's in his bosom,
To sting out human nature, and effect it?

Alon. This vast and solid earth, that blazing sun,
Those skies through which it rolls, must all have end:

What then is man? the smallest part of nothing.
Day buries day, month month, and year the year;
Our life is but a chain of many deaths:

Can then death's self be fear'd? Our life, much rather:

Life is the desert, life the solitude;

Death joins us to the great majority;

'Tis to be born to Platos and to Casars,

'Tis to be great for ever:

'Tis pleasure, 'tis ambition, then, to die.

Zan. [*Advances.*] I think, my lord,—you tal'd of death?

Alon. I did.

Zan. I give you joy,—then Leonora's dead?

Alon. No, Zanga, no; the greatest guilt is mine,
Who might have mark'd his tameness to resign her,
Who might have mark'd her sudden turn of love;
These, and a thousand tokens more; and yet,
For which the saints absolve my soul, did wed
Zan. Whither tends this?

Alon. To shed a woman's blood,
Would stain my sword, and make my wars inglorious;

But just resentment to myself bears in it
A stamp of greatness above vulgar minds:
He who, superior to the checks of nature,
Dares make his life the victim of his reason,
Does in some sort that reason deify,
And take a flight at heaven.

Zan. Alas, my lord!

'Tis not your reason, but her beauty finds
Those arguments, and throws you on your sword.
You cannot close an eye that is so bright,
You cannot strike a breast that is so soft,
That has ten thousand ecstasies in store
For Carlos—No, my lord;—I mean for you.

Alon. O, through my heart and marrow!—Pr'y—thee, spare me;

Nor more upbraid the weakness of thy lord:
I own, I tried—I quarrell'd with my heart,
And push'd it on, and bade it give her death:
But—O!—her eyes struck first, and murder'd me.

Zan. I know not what to answer to my lord:
Men are but men:

Farewell then, my best lord! since you must die.
Oh, that I were to share your monument,
And in eternal darkness close these eyes
Against those scenes which I am doom'd to suffer!

Alon. What dost thou mean?

Zan. And is it then unknown?

Sure, you distrust that ardent love I bear you;
Else could you doubt, when you are laid in dust,
But it will cut my poor heart through and through,
To see those revel on your sacred tomb,
Who brought you thither by their lawless loves?
For there they'll revel; and exult to find
Him sleep so fast, who else would mar their joys.

Alon. Distraction!—But Don Carlos, well thou know'st,

Is sheath'd in steel, and bent on other thoughts.

Zan. Yes, till the fever of his blood returns;
While her last kiss still glows upon his cheek;
But when he finds Alonso is no more,
How will he rush like lightning to her arms!
There sigh, there languish, there pour out his soul!
But not in grief:—Sad obsequies to thee!
But thou wilt be at peace: nor see, nor hear,
The burning kiss, the sigh of ecstasy,
Their throbbing hearts that jostle one another:
Thank Heaven, these torments will be all my own!

Alon. I'll ease thee of that pain. Let Carlos die:
O'ertake him on the road, and see it done:
'Tis my command. [*Gives his signet.*]

Zan. I dare not disobey.

Alon. My Zanga, now I have thy leave to die.

Zan. Ah, sir, think, think again:—Are all men buried

In Carlos' grave?—You know not womankind:

When once the throbbing of the heart has broke

The modest zone with which it first was tied,

Each man she meets will be a Carlos to her.

Alon. That thought has more of hell than had the former:

Another, and another, and another!

And each shall cast a smile upon my tomb!

I am convinc'd; I must not, will not die.

Zan. You cannot die : nor can you murder her :
What then remains ? In nature no third way,
But to forget,—and, so, to love again.

Alon. Oh !

Zan. If you forgive, the world will call you—
good ;

If you forget, the world will call you—wise ;
If you receive her to your grace again,
The world will call you—very, very kind.

Alon. Zanga, I understand thee well :—She dies,
Though my arm tremble at the stroke,—she dies.

Zan. That's truly great. What, think you, 'twas
set up

The Greek and Roman name in such a lustre,
But doing right in stern despite to nature ;
Shutting their ears to all her little cries,
When great, august, and godlike justice call'd ?
At Aulis one pour'd out a daughter's life,
And gain'd more glory than by all his wars ;
Another slew a sister in just rage ;
A third—the theme of all succeeding times !
Gave to the cruel axe a darling son :
Nay more, for justice some devote themselves,
As he at Carthage ;—an immortal name !
Yet there is one step left above them all,
Above their history, above their fable ;
A wife, bride, mistress, unenjoy'd :—Do that,
And tread upon the Greek and Roman glory.

Alon. 'Tis done—again ? new transports fire
my brain !

I had forgot it, 'tis my bridal night.
Friend, give me joy ; we must be gay together :
See that the festival be duly honour'd.
And when with garlands the full bowl is crown'd,
And music gives her elevating sound,
And golden carpets spread the sacred floor,
And a new day the blazing tapers pour,
Thou, Zanga, thou my solemn friends invite
From the dark realms of everlasting night ;
Call Vengeance, call the Furies, call Despair :
And Death, our chief invited guest, be there !
He with pale hand shall lead the bride, and spread
Eternal curtains round our nuptial bed. [Exeunt.]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Gallery in the Palace.

Enter ALONSO and ZANGA.

Alon. Is Carlos murder'd ?

Zan. I obey'd your order :

Six ruffians overtook him on the road ;
He fought as he was wont, and four he slew ;
Then sunk beneath an hundred wounds to death.
His last breath blest Alonzo, and desir'd
His bones might rest near yours.

Alon. O Zanga ! Zanga !

But I'll not think : it is a day of darkness,
Of contradictions, and of many deaths.
Where's Leonora then ? Quick, answer me :
I'm deep in horrors ; I'll be deeper still.
I find, thy artifice did take effect ;
And she forgives my late deportment to her.

Zan. I told her, from your childhood you were
wont,

On any great surprise, but chiefly then
When cause of sorrow bore it company,
To have your passion shake the seat of reason ;

A momentary ill, which soon blew o'er :
Then did I tell her of Don Carlos' death,
Closely suppressing by what means he fell,
And laid the blame on that : at first, she doubted :
But such the honest artifice I used,
That she, at length, was fully satisfied.
But what design you, sir, and how ?

Alon. I'll tell thee.

Thus I've ordain'd it : In the jasmine bower,
The place which she dishonour'd with her guilt,
There will I meet her : the appointment's made,
And calmly spread, for I can do it now,
The blackness of her crime before her sight,
And then, with all the cool solemnity
Of public justice, give her to the grave.

[Exit ALONSO.]

Zan. Why, get thee gone : horror and night go
with thee !

Sisters of Acheron go hand in hand,
Go dance around the bower, and close them in ;
And tell them that I sent you to salute them !
Profane the ground, and for the ambrosial rose
And breath of jessamine, let hemlock blacken
And deadly-nightshade poison all the air !
For the sweet nightingale—may ravens croak,
Toads pant, and adders rustle through the leaves !
May serpents, winding up the trees, let fall
Their hissing necks upon them from above,
And mingle kisses—such as I would give them !

[Exit.]

SCENE II.—A Bower in the Palace Garden. LEONORA discovered sleeping in the Bower.

Enter ALONSO.

Alon. Ye amaranths, ye roses like the morn,
Sweet myrtles, and ye golden orange groves,
Are you not blasted as I enter in ?
Joy-giving, love-inspiring, holy bower,
Know, in thy fragrant bosom thou receiv'st—
A murderer.— [He advances.]

Ha ! she sleeps :

The day's uncommon heat has overcome her.
Then take, my longing eyes, your last full gaze.
O, what a sight is here ! How dreadful fair !
Who would not think that being innocent ?
O my distracted heart !—O cruel Heaven !
To give such charms as those, and then call man,
Mere man, to be your executioner !
But see, she smiles :—I never shall smile more !—
It strongly tempts me to a parting kiss.

[Going towards her :—he starts back.]
Ha ! smile again ! She dreams of him she loves.
Curse on her charms ! I'll stab her through them all.

[As he is going to strike, she awakes.]

Leon. My lord, your stay was long ; and yonder
lull

Of falling water tempted me to rest,
Dispirited with noon's excessive heat.

Alon. Ye powers, with what an eye she mends
the day !

While they were closed, I should have given the
blow.

Leon. [Rises.] What says my lord ?

Alon. Why, this Alonso says :

If love were endless, men were gods : 'tis that
Does counterbalance travail, danger, pain ;
'Tis Heaven's expedient to make mortals bear
The light, and cheat them of the peaceful grave.

Leon. Alas ! my lord, why talk you of the grave ?
Your friend is dead : in friendship you sustain
A mighty loss ; repair it with my love.

Alon. Thy love? Thou piece of witchcraft—I would say,
Thou brightest angel,—I could gaze for ever.
Where hadst thou this,—enchantress, tell me,
where,—

Which with a touch works miracles, boils up
My blood to tumult, and turns round my brain?
But O, those eyes! those murderers! O whence,
Whence didst thou steal their burning orbs? From
heaven?

Thou didst, and 'tis religion to adore them.

Leon. My best Alonso, moderate your thought:
Extremes still fright me, though of love itself.

Alon. Extremes indeed! It hurried me away;
But I come home again:—And now for justice:—
And now for death. [Draws his dagger.

Enter ZANGA,

It is impossible. [Drops the dagger.
I leave her to just Heaven. [Exit ALONSO.

Leon. [Takes up the dagger.] Ha! a dagger.

Zan. With her hand, which held the steel in
vain!

That dagger found, will cause her to inquire,—
What can be done?—That's something still:—If
not,—

'Tis all I can; it shall be so.

Leon. O Zanga, I am sinking in my fears:

Alonso dropt this dagger as he left me,

And left me in a strange disorder too.

What can this mean! Angels preserve his life!

Zan. Yours, madam, yours!

Leon. What, Zanga, dost thou say?

Zan. Carry your goodness then to such extremes,

So blinded to the faults of him you love,

That you perceive not he is jealous?

Leon. Heavens!—

And yet a thousand things recur that swear it.

Jealous! It sickens at my heart. Unkind,

Ungenerous, groundless, weak, and insolent!

Why? wherefore? on what shadow of occasion?

O, how the great man lessens to my thought!

How could so mean a vice as jealousy

Live in a throng of such exalted virtues?—

I scorn and hate,—yet love him and adore.

I cannot, will not, dare not think it true,

'Till from himself I know it. [Exit LEONORA.

Zan. This succeeds

Just to my wish:—Now she with violence

Upbraids him; he, not doubting she is guilty,

Rages no less; and, if on either side

The waves run high, there still lives hope of ruin.

Enter ALONSO.

My lord,—

Alon. O Zanga, hold thy peace! I am no coward:

But Heaven itself did hold my hand; I felt it;

By the well-being of my soul, I did:

I'll think of vengeance at another season.

Zan. My lord, her guilt—

Alon. Perdition on thee, Moor,

For that one word!—I love her to distraction:—

If 'tis my shame, why, be it so:—I love her;

Nor can I help it; 'tis impos'd upon me

By some superior and resistless power:

I could not hurt her, to be lord of earth;

It shocks my nature like a stroke at heaven.

But see, my Leonora comes!—Begone.

[Exit ZANGA.

Enter LEONORA, with ALONSO's dagger.

O, seen for ever, yet for ever new,

The conquer'd thou dost conquer o'er again,
Inflicting wound on wound!

Leon. Alas! my lord,

What need of this to me?

Alon. Ha! dost thou weep?

Leon. Have I no cause?

Alon. If love is thy concern,

Thou hast no cause: none ever lov'd like me:

Oh, that this one embrace would last for ever!

Leon. These tears declare how much I taste the
joy

Of being folded in your arms and heart;

My universe does lie within that space:—

This dagger bore false witness.

Alon. Ha! my dagger?—

It rouses horrid images:—Away,
Away with it; and let us talk of love.

Leon. It touches you.

Alon. Let us talk of love.

Leon. Of death.

Alon. As thou lov'st happiness,—

Leon. Of murder.

Alon. Then must I fly, for thy sake and my own.

Leon. [Holding him.] Nay, by my injuries, you
first must hear me!

Alon. Yet, yet dismiss me; I am all in flames.

Leon. Who has most cause? You or myself?

What act

Of my whole life encourag'd you to this?

Or of your own, what guilt has drawn it on you?

You find me kind, and think me kind to all:

The weak, ungenerous error of your sex!

He that can stoop to harbour such a thought,

Deserves to find it true.

Alon. O sex, sex, sex!

The language of you all!—Ill-fated woman!

Why wilt thou force me back into the gulf

Of agonies, I had block'd up from thought?

But, since thou hast replung'd me in my torture,

I will be satisfied:—Confess, confess,—

Where did I find this picture?

Leon. Ha! Don Carlos?

By my best hopes, more welcome than thy own.

Alon. I know it: but is vice so very rank,

That thou should'st dare to dash it in my face?

Nature is sick of thee, abandoned woman!

Leon. Repent.

Alon. Is that for me?

Leon. Fall, ask my pardon.

Alon. Astonishment!

Leon. Dar'st thou persist to think I am dishonest?

Alon. I know thee so.

Leon. This blow then to thy heart!—

[She stabs herself.

Alon. Ho! Zanga! Isabella! Ho!—She
bleeds:—

Descend, ye blessed angels, to assist her!

Leon. This is the only way I would wound thee,
Though most unjust:—now, think me guilty still.

Enter ISABELLA.

Alon. Bear her to instant help. The world to
save her!

Leon. [Supported by ISABELLA.] Unhappy man

Well may'st thou gaze and tremble:

But fix thy terror and amazement right;

Not on my blood, but on thy own distraction.

What hast thou done? Whom censur'd?—Leonora

When thou had'st censur'd, thou would'st save her
life!

O inconsistent!—Should I live in shame?

Or stoop to any other means but this,

To assert my virtue? No: she who disputes,
Admits it possible she might be guilty.
While aught but truth could be my inducement to
it,

While it might look like an excuse to thee,
I scorn'd to vindicate my innocence:
But now, I let thy rashness know, the wound
Which least I feel, is that my dagger made.

[Exit LEONORA, in the arms of ISABELLA.]

Alon. Ha! Was this woman guilty? And if not,—
How my thought darkens that way! Grant, kind
Heaven,

That she prove guilty, or give being end.
Is that my hope then?
Is it in man the sore distress to bear,
When hope itself is blacken'd to despair!
When all the bliss I pant for is to gain
In hell a refuge from severer pain! [Exit.]

Enter ZANGA.

Zan. How stands the great account 'twixt me
and vengeance?

Though much is paid, yet still it owes me much;
And I will not abate a single groan.—
Ha! That were well:—but that were fatal too:—
Why, be it so:—Revenge, so truly great,
Would come too cheap, if bought with less than
life.

Come death, come hell, then! 'tis resolv'd, 'tis
done.

Enter ISABELLA.

Isa. Ah! Zanga, see me tremble:—Has not yet
Thy cruel heart its fill?—Poor Leonora—

Zan. Welters in blood, and gasps for her last
breath:—

What then? We all must die.

Isa. Alonso raves;
And, in the tempest of his grief, has thrice
Attempted on his life: At length, disarm'd,
He calls his friends, that save him, his worst foes,
And importunes the skies for swift perdition:—
After pause,

He started up and call'd aloud for Zanga,
For Zanga rav'd; and see, he seeks you here,
To learn that truth which most he dreads to know.

Zan. Begone. [Exit ISABELLA.]
Now, now, my soul, consummate all!

Enter ALONSO.

Alon. O Zanga! [Falls on ZANGA.]

Zan. Do not tremble so; but speak.

Alon. I dare not.

Zan. You will drown me with your tears.

Alon. Have I not cause?

Zan. As yet you have no cause.

Alon. Dost thou too rave?

Zan. Your anguish is to come:
You much have been abus'd.

Alon. Abus'd! By whom?

Zan. To know, were little comfort.

Alon. O! 'twere much.

Zan. Indeed?

Alon. By Heaven:—O give him to my fury!

Zan. Born for your use, I live but to oblige you:—
Know then, 'twas I.

Alon. Am I awake?

Zan. For ever:—

Thy wife is guiltless; that's one transport to me;
And I, I let thee know it; that's another:—
I urg'd Don Carlos to resign his mistress;

I forg'd the letter; I dispos'd the picture;—
I hated, I despis'd, and I destroy.

Alon. Oh!— [Swoons, and falls to the earth.]

Zan. Why, this is well:—why, this is blow for
blow!

Where are you? Crown me, shadow me with laurels,
Ye spirits, which delight in just revenge!
Let Europe and her pallid sons go weep,
Let Africa and her hundred thrones rejoice.
O my dear countrymen, look down and see
How I bestride your prostrate conqueror!

[Stands over ALONSO.]

I tread on haughty Spain, and all her kings.
But this is mercy, this is my indulgence,
'Tis peace, 'tis refuge from my indignation:
I must awake him into horrors.—Hoe!
Alonso,—hoe! the Moor is at the gate:
Awake,—invincible, omnipotent!—
Thou who dost all subdue.

Alon. Inhuman slave!

[Raising himself on his knee.]

Zan. Fallen Christian, thou mistak'st my cha-
racter.

Look on me. Whom am I? I know, thou say'st,
The Moor, a slave, an abject beaten slave:—
Eternal woes to him that made me so!—
But, look again: Have six years' cruel bondage
Extinguish'd majesty so far, that nought
Shines here, to give an awe of one above thee?
When the great Moorish king Abdallah fell,
Fell by thy hand accurst, I fought fast by him,
His son, though through his fondness in disguise,
Less to expose me to the ambitious foe!—

[Alonso starts up from the ground.]

Ha! does it rouse thee?—O'er my father's corse
I stood astride, till I had clove thy crest;
I then was made the captive of a squadron,
And sunk into thy servant:—But, O!—what,
What were my wages?—Hear nor heaven nor
earth!—

My wages were a blow,—by Heaven, a blow!—
And from a mortal hand.

Alon. O villain! villain!

[Rushing towards ZANGA.]

Zan. All strife is vain.

[Draws a dagger.]

Alon. Is thus my love return'd? [Starts back.]
Is this my recompense? Make friends of tigers!

Lay not your young, O mothers, on the breast,
For fear they turn to serpents as they lie,
And pay you for their nourishment with death.
Carlos is dead, and Leonora dying:
Both innocent, both murder'd, both by me!—
O shame! O guilt! O horror! O remorse!
O punishment! Had Satan never fallen,
Hell had been made for me. O Leonora!
Leonora! Leonora!

Zan. Must I despise thee too, as well as hate
thee?

Complain of grief? Complain, thou art a man.
Priam from fortune's lofty summit fell;
Great Alexander 'midst his conquests mourn'd;
Heroes and demigods have known their sorrows;
Cæsars have wept; and I have had my blow.
But 'tis reveng'd, and now my work is done.
Yet ere I fall, be it one part of vengeance,
To make even thee confess that I am just.
Thou seest a prince, whose father thou hast slain,
Whose native country thou hast laid in blood,
Whose sacred person,—Oh!—thou hast profan'd,
Whose reign extinguish'd: What was left to me,
So highly born? No kingdom, but revenge;
No treasure, but thy tortures and thy groans.

If cold white mortals censure this great deed,
Warn them, they judge not of superior beings,
Souls made of fire, and children of the sun,
With whom *Revenge* is *Virtue*. Fare thee well!
Now, fully satisfied, I should take leave.
But one thing grieves me; since thy death is near,
I leave thee my example how to die.

[*As he is going to stab himself, ALONSO rushes on him, and wrests his dagger from him:— at this moment,—*

Enter ALVAREZ, with ALONSO's eight Attendants.
The Attendants seize ZANGA. ALONSO puts ZANGA's dagger in his bosom.

Alon. No, monster,—thou shalt not escape by death.

My father,——

Alv. O Alonso!—Isabella,
Touch'd with remorse to see her mistress' pangs,
Told all the dreadful tale.

Alon. What groan was that?

Zan. As I have been a vulture to thy heart,
So will I be a raven to thine ear,—

MANUEL enters, and whispers ALVAREZ.

And true as ever snuff'd the scent of blood,
As ever flap its heavy wing against
The window of the sick, and croak'd despair:
Thy wife is dead.

Alv. The dreadful news is true.

Alon. Prepare the rack: invent new torments for him.

Zan. This too is well: Thy fix'd and noble mind
Turns all occurrence to its own advantage,
And I'll make vengeance of calamity.
Were I not thus reduc'd, thou would'st not know
That, thus reduced, I dare defy thee still.
Torture thou may'st, but thou shalt ne'er despise me.

The blood will follow where the knife is driven,
The flesh will quiver where the pincers tear,
And sighs and cries by nature grow on pain:
But these are foreign to the soul: not mine
The groans that issue, nor the tears that fall:

They disobey me: On the rack I scorn thee,
As when my falchion clove thy helm in battle.

Alv. Peace, villain!

Zan. While I live, old man, I'll speak:—
And well I know, thou dar'st not kill me yet:
For that would rob thy bloodhounds of their prey.

Alon. Who call'd Alonso?

Again?—'Tis Carlos' voice, and I obey.
O, how I laugh at all that this can do!

[*Stabs himself.*

The wounds that pain'd, the wounds that murder'd me,

Were given before; I am already dead,
This only marks my body for the grave.

Afric, thou art reveng'd.—O Leonora!— [*Dies.*

Zan. Good ruffians, give me leave;—My blood is yours,

The wheel's prepar'd, and you shall have it all:

Let me but look one moment on the dead,

And pay yourselves with gazing on my pangs.

[*Attendants loose ZANGA: he goes to ALONSO's body.*

Is this Alonso? Where's his haughty mien?

[*Stoops, and takes his hand.*

Is that the hand which smote me? Heavens, how pale!

And art thou dead? So is my enmity: [*Rises.*

I war not with the dust: The great, the proud,

The conqueror of Afric was my foe:

A lion preys not upon carcases.

This was thy only method to subdue me.

Terror and doubt fall on me; all thy good

Now blazes, all thy guilt is in the grave.

Never had man such funeral applause;

If I lament thee, sure thy worth was great.

O vengeance, I have follow'd thee too far,

And, to receive me, hell blows all her fires.

[ZANGA rushes out, followed by four of the Attendants.

Alv. Dreadful effect of jealousy: a rage

In which the wise with caution will engage,

Reluctant long, and tardy to believe,

Where sway'd by nature we ourselves deceive,—

Where our own folly joins the villain's art,

And each man finds a Zanga in his heart.

THE GAMESTER.

A TRAGEDY.

BY EDWARD MOORE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

BEVERLEY.

LEWSON.

STUKELY.

JARVIS.

BATES.

DAWSON.

Waiter.

Mrs. BEVERLEY.

CHARLOTTE.

LUCY.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—Beverley's Lodgings.

Enter Mrs. BEVERLEY, followed by CHARLOTTE.

Mrs. B. Be comforted, my dear, all may be well yet. And now, methinks, the lodging begins to look with another face. Oh, sister, sister, if these were all my hardships: if all I had to complain of were no more than quitting my house, servants, equipage, and show, your pity would be weakness.

Cha. Is poverty nothing, then?

Mrs. B. Nothing in the world, if it affected only me. While we had a fortune, I was the happiest of the rich; and now 'tis gone, give me but a bare subsistence, and my husband's smiles, and I'll be the happiest of the poor. To me, now, these lodgings want nothing but their master!—Why do you look so at me?

Cha. That I may hate my brother.

Mrs. B. Don't talk so, Charlotte.

Cha. Has he not undone you?—Oh, this pernicious vice of gaming! But methinks his usual hours of four or five in the morning might have contented him; 'twas misery enough to wake for him till then. Need he have stayed out all night?—I shall learn to detest him.

Mrs. B. Not for the first fault. He never slept from me before.

Cha. Slept from you! No, no, his nights have nothing to do with sleep. How has this one vice driven him from every virtue! Nay, from his affections too! The time was, sister—

Mrs. B. And is. I have no fear of his affections. Would I knew that he were safe!

Cha. From ruin and his companions. But that's impossible. His poor little boy, too! What must become of him?

Mrs. B. Why, want shall teach him industry.—From his father's mistakes he shall learn prudence, and from his mother's resignation, patience. Poverty has no such terrors in it as you imagine. There's no condition of life, sickness and pain excepted, where happiness is excluded. The husbandman, who rises early to his labour, enjoys more welcome rest at night for't. His bread is sweeter to him; his home happier; his family dearer; his enjoyments surer. The sun that rouses him in the morning, sets in the evening to release him. All situations have their comforts, if sweet contentment dwell in the heart. But my poor Beverley has none. The thought of having ruined those he loves, is misery for ever to him. Would I could ease his mind of that!

Cha. If he alone were ruined, 'twere just he should be punished. He is my brother, 'tis true; but when I think of what he has done, of the fortune you brought him, of his own large estate too, squandered away upon this vilest of passions, and among the vilest of wretches! Oh, I have no patience! My own little fortune is untouched, he says. Would I were sure on't!

Mrs. B. And so you may—'twould be a sin to doubt it.

Cha. I will be sure on't—'twas madness in me to give it to his management. But I'll demand it from him this morning. I have a melancholy occasion for it.

Mrs. B. What occasion?

Cha. To support a sister.

[*Takes her hand.*]

Mrs. B. No; I have no need on't. Take it, and reward a lover with it. The generous Lewson deserves much more. Why won't you make him happy!

Cha. Because my sister's miserable.

Mrs. B. You must not think so. I have my jewels left yet. And when all's gone, these hands

shall toil for our support. The poor should be industrious. Why those tears, Charlotte.

Cha. They flow in pity for you.

Mrs. B. All may be well yet. When he has nothing to lose, I shall fether him in these arms again; and then what is it to be poor?

Cha. Cure him but of this destructive passion, and my uncle's death may retrieve all yet.

Mrs. B. Ay, Charlotte, could we cure him! But the disease of play admits no cure but poverty; and the loss of another fortune would but increase his shame and his affliction. Will Mr. Lewson call this morning?

Cha. He said so last night. He gave me hints, too, that he had suspicions of our friend Stukely.

Mrs. B. Not of treachery to my husband? That he loves play, I know, but surely he's honest.

Cha. He would fain be thought so; therefore I doubt him. Honesty needs no pains to set itself off.

Enter Lucy.

Lucy. Your old steward, madam. I had not the heart to deny him admittance, the good old man begg'd so hard for't.

[Exit Lucy.]

Enter JARVIS.

Mrs. B. Is this well, Jarvis? I desired you to avoid me.

Jar. Did you, madam? I am an old man, and had forgot. Perhaps, too, you forbade my t-rans; but I am old, madam, and age will be forgetful.

Mrs. B. The faithful creature! how he moves me!

[To CHARLOTTE.]

Jar. I have forgot those apartments too. I remember none such in my young master's house; and yet I have lived in't these five-and-twenty years. His good father would not have dismissed me.

Mrs. B. He had no reason, Jarvis.

Jar. I was faithful to him while he lived, and when he died he bequeathed me to his son. I have been faithful to him too.

Mrs. B. I know it, Jarvis, I know it.

Jar. I am an old man, madam, and have not a long time to live. I asked but to have died with him, and he dismissed me.

Mrs. B. Pr'ythee no more of this! *[Weeping.]* 'Twas his poverty that dismissed you.

Jar. Is he indeed so poor then? Oh! he was the joy of my old heart. But must his creditors have all? And have they sold his house too? His father built it when he was but a prating boy. The times that I have carried him in these arms! And, Jarvis, says he, when a beggar has asked charity of me, why should people be poor? You shan't be poor, Jarvis; if I were a king, nobody should be poor. Yet he is poor. And then he was so brave! Oh, he was a brave little boy. And yet so merciful, he'd not have hurt the guat that stung him.

Mrs. B. Speak to him, Charlotte, for I cannot.

Jar. I have a little money, madam; it might have been more, but I have loved the poor. All that I have is yours.

Mrs. B. No, Jarvis; we have enough yet. I thank you though, and will deserve your goodness.

Jar. But shall I see my master? And will he let me attend him in his distresses? I'll be no expense to him; and 'twill kill me to be refused.—Where is he, madam?

Mrs. B. Not at home, Jarvis. You shall see him another time.

[Retires, and sits.]

ACT. DRAMA.—NO. XIX.

Cha. To-morrow, or the next day.—Oh, Jarvis! what a change is here!

[Apart to JARVIS.]

Jar. A change indeed, madam! my old heart aches at it. And yet, methinks—But here's somebody coming.

[Retires.]

Enter LUCY, with STUKELY.

Lucy. Mr. Stukely, madam.

[Exit.]

Stu. Good morning to you, ladies. Mr. Jarvis, your servant. Where's my friend, madam?

[To Mrs. BEVERLEY, who rises, and advances.]

Mrs. B. I should have asked that question of you. Have you seen him to-day?

Stu. No, madam.

Cha. Not last night?

Stu. Last night! Did he not come home, then?

Mrs. B. No.—Were you not together.

Stu. At the beginning of the evening, but not since. Where can he have stayed?

Cha. You call yourself his friend, sir, why do you encourage him in this madness of gaming?

Stu. You have asked me that question before, madam; and I told you my concern was, that I could not save him: Mr. Beverley is a man, madam; and if the most friendly entreaties have no effect upon him, I have no other means. My purse has been his, even to the injury of my fortune. If that has been encouragement, I deserve censure; but I meant it to retrieve him.

Mrs. B. I don't doubt it, sir, and I thank you. But where did you leave him last night?

Stu. At Wilson's, madam, if I ought to tell, in company I did not like. Possibly he may be there still. Mr. Jarvis knows the house, I believe.

Jar. *[Coming forward.]* Shall I go, madam?

Mrs. B. No; he may take it ill.

Cha. He may go as from himself.

Stu. And, if he pleases, madam, without naming me. I am faulty myself, and should conceal the errors of a friend. But I can refuse nothing here.

[Bowling to the Ladies.]

Jar. I would fain see him, methinks.

Mrs. B. Do so, then; but take care how you upbraid him—I have never upbraided him.

Jar. Would I could bring him comfort! *[Exit.]*

Stu. Don't be too much alarmed, madam. All men have their errors, and their times of seeing them. Perhaps my friend's time is not come yet. But he has an uncle; and old men don't live for ever. You should look forward, madam: we are taught how to value a second fortune by the loss of a first.

[Knocking.]

Mrs. B. Hark! No—that knocking was too rude for Mr. Beverley. Pray Heaven he be well!

Stu. Never doubt it, madam. You shall be well too. Everything shall be well. *[Knocking again.]*

Mrs. B. The knocking is a little loud, though.—Who waits there? Will none of you answer? None of you, did I say? Alas, what was I thinking of! I had forgot myself. *[Retires, weeping—sits.]*

Cha. I'll go, sister—But don't be alarmed so.

[Exit.]

Stu. *[Goes to Mrs. B.]* What extraordinary accident have you to fear, madam?

Mrs. B. *[Rising, and advancing.]* I beg your pardon; but 'tis ever thus with me in Mr. Beverley's absence. No one knocks at the door, but I fancy it is a messenger of ill news.

Stu. You are too fearful, madam; 'twas but one night of absence; and if ill thoughts intrude (as love is always doubtful), think of your worth and beauty, and drive them from your breast.

U

Mrs. B. What thoughts? I have no thoughts that wrong my husband.

Stu. Such thoughts indeed would wrong him. The world is full of slander; and every wretch that knows himself unjust charges his neighbour with like passions, and by the general frailty hides his own—If you are wise, and would be happy, turn a deaf ear to such reports. 'Tis ruin to believe them.

Mrs. B. Ay, worse than ruin. 'Twould be to sin against conviction. Why was it mentioned?

Stu. To guard you against rumour. The sport of hal mankind is mischief; and for a single error they make men devils. If their tales reach you, disbelieve them.

Mrs. B. What tales? What told? By whom? I have heard nothing—or, if I had, with all his errors, my Beverley's firm faith admits no doubt—It is my safety, my seat of rest and joy, while the storm threatens round me. I'll not forsake it. [Stukely sighs, and looks down.] Why turn you, sir, away? and why that sigh?

Stu. I was attentive, madam; and sighs will come, we know not why. Perhaps I have been too busy—If it should seem so, impute my zeal to friendship, that meant to guard you against evil tongues. Your Beverley is wronged, slandered most vilely—My life upon his truth.

Mrs. B. And mine too. Who is't that doubts it? But no matter—I am prepared, sir—Yet why this caution?—You are my husband's friend; I think you mine too; the common friend of both. [Pauses.] I had been unconcerned else.

Stu. For Heaven's sake, madam, be so still! I meant to guard you against suspicion, not to alarm it.

Mrs. B. Nor have you, sir. Who told you of suspicion? I have a heart it cannot reach.

Stu. Then I am happy—I would say more—but am prevented.

Enter CHARLOTTE.

Cha. What a heart has that Jarvis! A creditor, sister. But the good old man has taken him away—"Don't distress his wife—Don't distress his sister," I could hear him say. "'Tis cruel to distress the afflicted"—And when he saw me at the door, he begged pardon that his friend had knocked so loud.

Stu. I wish I had known of this. Was it a large demand, madam?

Cha. I heard not that; but visits such as these we must expect often—Why so distressed, sister? This is no new affliction.

Mrs. B. No, Charlotte; but I am faint with watching—quite sunk and spiritless—Will you excuse me, sir? I'll to my chamber, and try to rest a little. [Exit.]

Stu. Good thoughts go with you, madam. My bait is taken then. [Aside.]—Poor Mrs. Beverley! How my heart grieves to see her thus!

Cha. Cure her, and be a friend then.

Stu. How cure her, madam?

Cha. Reclaim my brother.

Stu. Ay, give him a new creation, or breathe another soul into him. I'll think on't, madam. Advice, I see, is thankless.

Cha. Useless I am sure it is, if, through mistaken friendship, or other motives, you feed his passion with your purse, and sooth it by example. Physicians, to cure fevers, keep from the patient's thirsty lip the cup that would inflame him. You

give it to his hands. [A knocking.] Hark, sir!—These are my brother's desperate symptoms—Another creditor!

Stu. One not so easily got rid of—What, Lewson!—

Enter LEWSON.

Lew. Madam, your servant—Yours, sir. I was inquiring for you at your lodgings.

Stu. This morning! You had business then?

Lew. You'll call it by another name, perhaps. Where's Mr. Beverley, madam?

Cha. We have sent to inquire for him.

Lew. Is he abroad then? He did not use to go out so early.

Cha. No, nor stay out so late.

Lew. Is that the case? I am sorry for it. But Mr. Stukely, perhaps, may direct you to him.

Stu. I have already, sir. But what was your business with me?

Lew. To congratulate you upon your late successes at play. Poor Beverley!—But you are his friend: and there's a comfort in having successful friends.

Stu. And what am I to understand by this?

Lew. That Beverley's a poor man, with a rich friend; that's all.

Stu. Your words would mean something, I suppose. Another time, sir, I shall desire an explanation.

Lew. And why not now? I am no dealer in long sentences. A minute or two will do for me.

Stu. But not for me, sir. I am slow of apprehension, and must have time and privacy. A lady's presence engages my attention. Another morning I may be found at home.

Lew. Another morning, then, I'll wait upon you.

Stu. I shall expect you, sir. Madam, your servant. [Exit.]

Cha. What mean you by this?

Lew. To hint to him that I know him.

Cha. How know him? Mere doubt and supposition!

Lew. I shall have proof soon.

Cha. And what then? Would you risk your life to be his punisher?

Lew. My life, madam! Don't be afraid. But let it content you that I know this Stukely—'Twould be as easy to make him honest as brave.

Cha. And what do you intend to do?

Lew. Nothing, till I have proof.—But, methinks, madam, I am acting here without authority. Could I have leave to call Mr. Beverley brother, his concerns would be my own. Why will you make my services appear officious? [Takes her hand.]

Cha. You know my reasons, and should not press me. But I am cold, you say; and cold I will be, while a poor sister's destitute.—Misfortunes press too hard upon her; yet, till to-day, she has borne them nobly. Till I see her condition ameliorated, love has no joys for me.

Lew. Where is she?

Cha. Gone to her chamber. Her spirits failed her.

Lew. I hear her coming. [Aside.] Let what has passed with Stukely be a secret—She has already too much to trouble her.

Enter Mrs. BEVERLEY.

Mrs. B. Good morning, sir; I heard your voice, and, as I thought, inquiring for me. Where's Mr. Stukely, Charlotte?

Cha. This moment gone—You have been in tears, sister; but here's a friend shall comfort you.

Lew. Or, if I add to your distresses, I'll beg your pardon, madam. The sale of your house and furniture was finished yesterday.

Mrs. B. I know it, sir; I know too your generous reasons for putting me in mind of it. But you have obliged me too much already.

Lew. There are trifles, madam, which I know you have set a value on; those I have purchased, and will deliver. I have a friend, too, that esteems you—He has bought largely, and will call nothing his, till he has seen you. If a visit to him would not be painful, he has begged it may be this morning.

Mrs. B. Not painful in the least. My pain is from the kindness of my friends. Why am I to be obliged beyond the power of return?

Lew. You shall repay us at your own time. I have a coach waiting at the door.—Shall we have your company, madam? [*TO CHARLOTTE.*]

Cha. No; my brother may return soon; I'll stay and receive him.

Mrs. B. [*TO CHAR.*] He may want a comforter, perhaps. But don't upbraid him, Charlotte. We shan't be absent long. Come, sir, since I must be so obliged.

Lew. 'Tis I that am obliged. An hour, or less, will be sufficient for us. We shall find you at home, madam?

[*Exeunt LEWSON and Mrs. BEVERLEY on one side, and CHARLOTTE on the other.*]

SCENE II.—Stukely's Lodgings.

Enter STUKELY.

Stu. That Lewson suspects me, 'tis too plain. Yet why should he suspect me? I appear the friend of Beverley as much as he. But I am rich, it seems; and so I am, thanks to another's folly and my own wisdom. To what use is wisdom, but to take advantage of the weak? This Beverley's my fool; I cheat him, and he calls me friend. But more business must be done yet—His wife's jewels are unsold; so is the reversion of his uncle's estate: I must have these too. And then there's a treasure above all—I love his wife—Before she knew this Beverley I loved her; but, like a cringing fool, bowed at a distance, while he stepped in and won her—Never, never will I forgive him for it. My pride, as well as love, is wounded by this conquest. Those hints this morning were well thrown in—Already they have fastened on her. If jealousy should weaken her affections, want may corrupt her virtue; my heart rejoices in the hope!—These jewels may do much—He shall demand them of her; which, when mine, shall be converted to special purposes—What now, Bates?

Enter BATES.

Bates. Is it a wonder then to see me? The forces are all in readiness, and only wait for orders. Where's Beverley?

Stu. At last night's rendezvous, waiting for me. Is Dawson with you?

Bates. Dressed like a nobleman; with money in his pocket, and a set of dice that shall deceive the devil.

Stu. That fellow has a head to undo a nation; but for the rest, they are such low-mannered, ill-

looking dogs, I wonder Beverley has not suspected them.

Bates. No matter for manners and looks. Do you supply them with money, and they are gentlemen by profession—The passion of gaming casts such a mist before the eyes, that the nobleman shall be surrounded with sharpeners, and imagine himself in the best company.

Stu. There's that William's, too. It was he, I suppose, that called at Beverley's with the note this morning. What directions did you give him?

Bates. To knock loud, and be clamorous. Did not you see him?

Stu. No, the fool sneaked off with Jarvis. Had he appeared within doors, as directed, the note had been discharged. I waited there on purpose. I want the women to think well of me; for Lewson's grown suspicious; he told me so himself.

Bates. What answer did you make him?

Stu. A short one—That I would see him soon for further explanation.

Bates. We must take care of him. But what have we to do with Beverley? Dawson and the rest are wondering at you.

Stu. Why, let them wonder. I have designs above their narrow reach. They see me lend him money, and they stare at me. But they are fools. I want him to believe me beggared by him.

Bates. And what then?

Stu. Ay, there's the question; but no matter; at night you may know more. He waits for me at Wilson's—I told the women where to find him.

Bates. To what purpose?

Stu. To save suspicion. It looked friendly, and they thanked me.—Old Jarvis was despatched to him.

Bates. And may entreat him home—

Stu. No; he expects money from me; but I'll have none. His wife's jewels must go—Women are easy creatures, and refuse nothing where they love. Follow to Wilson's, but be sure he sees you not. You are a man of character, you know; of prudence and discretion. Wait for me in an outer room; I shall have business for you presently.—Come, sir.

Let drudging fools by honesty grow great;
The shorter road to riches is deceit. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Gaming-house, with Table, Box, Dice, &c.

BEVERLEY discovered sitting.

Bev. [*Rises and comes forward.*] Why, what a world is this! The slave that digs for gold receives his daily pittance, and sleeps contented; while those for whom he labours convert their good to mischief, making abundance the means of want. O shame! shame! Had fortune given me but little, that little had still been my own. But plenty leads to waste; and shallow streams maintain their currents, while swelling rivers beat down their banks, and leave their channels empty. What had I to do with play? I wanted nothing—My wishes and my means were equal. The poor fol-

lowed me with blessings, love scattered roses on my pillow, and morning waked me to delight—Oh, bitter thought, that, leads to what I was, by what I am! I would forget both—Who's there!

Enter a Waiter.

Wai. A gentleman, sir, inquires for you.

Bev. He might have used less ceremony. Stukely, I suppose?

Wai. No, sir, a stranger.

Bev. Well, show him in. [*Exit Waiter.*] A messenger from Stukely then; from him that has undone me! yet all in friendship—And now he lends me his little, to bring back fortune to me.

Enter JARVIS.

Jarvis!—Why this intrusion?—Your absence had been kinder.

Jar. I came in duty, sir. If it be troublesome—

Bev. It is—I would be private—hid even from myself. Who sent you hither?

Jar. One that would persuade you home again. My mistress is not well—her tears told me so.

Bev. Go with thy duty there then—I have no business for thee.

Jar. Yes, sir; to lead you from this place. I am your servant still. Your prosperous fortune blessed my old age: If that has left you, I must not leave you.

Bev. Not leave me! Recall past time, then; or, through this sea of storms and darkness, show me a star to guide me.—But what canst thou?

Jar. The little that I can, I will. You have been generous to me.—I would not offend you, sir—but—

Bev. No. Think'st thou I'd ruin thee too? I have enough of shame already—My wife! my wife! Wouldst thou believe it, Jarvis? I have not seen her all this long night—I, who have loved her so, that every hour of absence seemed as a gap in life! But other bonds have held me—Oh, I have played the boy! dropping my counters in the stream, and reaching to redeem them, lost myself!

Jar. For pity's sake, sir!—I have no heart to see this change.

Bev. Nor I to bear it—How speaks the world of me, Jarvis?

Jar. As of a good man dead—Of one who, walking in a dream, fell down a precipice. The world is sorry for you.

Bev. Ay, and pities me—Says it not so? But I was born to infamy. I'll tell thee what it says; it calls me villain, a treacherous husband, a cruel father, a false brother, one lost to nature and her charities; or, to say all in one short word, it calls me—gamester. Go to thy mistress—I'll see her presently.

[*Runs back and sits.*]

Jar. And why not now? [*Following him.*] Rude people press upon her; loud, bawling creditors; wretches who know no pity—I met one at the door—he would have seen my mistress: I wanted means of present payment, so promised it to-morrow. But others may be pressing, and she has grief enough already. Your absence hangs too heavy on her.

Bev. Tell her I'll come then. But what hast thou to do with my mistresses? Thy honesty has left thee poor. Keep what thou hast; lest, between thee and the grave, misery steal in. I have a friend shall counsel me—This is that friend.

Enter STUKELY.

Stu. How fares it, Beverley? (*BEVERLEY rises and advances.*) Honest Mr. Jarvis, well met. That viper, Williams! Was it not he that troubled you this morning?

Jar. My mistress heard him then? I am sorry that she heard him.

Bev. And Jarvis promised payment.

Stu. That must not be. Tell him I'll satisfy him.

Jar. Will you, sir. Heaven will reward you for it.

Bev. Generous Stukely! Friendship like yours, had it ability like will, would more than balance the wrongs of fortune.

Stu. You think too kindly of me. Make haste to Williams; his clamours may be rude, else.

[*To JARVIS.*]

Jar. And my master will go home again. Alas! sir, we know of hearts there breaking for his absence.

[*Exit.*]

Bev. 'Would I were dead!

Stu. Pr'ythee, be a man, and leave dying to disease and old age. Fortune may be ours again; at least we'll try for't.

Bev. No; it has fooled us on too far.

Stu. Ay, ruined us; and therefore we'll sit down contented. These are the despondings of men without money; but let the shining ore chink in the pocket, and folly turns to wisdom. We are Fortune's children. True, she's a fickle mother; but shall we droop because she's peevish? No; she has smiles in store, and these her frowns are meant to brighten them.

Bev. Is this a time for levity? But you are single in the ruin, and, therefore, may talk lightly of it: with me 'tis complicated misery.

Stu. You censure me unjustly; I but assumed these spirits, to cheer my friend. Heaven knows, he wants a comforter.

Bev. What new misfortune?

Stu. I would have brought you money, but lenders want securities. What's to be done? All that was mine is yours already.

Bev. And there's the double weight that sinks me, I have undone my friend too; one who, to save a drowning wretch, reached out his hand, and perished with him.

Stu. Have better thoughts.

Bev. Whence are they to proceed? I have nothing left.

Stu. [*Sighing.*] Then we're indeed undone—What! nothing? No moveables, nor useless trinkets! Baubles locked up in caskets, to starve their owners? I have ventured deeply for you.

Bev. Therefore this heart-ache; for I am lost beyond all hope.

Stu. No; means may be found to save us. Jarvis is rich—who made him so? This is no time for ceremony.

Bev. And is it for dishonesty? The good old man! Shall I rob him too? My friend would grieve for't. No; let the little that he has, buy food and clothing for him.

Stu. Good morning then.

[*Going.*]

Bev. So hasty! why, then, good morning.

Stu. And when we meet again, upbraid me. Say it was I that tempted you. Tell Lewson so, and tell him, I have wronged you. He has suspicions of me, and will thank you.

Bev. No; we have been companions in a rash

voyage, and the same storm has wrecked us both: Mine shall be self-upbraidings.

Stu. And will they feed us? You deal unkindly by me. I have sold and borrowed for you while land or credit lasted: and now, when fortune should be tried, and my heart whispers me success, I am deserted—turned loose to beggary, while you have boards.

Ber. What hoards? Name them, and take them!

Stu. Jewels.

Ber. And shall this thriftless hand seize them too? My poor, poor wife! Must she lose all? I would not wound her so.

Stu. Nor I, but from necessity. One effort more, and fortune may grow kind. I have unusual hopes.

Ber. Think of some other means then.

Stu. I have, and you rejected them.

Ber. Pr'ythee, let me be a man.

Stu. Ay, and your friend a poor one. But I have done: And for these trinkets of a woman, why, let her keep them, to deck out pride with, and show a laughing world that she has finery to starve in.

Ber. No; she shall yield up all. My friend demands it. But need we have talked lightly of her? The jewels that she values are truth and innocence. Those will adorn her ever; and, for the rest, she wore them for a husband's pride, and to his wants will give them. Alas! you know her not. Where shall we meet?

Stu. No matter; I have changed my mind. Leave me to a prison; 'tis the reward of friendship.

Ber. Perish mankind first! Leave you to a prison! No! fallen as you see me, I'm not that wretch: Nor would I change this heart, o'er-charged as 'tis with folly and misfortune, for one most prudent and most happy, if callous to a friend's distresses.

Stu. You are too warm.

Ber. In such a cause, not to be warm is to be frozen. Farewell—I'll meet you at your lodgings.

Stu. Reflect a little. The jewels may be lost—better not hazard them—I was too pressing.

Ber. And I ungrateful. Reflection takes up time—I have no leisure for't—within an hour expect me. [Exit.]

Stu. The thoughtless, shallow prodigal! We shall have sport at night, then—but hold—the jewels are not ours yet—the lady may refuse them—the husband may relent too—'tis more than probable—I'll write a note to Beverley, and the contents shall spur him to demand them. But am I grown this rogue through avarice? No; I have warmer motives, love and revenge. Ruin the husband, and the wife's virtue may be bid for.

Enter BATES.

Look to your men, Bates; there's money stirring. We meet to-night upon this spot. Hasten, and tell them. Beverley calls upon me at my lodgings, and we return together. Hasten, I say, the rogues will scatter else.

Bates. Not till their leader bids them.

Stu. Come on, then—give them the word, and follow me; I must advise with you. This is a day of business. [Exit.]

SCENE II.—Beverley's Lodgings.

Enter BEVERLEY and CHARLOTTE.

Cha. Your looks are changed too; there's wild-

ness in them. My wretched sister! How will it grieve her to see you thus!

Ber. No, no; a little rest will ease me. And for your Lewson's kindness to her, it has my thanks; I have no more to give him.

Cha. Yes; a sister and her fortune. I trifle with him, and he complains. My looks, he says, are cold upon him. He thinks too—

Ber. That I have lost your fortune. He dares not think so.

Cha. Nor does he; you are too quick at guessing. He cares not if you had. That care is mine; I lent it you to husband, and now I claim it.

Ber. You have suspicions then?

Cha. Cure them, and give it me.

Ber. To stop a sister's chidings?

Cha. To vindicate her brother.

Ber. How if he needs no vindication?

Cha. I would fain hope so.

Ber. Ay, would and cannot—Leave it to time, then; 'twill satisfy all doubts.

Cha. Mine are already satisfied.

Ber. 'Tis well. And when the subject is renewed, speak to me like a sister, and I will answer like a brother.

Cha. To tell me I'm a beggar. Why, tell it now. I, that can bear the ruin of those dearer to me—the ruin of a sister and her infant—can bear that too.

Ber. No more of this—you wring my heart.

Cha. Unthinking rioter! whose home was heaven to him!—an angel dwelt there, and a little cherub, that crown'd his days with blessings. How he has lost this heaven, to league with devils!

Ber. Forbear, I say; reproaches come too late; they search, but cure not. And, for the fortune you demand, we'll talk to-morrow on't—our tempers may be milder.

Cha. Or, if 'tis gone, why, farewell all. But I'll upbraid no more. What Heaven permits, perhaps it may ordain. Yet, that the husband, father, brother, should be its instruments of vengeance! 'Tis grievous to know that!

Ber. If you're my sister, spare the remembrance—it wounds too deeply. To-morrow shall clear all; and when the worst is known, it may be better than your fears. Comfort my wife—and for the pains of absence I'll make atonement.

Cha. She comes! Look cheerfully upon her.—Affections such as hers are prying, and lend those eyes that read the soul.

Enter MRS. BEVERLEY and LEWSON.

Mrs. B. My life! [Embrace.]

Ber. My love! how fares it? I have been a truant husband.

Mrs. B. But we meet now, and that heals all.—Doubts and alarms I have had; but in this dear embrace I bury and forget them. My friend here, [Pointing to Lewson,] has been indeed a friend. Charlotte, 'tis you must thank him: your brother's thanks and mine are of too little value.

Ber. Yet what we have, we'll pay. I thank you, sir, and am obliged. I would say more, but that your goodness to the wife upbraids the husband's follies. Had I been wise, she had not trespassed on your bounty.

Lew. Nor has she trespassed. The little I have done, acceptance overpays.

Cha. So friendship thinks—

Mrs. B. And doubles obligations by striving to

conceal them—We'll talk another time on't—You are too thoughtful, love.

Bev. No, I have reason for these thoughts.

Cha. And hatred for the cause—'Would you had that too!

Bev. I have—the cause was avarice.

Cha. And who the tempter?

Bev. A ruined friend—ruined by too much kindness.

Lew. Ay, worse than ruined; stabbed in his fame, mortally stabbed—riches can't cure him.

Bev. Or, if they could, those I have drained him of. Something of this he hinted in the morning—that Lewson had suspicions of him—Why these suspicions?

Lew. At school we knew this Stukely. A cunning, plodding boy he was, sordid and cruel, slow at his task, but quick at shifts and tricking. He schemed out mischief, that others might be punished; and would tell his tale with so much art, that for the lash he merited, rewards and praise were given him. Show me a boy with such a mind, and time, that ripens manhood in him, shall ripen vice too—I'll prove him, and lay him open to you—I'll then, be warned—I know him, and therefore shun him.

Bev. As I would those that wrong him. You are too busy, sir.

Mrs. B. No, not too busy—Mistaken, perhaps—That had been milder.

Lew. No matter, madam. I can bear this, and praise the heart that prompts it. Pity such friendship should be so placed!

Bev. Again, sir! But I'll bear too. You wrong him, Lewson, and will be sorry for't.

Cha. Ay, when 'tis proved he wrongs him. The world is full of hypocrites.

Bev. And Stukely one—so you would infer, I think. I'll bear no more of this—my heart aches for him—I have undone him.

Lew. The world says otherwise.

Bev. The world is false then. I have business with you, love. [To *Mrs. BEVERLEY*.] We'll leave them to their rancour.

Cha. No; we shall find room within for't. Come this way, sir. [To *LEWSON*.]

Lew. Another time my friend will thank me; that time is hastening too.

[*Exeunt with CHARLOTTE.*
Bev. They hurt me beyond bearing. Is Stukely false! Then honesty has left us! 'I were sinning against Heaven to think so.

Mrs. B. I never doubted him.

Bev. No; you are charity. Meekness and enduring patience live in that heart, and love that knows no change. Why did I ruin you?

Mrs. B. You have not ruined me. I have no wants when you are present, nor wishes in your absence, but to be blest with your return. Be but resigned to what has happened, and I am rich beyond the dreams of avarice.

Bev. My generous girl!—But memory will be busy; still crowding on my thoughts, to sour the present by the past. I have another pang too.

Mrs. B. Tell it, and let me cure it.

Bev. That friend—that generous friend, whose fame they have traduced—I have undone him too. While he had means, he lent me largely; and now a prison must be his portion.

Mrs. B. No; I hope otherwise.

Bev. To hope must be to act. The charitable wish feeds not the hungry. Something must be done.

Mrs. B. What?

Bev. In bitterness of heart he told me, just now he told me, I had undone him. Could I hear that, and think of happiness? No; I have disclaimed it while he is miserable.

Mrs. B. The world may mend with us, and then we may be grateful. There's comfort in that hope.

Bev. Ay; 'tis the sick man's cordial, his promised cure; while, in preparing it, the patient dies. What now?

Enter Lucy.

Lucy. A letter, sir.

Bev. The hand is Stukely's. [Delivers it, and exit.

[Opens it, and reads it to himself.

Mrs. B. And brings good news—at least I'll hope so—What says he, love?

Bev. Why this—too much for patience. Yet he directs me to conceal it from you. [Reads.] "Let your haste to see me be the only proof of your esteem for me. I have determined, since we parted, to bid adieu to England; choosing rather to forsake my country, than owe my freedom in it to the means we talked of. Keep this a secret at home, and hasten to the ruined R. STUKELY."—Ruined by friendship! I must relieve or follow him. [Going in a state of distraction.

Mrs. B. Follow him, did you say? Then I am lost, indeed!

Bev. Oh, this infernal vice! how has it sunk me! A vice, whose highest joy was poor to my domestic happiness. Yet how have I pursued it! turned all my comforts to bitterest pangs, and all my smiles to tears. Damned, damned infatuation!

Mrs. B. Be cool, my life! What are the means the letter talks of? Have you—have I those means? Tell me, and ease me. I have no life while you are wretched.

Bev. No, no; it must not be. 'Tis I alone have sinned; 'tis I alone must suffer. You shall reserve those means, to keep my child and his wronged mother from want and wretchedness.

Mrs. B. What means?

Bev. I came to rob you of them—but cannot—dare not. Those jewels are your sole support: I should be more than monster to request them.

Mrs. B. My jewels! Trifles, not worth speaking of, if weighed against a husband's peace; but let them purchase that, and the world's wealth is of less value. [Embrace.

Bev. How little do I seem before such virtues!

Mrs. B. No more, my love. I kept them till occasion called to use them; now is the occasion, and I'll resign them cheerfully.

Bev. Why, we'll be rich in love then. But this excess of kindness melts me. Yet for a friend one would do much. He has denied me nothing.

Mrs. B. Come to my closet—But let him manage wisely. We have no more to give him.

Bev. Where learnt my love this excellence? 'Tis Heaven's own teaching: that Heaven, which to an angel's form has given a mind more lovely. I am unworthy of you, but will deserve you better.

Henceforth my follies and neglects shall cease,
And all to come be penitence and peace;
Vice shall no more attract me with her charms,
Nor pleasure reach me, but in these dear arms.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—Stukely's Lodgings.

Enter STUKELY and BATES.

Stu. So runs the world, Bates. Fools are the natural prey of knaves; Nature designed them so, when she made lambs for wolves. The laws, that fear and policy have framed, Nature disclaims; she knows but two, and those are force and cunning. The nobler law is force; but then there's danger in't; while cunning, like a skilful miner, works safely and unseen.

Bates. And therefore wisely. Force must have nerves and sinews; cunning wants neither. The dwarf that has it shall trip the giant's heels up.

Stu. And bind him to the ground. Why, we'll erect a shrine for Nature, and be her oracles. Conscience is weakness; fear made it, and fear maintains it. The dread of shame, inward reproaches, and fictitious burnings, swell out the phantom. Nature knows none of this; her laws are freedom.

Bates. Sound doctrine, and well delivered!

Stu. We are sincere, too, and practise what we teach. Let the grave pedant say as much. But now to business. The jewels are disposed of; and Beverley again worth money. If my design succeeds, this night we finish with him. Go to your lodgings, and be busy. You understand conveyances, and make ruin sure.

Bates. Better stop here. The sale of this reversion may be talked of. There's danger in it.

Stu. No, 'tis the mark I aim at. We'll thrive and laugh. You are the purchaser, and there's the payment. [*Giving him a pocket-book.*] He thinks you rich; and so you shall be. Inquire for titles, and deal hardly; 'twill look like honesty.

Bates. How, if he suspects us?

Stu. Leave it to me. I study hearts, and when to work upon them. Go to your lodgings; and if we come, be busy over papers. Talk of a thoughtless age, of gaming and extravagance; you have a face for't.

Bates. A feeling too, that would avoid it. We push too far; but I have cautioned you. If it ends ill, you'll think of me—and so, adieu. [*Exit.*]

Stu. This fellow sins by halves; his fears are conscience to him. I'll turn these fears to use. Rogues that dread shame, will still be greater rogues to hide their guilt. Lewson grows troublesome—We must get rid of him—He knows too much. I have a tale for Beverley. He shall call Lewson to account—If it succeeds, 'tis well; if not, we must try other means. [*Knocking.*] But here he comes—I must dissemble.

Enter BEVERLEY.

Look to the door there! [*In a seeming fright.*]—My friend! I thought of other visitors.

Bev. No; these shall guard you from them. [*Offering notes.*] Take them, and use them cautiously. The world deals hardly by us.

Stu. And shall I leave you destitute? No; your wants are the greatest. Another climate may treat me kinder. The shelter of to-night takes me from this.

Bev. Let these be your support then. Yet is there need of parting? I may have means again; we'll share them, and live wisely.

Stu. No: I should tempt you on. 'Tis nature in me; ruin can't cure it. Even now I would be gaming. Taught by experience as I am, and knowing this poor sum is all that's left us, I am for venturing still; and say I am to blame. Yet will this little supply our wants? No, we must put it out to usury. Whether 'tis madness in me, or some restless impulse of good fortune, I yet am ignorant; but—

Bev. Take it, and succeed then. I'll try no more.

Stu. 'Tis surely impulse; it pleads so strongly. But you are cold—We'll e'en part here then. And for this last reserve, keep it for better uses; I'll have none on't. I thank you though, and will seek fortune singly. One thing I had forgot—

Bev. What is it?

Stu. Perhaps, 'twere best forgotten. But I am open in my nature, and zealous for the honour of my friend. Lewson speaks freely of you.

Bev. Of you I know he does.

Stu. I can forgive him for't; but, for my friend, I'm angry.

Bev. What says he of me?

Stu. That Charlotte's fortune is embezzled. He talks on't loudly.

Bev. He shall be silenced, then? How heard you of it?

Stu. From many. He questioned Bates about it. You must account with him, he says.

Bev. Or he with me—and soon, too.

Stu. Speak mildly to him. Cautions are best.

Bev. I'll think on't—But whither go you?

Stu. From poverty and prisons—No matter whither. If fortune changes, you may hear from me.

Bev. May these be prosperous, then. [*Offering the notes, which he refuses.*] Nay, they are yours—I have sworn it, and will have nothing. Take them, and use them.

Stu. Singly I will not. My cares are for my friend; for his lost fortune and ruined family. All separate interests I disclaim. Together we have fallen; together we must rise. My heart, my honour, and affections, all will have it so.

Bev. I am weary of being fooled.

Stu. And so am I. Here let us part, then. These bodings of good fortune shall all be stifled; call them folly, and forget them—farewell.

Bev. No; stay a moment. How my poor heart's distracted! I have these bodings too; but whether caught from you, or prompted by my good or evil genius, I know not. The trial shall determine. And yet, my wife—

Stu. Ay, ay, she'll chide.

Bev. No; my chidings are all here.

[*Pointing to his heart.*]

Stu. I'll not persuade you.

Bev. I am persuaded; by reason too; the strongest reason, necessity. Oh, could I but regain the height I have fallen from, Heaven should forsake me in my latest hour, if I again mixed in these scenes, or sacrificed the husband's peace, his joy, and best affections, to avarice and infamy.

Stu. I have resolved like you; and, since our motives are so honest, why should we fear success?

Bev. Come on, then. Where shall we meet?

Stu. At Wilson's. Yet if it hurts you, leave me: I have misled you often.

Bev. We have misled each other. But come! Fortune is fickle, and may be tired with plaguing us.—There let us rest our hopes.

Stu. Yet think a little—

Bev. I cannot—thinking but distracts me.

When desperation leads, all thoughts are vain ;
Reason would lose what rashness may obtain.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*Beverley's Lodgings.*

Enter Mrs. BEVERLEY and CHARLOTTE.

Cha. 'Twas all a scheme, a mean one ; unworthy of my brother.

Mrs. B. No, I am sure it was not. Stukely is honest too ; I know he is. This madness has undone them both.

Cha. My brother irrecoverably. You are too spiritless a wife. A mournful tale, mixed with a few kind words, will steal away your soul. The world's too subtle for such goodness. Had I been by, he should have asked your life sooner than those jewels.

Mrs. B. He should have had it then. [*Hastily.*] I live but to oblige him. She who can love, and is beloved like me, will do as much. Men have done more for mistresses, and women for a base betrayer : and shall a wife do less ? Your chidings hurt me, Charlotte.

Cha. And come too late ; they might have saved you else. How could he use you so ?

Mrs. B. 'Twas friendship did it. His heart was breaking for a friend.

Cha. The friend that has betrayed him.

Mrs. B. Pr'ythee don't think so.

Cha. To-morrow he accounts with me.

Mrs. B. And fairly—I will not doubt it.

Cha. Unless a friend has wanted. I have no patience—Sister ! sister ! we are bound to curse this friend.

Mrs. B. My Beverley speaks nobly of him.

Cha. And Lewson truly. But I displease you with this talk. To-morrow will instruct us.

Mrs. B. Stay till it comes then—I would not think so hardly.

Cha. Nor I, but from conviction. Yet we have hope of better days. My uncle is infirm, and of an age that threatens hourly : or if he live, you never have offended him ; and for distresses so unmerited he will have pity.

Mrs. B. I know it, and am cheerful.

Cha. My Lewson will be kind too. While he and I have life and means, you shall divide with us. And see, he's here !

Enter LEWSON.

We were just speaking of you.

Lew. 'Tis best to interrupt you then. Few characters will bear a scrutiny ; and where the bad outweighs the good, he's safest that's least talked of. What say you, madam ? [*To CHARLOTTE.*]

Cha. That I hate scandal, though a woman—therefore talk seldom of you.

Mrs. B. Or, with more truth, that, though a woman, she loves to praise—therefore talk always of you. I'll leave you to decide it. [*Exit.*]

Lew. [*Taking her hand.*] How good and amiable ! I came to talk in private with you, of matters that concern you.

Cha. What matters ?

Lew. First answer me sincerely to what I ask.

Cha. Propose your question.

Lew. 'Tis now a tedious twelvemonth since,

with an open and kind heart, you said you loved me. And when, in consequence of such sweet words, I pressed for marriage, you gave a voluntary promise that you would live for me.

Cha. You think me changed, then ? [*Angrily.*]

Lew. I did not say so.

Cha. Why am I doubted ?

Lew. My doubts are of myself. I have my faults, and you have observation. If, from my temper, my words or actions, you have conceived a thought against me, or even a wish for separation, all that has passed is nothing.

Cha. Why, now I'll answer you. Your doubts are prophecies—I am really changed. [*They part.*]

Lew. Indeed !

Cha. I could torment you now, as you have me ; but it is not in my nature. That I am changed, I own ; for what at first was inclination, is now grown reason in me ; and from that reason, had I the world, nay, were I poorer than the poorest, and you too wanting bread—I would be yours, and happy.

Lew. My kindest Charlotte ! [*Taking her hand.*] Thanks are too poor for this, and words too weak ! But if we loved so, why should our union be delayed ?

Cha. For happier times. The present are too wretched.

Lew. I may have reasons that press it now.

Cha. What reasons ?

Lew. The strongest reasons ; unanswerable ones.

Cha. Be quick and name them.

Lew. First promise, that to-morrow, or the next day, you will be mine for ever.

Cha. I do—though misery should succeed.

Lew. Thus then I seize you ! And with you every joy on this side heaven !

Cha. Now, sir, your secret.

Lew. Your fortune's lost.

Cha. My fortune lost ! [*Aside.*] Where learned you this sad news ?

Lew. From Bates, Stukely's prime agent. I have obliged him, and he's grateful. He told it me in friendship, to warn me from my Charlotte.

Cha. 'Twas honest in him, and I'll esteem him for it.

Lew. He knows much more than he has told.

Cha. For me it is enough. And for your generous love, I thank you from my soul. If you'd oblige me more, give me a little time.

Lew. Why time ? It robs us of our happiness.

Cha. I have a task to learn first. The little pride this fortune gave me must be subdued ; and for a life of obligations, I have not learned to bear it.

Lew. Mine is that life. You are too noble.

Cha. Leave me to think on't.

Lew. To-morrow then you'll fix my happiness.

Cha. All that I can I will.

Lew. It must be so ; we live but for each other. Keep what you know a secret ; and when we meet to-morrow, more may be known. Farewell.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*A Room, with a Gaming-house in the back scene.*

Enter BEVERLEY and STUKELY.

Bev. Whither would you lead me ? [*Angrily.*]

Stu. Where we may vent our curses.

Bev. Ay, on yourself, and those damned counsels

that have destroyed me. A thousand fiends were in that bosom, and all let loose to tempt me—I had resisted else.

Stu. Go on, sir. I have deserved this from you.

Rev. And curses everlasting. Time is too scanty for them—

Stu. What have I done?

Rev. What the arch-devil of old did—soothed with false hopes for certain ruin.

Stu. Myself unhurt; nay, pleased at your destruction—so your words mean. Why, tell it to the world. I am too poor to find a friend in't.

Rev. A friend! What's he? I had a friend.

Stu. And have one still.

Rev. Ay; I'll tell you of this friend. He found me happiest of the happy. Fortune and honour crowned me; and love and peace lived in my heart. One spark of folly lurked there; that too he found; and by deceitful breath blew it into flames, that have consumed me. This friend were you to me.

Stu. A little more, perhaps. The friend, who gave his all to save you; and not succeeding, chose ruin with you. But no matter, I have undone you, and am a villain.

Rev. No; I think not. The villains are within.

Stu. What villains?

Rev. Dawson and the rest. We have been dupes to sharpers.

Stu. How know you this? I have had doubts as well as you; yet still as fortune changed, I blushed at my own thoughts. But you have proofs, perhaps!

Rev. Ay, damned ones. Repeated losses. Night after night, and no reverse. Chance has no hand in this.

Stu. I think more charitably; yet I am peevish in my nature, and apt to doubt. The world speaks fairly of this Dawson; so it does of the rest. We have watched them closely too. But 'tis a right usurped by losers, to think the winners knaves. We'll have more manhood in us.

Rev. I know not what to think—This night has stung me to the quick—blasted my reputation too. I have bound my honour to these vipers; played meanly upon credit, till I tired them; and now they shun me, to rifle one another. What's to be done?

Stu. Nothing. My counsels have been fatal.

Rev. By Heaven, I'll not survive this shame. Traitor! 'tis you have brought it on me. [*Seizing him.*] Show me the means to save me, or I'll commit a murder here, and next upon myself.

Stu. Why, do it then, and rid me of ingratitude.

Rev. Pr'ythee forgive this language—I speak I know not what. Rage and despair are in my heart, and hurry me to madness. My home is horror to me—I'll not return to it. Speak quickly; tell me, if, in this wreck of fortune, one hope remains? Name it, and be my oracle. [*Kneels.*]

Stu. To vent your curses on. You have bestowed them liberally. Take your own counsel; and should a desperate hope present itself, 'twill suit your desperate fortune. I'll not advise you.

Rev. What hope? By Heaven I'll catch at it, however desperate. I am so sunk in misery, it cannot lay me lower.

Stu. You have an uncle.

Rev. [*Rises.*] Ay, what of him?

Stu. Old men live long by temperance; while their heirs starve on expectation.

Rev. What mean you?

Stu. That the reversion of his estate is yours, and will bring money to pay debts with. Nay, more, it may retrieve what's past.

Rev. Or leave my child a beggar.

Stu. And what's his father? A dishonourable one; engaged for sums he cannot pay. That should be thought of.

Rev. It is my shame. The poison that inflames me. Where shall we go? To whom? I'm impatient till all's lost.

Stu. All may be yours again. Your man is Bates. He has large funds at his command, and will deal justly by you.

Rev. I am resolved. Tell them within we'll meet them presently; and with full purses, too. Come, follow me.

Stu. No; I'll have no hand in this; nor do I counsel it. Use your discretion, and act from that. You'll find me at my lodgings.

Rev. Succeed what will, this night I'll dare the worst.

'Tis loss of fear to be completely curst.

[*Exit.*]

Stu. [*Looks after him.*] Why, lose it then for ever. Fear is the mind's worst evil: and 'tis a friendly office to drive it from the bosom. Thus far has fortune crowned me. Yet Beverley is rich; rich in his wife's best treasure, her honour and affections. I would supplant him there too. But 'tis the curse of thinking minds to raise up difficulties. Fools may conquer women. Fearless of dangers which they see not, they press on boldly, and, by persisting, prosper. Yet may a tale of art do much. Charlotte is sometimes absent. The seeds of jealousy are sown already. If I mistake not, they have taken root too. Now is the time to ripen them, and reap the harvest. The softest of her sex, if wronged in love, or thinking that she's wronged, becomes a tigress in revenge.—I'll instantly to Beverley's. No matter for the danger. When beauty leads us on, 'tis indiscretion to reflect, and cowardice to doubt. [*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.—Beverley's Lodgings.

Enter Mrs. BEVERLEY and LUCY.

Mrs. B. Did Charlotte tell you any thing?

Lucy. No, madam.

Mrs. B. She looked confused, methought; said she had business with her Lewson; which when I pressed to know, tears only were her answer.

Lucy. She seemed in haste too. Yet her return may bring you comfort.

Mrs. B. No, my kind girl; I was not born for it. But why do I distress thee? Thy sympathizing heart bleeds for the ills of others. What pity that thy mistress can't reward thee! But there's a Power above, that sees, and will remember all. [*Knocking.*] Hark! there's some one entering.

Lucy. Perhaps 'tis my master, madam. [*Exit.*]

Mrs. B. Let him be well too, and I am satisfied. [*Goes to the door, and listens.*] No, 'tis another's voice.

Enter LUCY and STUKELY.

Lucy. Mr. Stukely, madam.

[*Exit.*]

Stu. To meet you thus alone, madam, was what I wished. Unseasonable visits, when friendship warrants them, need no excuse—therefore I make none.

Mrs. B. What mean you, sir? And where is your friend?

Stu. Men may have secrets, madam, which their best friends are not admitted to. We parted in the morning, not soon to meet again.

Mrs. B. You mean to leave us then—to leave your country too? I am no stranger to your reasons, and pity your misfortunes.

Stu. Your pity has undone you. Could Beverley do this? That letter was a false one; a mean contrivance to rob you of your jewels. I wrote it not.

Mrs. B. Impossible! Whence came it then?

Stu. Wronged as I am, madam, I must speak plainly.

Mrs. B. Do so, and ease me. Your hints have troubled me. Reports, you say, are stirring. Reports of whom? You wished me not to credit them. What, sir, are these reports?

Stu. I thought them slander, madam; and cautioned in friendship, lest from officious tongues the tale had reached you with double aggravation.

Mrs. B. Proceed, sir.

Stu. It is a debt due to my fame; due to an injured wife too. We are both injured.

Mrs. B. How injured? And who has injured us?

Stu. My friend—your husband.

Mrs. B. You would resent for both then; but know, sir, my injuries are my own, and do not need a champion.

Stu. Be not too hasty, madam. I come not in resentment, but for acquittance. You thought me poor; and to the feigned distresses of a friend gave up your jewels.

Mrs. B. I gave them to a husband.

Stu. Who gave them to a—

Mrs. B. What? Whom did he give them to?

Stu. A mistress.

Mrs. B. No; on my life he did not.

Stu. Himself confessed it, with curses on her avarice.

Mrs. B. I'll not believe it. He has no mistress; or, if he has, why is it told to me?

Stu. To guard you against insults. He told me, that, to move you to compliance, he forged that letter, pretending I was ruined, ruined by him too. The fraud succeeded; and what a trusting wife bestowed in pity was lavished on a wanton.

Mrs. B. Then I am lost indeed! And my affections are too powerful for me. His follies I have borne without upbraiding, and saw the approach of poverty without a tear. My affections, my stroug affections, supported me through every trial.

Stu. Be patient, madam.

Mrs. B. Patient! The barbarous, ungrateful man! And does he think that the tenderness of my heart is his best security for wounding it? But he shall find that injuries such as these can arm my weakness for vengeance and redress.

Stu. Ha! then I may succeed. [*Aside.*—Redress is in your power.

Mrs. B. What redress?

Stu. Forgive me, madam, if, in my zeal to serve you, I hazard your displeasure. Think of your wretched state. Already want surrounds you—Is it in patience to bear that? To see your helpless little one robbed of his birthright? A sister too, with unavailing tears, lamenting her lost fortune? No comfort left you, but ineffectual pity from the few, outweighed by insults from the many.

Mrs. B. Am I so lost a creature? Well, sir, my redress?

Stu. To be resolved is to secure it. The marriage vow, once violated, is, in the sight of Heaven, dissolved—Start not, but hear me. 'Tis now the summer of your youth: time has not cropped the roses from your cheek, though sorrow long has washed them: then use your beauty wisely, and, freed by injuries, fly from the cruellest of men, for shelter with the kindest.

Mrs. B. And who is he?

Stu. A friend to the unfortunate; a bold one too, who, while the storm is bursting on your brow, and lightning flashing from your eyes, dares tell you that he loves you. [*Kneels.*

Mrs. B. 'Would that these eyes had Heaven's own lightning, that, with a look, thus I might blast thee! Am I then fallen so low? Has poverty so humbled me, that I should listen to a hellish offer, and sell my soul for bread? Oh, villain! villain! [*He rises.*] But now I know thee, and thank thee for the knowledge.

Stu. If you are wise, you shall have cause to thank me.

Mrs. B. An injured husband too shall thank thee.

Stu. Yet know, proud woman, I have a heart as stubborn as your own! as haughty and imperious; and, as it loves, so can it hate.

Mrs. B. Mean, despicable villain! I scorn thee and thy threats. Was it for this that Beverley was false?—that his too-credulous wife should, in despair and vengeance, give up her honour to a wretch? But he shall know it, and vengeance shall be his.

Stu. Why, send him for defiance then—Tell him I love his wife; but that a worthless husband forbids our union. I'll make a widow of you, and court you honourably.

Mrs. B. Oh, coward, coward! thy soul will shrink at him: yet in the thought of what may happen, I feel a woman's fears. [*Rings.*] Keep thy own secret, and begone. Your absence, sir, would please me.

Stu. I'll not offend you, madam. [*Exit.*

Mrs. B. Why opens not the earth, to swallow such a monster? Be conscience, then, his punisher, till Heaven, in mercy, gives him penitence, or dooms him in its justice. [*Exit.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—Stukely's Lodgings.

Enter STUKELY and BATES, meeting.

Bates. Where have you been?

Stu. Fooling my time away—playing my tricks, like a tame monkey, to entertain a woman. No matter where—I have been vexed and disappointed.—Tell me of Beverley; how bore he his last shock?

Bates. Like one (so Dawson says) whose senses had been numbed with misery. When all was lost, he fixed his eyes upon the ground, and stood some time, with folden arms, stupid and motionless; then snatching his sword, that hung against

the wainscot, he sat him down, and, with a look of fixed attention, drew figures on the floor. At last, he started up, looked wild, and trembled; and, like a woman, seized with her sex's fits, laughed out aloud, while the tears trickled down his face—so left the room.

Stu. Why, this was madness.

Bates. The madness of despair.

Stu. We must confine him then—A prison would do well. [*Knocking.*] Hark, that knocking may be his—Go that way down. [*Exit BATES.*] Who's there?

Enter LEWSON.

Lew. An enemy—an open and avowed one.

Stu. Why am I thus broke in upon? This house is mine, sir, and should protect me from insult and ill-manners.

Lew. Guilt has no place of sanctuary: wherever found, 'tis virtue's lawful game. The fox's hold, and tiger's den, are no security against the hunter.

Stu. Your business, sir?

Lew. To tell you that I know you. Why this confusion? That look of guilt and terror? Is Beverley awake, or has his wife told tales? The man that dares like you, should have a soul to justify his deeds, and courage to confront accusers: not, with a coward's fear, to shrink beneath reproof.

Stu. Who waits there? [*Aloud, and in confusion.*]

Lew. By Heaven, he dies, that interrupts us!—*[Drawing his sword.]*—You should have weighed your strength, sir; and then, instead of climbing to high fortune, the world had marked you for what you are—a little, paltry villain!

Stu. You think I fear you.

Lew. I know you fear me—This is to prove it.—*[Strikes him.]* You wanted privacy—A lady's presence took up your attention. Now we are alone, sir. Why, what a wretch! *[Flings him from him.]* The vilest insect in creation will turn when trampled on; yet has this thing undone a man!—by cunning and mean arts undone him! But we have found you, sir; traced you through all your labyrinths. If you would save yourself, fall to confession, no mercy will be shown else.

Stu. First prove me what you think me; till then your threatenings are in vain—And for this insult, vengeance may yet be mine.

Lew. Infamous coward! why, take it now then—*[Threatening—STUKELY retires.]* Alas, I pity thee! Yet, that a wretch like this should overcome a Beverley! It fills me with astonishment! A wretch, so mean of soul, that even desperation cannot animate him to look upon an enemy. You should not have thus soared, sir, unless, like others of your black profession, you had a sword, to keep the fools in awe your villany has ruined.

Stu. Villany! 'Twere best to curb this license of your tongue—for know, sir, while there are laws, this outrage on my reputation will not be borne with.

Lew. Laws! Darest thou seek shelter from the laws—those laws, which thou and thy infernal crew live in the constant violation of! Talk'st thou of reputation too, when, under friendship's sacred name, thou hast betrayed, robbed, and destroyed?

Stu. Ay, rail at gaming—'tis a rich topic, and affords noble declamation. Go, preach against it in the city—you'll find a congregation in every tavern. If they should laugh at you, fly to my

lord, and sermonize it there: he'll thank you, and reform.

Lew. And will example sanctify a vice? No, wretch; the custom of my lord, or of the cit that apes him, cannot excuse a breach of law, or make the gamester's calling reputable.

Stu. Rail on, I say. But is this zeal for beggared Beverley? Is it for him that I am treated thus? No; he and his wife might both have groined in prison, had but the sister's fortune escaped the wreck, to have rewarded the disinterested love of honest Mr. Lewson.

Lew. How I detest thee for the thought. But thou art lost to every human feeling. Yet, let me tell thee, and may it wring thy heart, that, though my friend is ruined by thy snares, thou hast, unknowingly, been kind to me.

Stu. Have I? It was, indeed, unknowingly.

Lew. Thou hast assisted me in love—given me the merit that I wanted: since, but for thee, my Charlotte had not known 'twas her dear self I sighed for, and not her fortune.

Stu. Thank me, and take her then.

Lew. And as a brother to poor Beverley, I will pursue the robber that has stripped him, and snatch him from his gripe.

Stu. Then know, imprudent man, he is within my gripe; and should my friendship for him be slandered once again, the hand that has supplied him shall fall and crush him.

Lew. Why, now there's spirit in thee! This is, indeed, to be a villain! But I shall reach thee yet—Fly where thou wilt, my vengeance shall pursue thee—And Beverley shall yet be saved—be saved from thee, thou monster! nor owe his rescue to his wife's dishonour. [*Exit.*]

Stu. *[Pausing.]* Then ruin has enclosed me!—Curse on my coward heart! I would be bravely villainous; but 'tis my nature to shrink at danger, and he has found me. Yet fear brings caution, and that, security. More mischief must be done, to hide the past. Look to yourself, officious Lewson—there may be danger stirring. How now, Bates?

Enter BATES.

Bates. What is the matter? 'Twas Lewson, and not Beverley, that left you—I heard him loud—You seem alarmed too.

Stu. Ay, and with reason. We are discovered.

Bates. I feared as much, and, therefore, cautioned you; but you were peremptory.

Stu. Thus fools talk ever; spending their idle breath on what is past, and trembling at the future. We must be active; Beverley, at worst, is but suspicious; but Lewson's genius, and his hate to me, will lay all open. Means must be found to stop him.

Bates. What means?

Stu. Dispatch him—Nay, start not—Desperate occasions call for desperate deeds—We live but by his death.

Bates. You cannot mean it?

Stu. I do, by Heaven!

Bates. Good night, then.

[Going.]

Stu. Stay—I must be heard, then answered.—Perhaps the motion was too sudden; and human weakness starts at murder, though strong necessity compels it. I have thought long of this; and my first feelings were like yours; a foolish conscience awed me, which soon I conquered. The man that would undo me, nature cries out, undo. Brutes know their foes by instinct; and, where superior

force is given, they use it for destruction. Shall man do less? Lewson pursues us to our ruin! and shall we, with the means to crush him, fly from our hunter, or turn, and tear him? 'Tis folly even to hesitate.

Bates. He has obliged me, and I dare not.

Stu. Why, live to shame, then—to beggary and punishment. You would be privy to the deed, yet want the soul to act it. Nay, more, had my designs been levelled at his fortune, you had stepped in the foremost—And what is life without its comforts?—Those you would rob him of, and, by a lingering death, add cruelty to murder. Henceforth, adieu to half-made villains—There's danger in them. What you have got is yours—keep it, and hide with it—I'll deal my future bounty to those that merit it.

Bates. What's the reward?

Stu. Equal division of our gains. I swear it, and will be just.

Bates. Think of the means then.

Stu. He's gone to Beverley's—Wait for him in the street—'Tis a dark night, and fit for mischief—A dagger would be useful.

Bates. No more.

Stu. Consider the reward. When the deed's done, I have other business with you. Send Dawson to me.

Bates. Think it already done—and so, farewell.

[Exit.]

Stu. Why, farewell, Lewson, then; and farewell to my fears. This night secures me—I'll wait the event within.

[Exit.]

SCENE II.—The Street.—Stage darkened.

Enter BEVERLEY.

Bev. How like an outcast do I wander! Loaded with every curse that drives the soul to desperation! The midnight robber, as he walks his rounds, sees, by the glimmering lamp, my frantic looks, and dreads to meet me. Whither am I going? My home lies there: all that is dear on earth it holds too; yet are the gates of death more welcome to me—I'll enter it no more—Who passes there? 'Tis Lewson—He meets me in a gloomy hour; and, memory tells me, he has been meddling with my fame.

Enter LEWSON.

Lew. Beverley! well met. I have been busy in your affairs.

Bev. So I have heard, sir: and now I must thank you as I ought.

Lew. To-morrow I may deserve your thanks. Late as it is, I go to Bates. Discoveries are making that an arch villain trembles at.

Bev. Discoveries are made, sir, that you should tremble at. Where is this boasted spirit, this high demeanour, that was to call me to account? You say I have wronged my sister—Now say as much. But, first be ready for defence as I am for resentment.

[Draws.]

Lew. What mean you? I understand you not.

Bev. The coward's stale acquaintance! who, when he spreads foul calumny abroad, and dreads just vengeance on him, cries out, "What mean you? I understand you not."

Lew. Coward and calumny! Whence are those words? But I forgive and pity you.

Bev. Your pity had been kinder to my fame: but you have traduced it—told a vile story to the public ear, that I have wronged my sister,

Lew. 'Tis false! Show me the man that dares accuse me.

Bev. I thought you brave, and of a soul superior to low malice; but I have found you, and will have vengeance. This is no place for argument.

Lew. Nor shall it be for violence. Imprudent man! who, in revenge for fancied injuries, would pierce the heart that loves him! But honest friendship acts from itself, unmoved by slander. You know me not.

Bev. Yes, for the slanderer of my fame—buzzing in every ear foul breach of trust, and family dishonour.

Lew. Have I done this? Who told you so?

Bev. The world—'Tis talked of everywhere. It pleased you to add threats too—You were to call me to account—Why, do it now, then: I should be proud of such an arbiter.

Lew. Put up your sword, and know me better. I never injured you. The base suggestion comes from Stukely: I see him and his aims.

Bev. What aims? I'll not conceal it—'twas Stukely that accused you.

Lew. To rid him of an enemy—Perhaps of two—He fears discovery, and frames a tale of falsehood, to ground revenge and murder on.

Bev. I must have proof of this.

Lew. Wait till to-morrow then.

Bev. I will.

Lew. Good night—I go to serve you—Forget what's past, as I do; and cheer your family with smiles—To-morrow may confirm them, and make all happy.

[Exit.]

Bev. How vile and how absurd is man! His boasted honour is but another name for pride, which easier bears the consciousness of guilt, than the world's just reproofs! But 'tis the fashion of the times; and in defence of falsehood and false honour, men die martyrs. I knew not that my nature was so bad.

Enter BATES and JARVIS.

Jar. This way the noise was; and yonder's my poor master.

Bates. I heard him at high words with Lewson.

Jar. I heard him too. Misfortunes vex him.

Bates. Go to him, and lead him home. I'll not be seen by him.

[Exit.]

Bev. [Starting.] What fellow's that! [Seeing JARVIS.] Art thou a murderer, friend? Come, lead the way—I have a hand as mischievous as thine; a heart as desperate too—Jarvis! to bed, old man—the cold will chill thee.

Jar. Why are you wandering at this late hour? Your sword drawn too? For Heaven's sake sheathe it, sir—the sight distracts me.

Bev. Whose voice was that?

[Wildly.]

Jar. 'Twas mine, sir: Let me entreat you to give the sword to me.

Bev. Ay, take it—quickly take it. Perhaps I am not so cursed, but Heaven may have sent thee at this moment to snatch me from perdition.

Jar. Then I am blessed.

Bev. Continue so, and leave me—my sorrows are contagious. No one is blessed that's near me.

Jar. I came to seek you, sir.

Bev. And now thou hast found me, leave me—My thoughts are wild, and will not be disturbed.

Jar. Such thoughts are best disturbed.

Bev. I tell thee that they will not. Who sent thee hither?

Jar. My weeping mistress. Alas, sir, forget your griefs, and let me lead you to her. The streets are dangerous.

Ber. Be wise, and leave me then. The night's black horrors are suited to my thoughts. These stones shall be my resting-place. [*Lies down.*] Here shall my soul brood o'er its miseries; till, with the fiends of hell, and guilty of the earth, I start and tremble at the morning's light.

Jar. For pity's sake, sir! [*Endeavours to raise him.*] Upon my knees I beg you to quit this place, and these sad thoughts. Let patience, not despair, possess you. Rise, I beseech you. There's not a moment of your absence that my poor mistress does not groan for.

Ber. Have I undone her, and is she still so kind? [*Starting up.*] It is too much. My brain can't hold it. Oh, Jarvis, how desperate is that wretch's state, which only death or madness can relieve.

Jar. [*Rising.*] Appease his mind, good Heaven, and give him resignation. Alas, sir! could beings in the other world perceive the events of this, how would your parents' blessed spirits grieve for you, even in heaven.—Let me conjure you, by their honoured memories—by the sweet innocence of your yet helpless child, and by the ceaseless sorrows of my poor mistress, to rouse your manhood, and struggle with these griefs!

Ber. Thou virtuous, good old man. Thy tears and thy entreaties have reached my heart, through all its miseries.

Jar. Be but resign'd, sir, and happiness may yet be yours.—Hark! I hear voices—Come this way: we may reach home unnoticed.

Ber. Well, lead me then—unnoticed didst thou say? Alas! I dread no looks, but of those wretches I have made at home. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—STUKELY'S Lodgings.

Enter STUKELY and DAWSON.

Stu. Come hither, Dawson; my limbs are on the rack, and my soul shivers in me, till this night's business be complete.—Tell me thy thoughts! is Bates determined, or does he waver?

Daw. At first he seemed irresolute:—wished the employment had been mine: and muttered curses on his coward hand, that trembled at the deed.

Stu. And did he leave you so?

Daw. No; we walked together, and, sheltered by the darkness, saw Beverley and Lewson in warm debate; but soon they cooled, and then I left them, to hasten hither; but not till 'twas resolved Lewson should die.

Stu. Thy words have given me life. That quarrel too was fortunate; for, if my hopes deceive me not, it promises a grave to Beverley.

Daw. You misconceive me—Lewson and he were friends.

Stu. But my prolific brain shall make them enemies. If Lewson falls, he falls by Beverley. Ask me no questions, but do as I direct. This writ [*takes out a pocket-book*] for some days past I have treasured here, till a convenient time called for its use.—That time is come; take it, and give it to an officer.—It must be served this instant.

[*Gives a paper.*]

Daw. On Beverley!

Stu. Look at it.—It is for the sums that I have lent him.

Daw. Must he to prison then?

Stu. I ask obedience, not replies. This night a gaol must be his lodging. 'Tis probable he's not gone home yet.—Wait at his door, and see it executed.

Daw. Upon a beggar! He has no means of payment.

Stu. Dull and insensible. If Lewson dies, who was it killed him? Why, he that was seen quarrelling with him: and I, that knew of Beverley's intents, arrested him in friendship.—A little late, perhaps; but 'twas a virtuous act, and men will thank me for it. Now, sir, you understand me.

Daw. Most perfectly; and will about it.

Stu. Haste, then; and when 'tis done, come back, and tell me.

Daw. Till then, farewell. [*Exit.*]

Stu. Now tell thy tale, fond wife; and, Lewson, if again thou canst insult me,

Not avarice now, but vengeance fires my breast,
And one short hour must make me curst or bless'd. [*Exit.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—Stukely's Lodgings.

Enter STUKELY, BATES, and DAWSON.

Bates. Poor Lewson! But I told you enough last night. The thought of him is horrible to me.

Stu. In the street, did you say? and no one near him?

Bates. By his own door; he was leading me to his house. I pretended business with him, and stabbed him to the heart, while he was reaching at the bell.

Stu. And did he fall so suddenly?

Bates. The repetition pleases you, I see.—I told you he fell without a groan.

Stu. What heard you of him this morning?

Bates. That the watch found him in their rounds, and alarmed the servants. I mingled with the crowd just now, and saw him dead in his own house.—The sight terrified me.

Stu. Away with terrors, till his ghost rise and accuse us. We have no living enemy to fear, unless 'tis Beverley; and him we have lodged safe in prison.

Bates. Must he be murdered too?

Stu. No; I have a scheme to make the law his murderer. At what hour did Lewson fall?

Bates. The clock struck twelve as I turned to leave him.—'Twas a melancholy bell, I thought, ringing for his death.

Stu. The time was lucky for us—Beverley was arrested at one, you say? [*To DAWSON.*]

Daw. Exactly.

Stu. Good. We'll talk of this presently. The women were with him, I think.

Daw. And old Jarvis. I would have told you of them last night, but your thoughts were too busy.—'Tis well you have a heart of stone; the tale would melt it else.

Stu. Out with it, then.

Daw. I traced him to his lodgings; and, pretending pity for his misfortunes, kept the door

open while the officers seized him. 'Twas a damned deed! but no matter—I followed my instructions.

Stu. And what said he?

Daw. He upbraided me with treachery, called you a villain, acknowledged the sums you had lent him, and submitted to his fortune.

Stu. And the women—

Daw. For a few minutes, astonishment kept them silent. They looked wildly at one another, while the tears streamed down their cheeks. But rage and fury soon gave them words; and then, in the very bitterness of despair, they cursed me, and the monster that had employed me.

Stu. And you bore it with philosophy?

Daw. Till the scene changed, and then I melted. I ordered the officers to take away their prisoner. The women shrieked, and would have followed him; but we forbade them. 'Twas then they fell upon their knees, the wife fainted, the sister raving, and both, with all the eloquence of misery, endeavouring to soften us. I never felt compassion till that moment; and, had the officers been moved like me, we had left the business undone, and fled with curses on ourselves. But their hearts were steeled by custom. The sighs of beauty, and the pangs of affection, were beneath their pity. They tore him from their arms, and lodged him in prison, with only Jarvis to comfort him.

Stu. There let him lie, till we have farther business with him. You saw him quarrelling with Lewson in the street, last night? [To BATES.]

Bates. I did: his steward, Jarvis, saw him too.

Stu. And shall attest it: here's matter to work upon—An unwilling evidence carries weight with him. Something of my design I have hinted t'you before.—Beverley must be the author of this murder, and we the parties to convict him. But how to proceed will require time and thought. Come along with me—the room within is fitted for privacy. But no compassion, sir! [To DAWSON.] We want leisure for't. This way. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—*Beverley's Lodgings.*—*Mrs. BEVERLEY and CHARLOTTE discovered sitting.*

Mrs. B. No news of Lewson yet?

Cha. None. He went out early, and knows not what has happened. [Clock strikes.]

Mrs. B. The clock strikes eight. [Rising.] I'll wait no longer.

Cha. [Rising.] Stay but till Jarvis comes. He has sent twice to stop us till we see him.

Mrs. B. Oh, what a night was last night! I would not pass another such to purchase worlds by it. My poor Beverley, too! What must he have felt? I wanted love for him, or they had not forced him from me. They should have parted soul and body first.—I was too tame.

Cha. You must not talk so.—All that we could we did; and Jarvis did the rest. The faithful creature will give him comfort. See where he comes. His looks are cheerful too.

Enter JARVIS.

Mrs. B. Are *these* then cheerful! Alas, he weeps! Speak to him, Charlotte, I have no tongue to ask him questions.

Cha. How does your master, Jarvis?

Jar. I am old and foolish, madam; and tears will come before my words. But don't you weep [To Mrs. B.]; I have a tale of joy for you.

Mrs. B. Say but he's well, and I have joy enough.

Jar. All shall be well. I have news for him that will make his poor heart bound again. Fy upon old age! How childish it makes me! I have a tale of joy for you, and my tears drown it.

Mrs. B. What is it, Jarvis?

Jar. Yet why should I rejoice when a good man dies? Your uncle, madam, died yesterday.

Mrs. B. My uncle!—Oh, heavens!

Cha. How heard you of his death?

Jar. His steward came express, madam. I met him in the street, inquiring for your lodgings. I should not rejoice, perhaps; but he was old, and my poor master a prisoner. Now he shall live again. Oh, 'tis a brave fortune! and, 'twas death to me to see him a prisoner.

Cha. How did he pass the night, Jarvis?

Jar. Like a man dreaming of death and horrors. When they led him to his cell, he flung himself upon a wretched bed, and lay speechless till day-break. I spoke to him, but he would not hear me; and when I persisted, he raised his hand at me, and knit his brow so—I thought he would have struck me. I bid him be of comfort—Begone, old wretch, says he—My wife! my child! my sister! I have undone them all, and will know no comfort! Then, falling upon his knees, he imprecated curses upon himself.

Mrs. B. This is too horrible! But we have stayed too long. Let us haste to comfort him, or die with him. [Exeunt.]

SCENE III.—*A Prison.*—*BEVERLEY is discovered sitting in the back-ground.*

Bev. Why, there's an end then; I have judged deliberately, and the result is death! How the self-murderer's account may stand, I know not. [Rises.] But this I know—the load of hateful life oppresses me too much. The horrors of my soul are more than I can bear. [Offers to kneel.] Father of mercy!—I cannot pray—Despair has laid his iron hand upon me, and sealed me for perdition. Conscience! conscience! thy clamours are too loud! Here's that shall silence thee. [Takes a phial out of his pocket, and looks at it.] Thou art most friendly to the miserable. Come, then, thou cordial for sick minds—Come to my heart. [Drinks.] Oh, that the grave would bury memory as well as body! For, if the soul sees and feels the sufferings of those dear ones it leaves behind, the Everlasting has no vengeance to torment it deeper—I'll think no more on't—Reflection comes too late—Once there was a time for't—but now 'tis past.—Who's there?

Enter JARVIS.

Jar. One, that hoped to see you with better looks. Why do you turn so from me? I have brought comfort with me. And see who comes to give it welcome!

Bev. My wife and sister! Why, 'tis but one pang more, then, and farewell, world! [Aside.]

Enter Mrs. BEVERLEY and CHARLOTTE.

Mrs. B. Where is he? [Runs and embraces him.] Oh, I have him! I have him! And now they shall never part us more. I have news, love, to make you happy for ever.—Alas, he hears us not!—Speak to me, love. I have no heart to see you thus.

Bev. This is a sad place.

Mrs. B. We come to take you from it—to tell you the world goes well again—that Providence has seen our sorrows, and sent the means to help them.—Your uncle died yesterday.

Bev. My uncle! No, do not say so! Oh, I am sick at heart!

Mrs. B. Indeed! I meant to bring you comfort.

Bev. Tell me he lives, then. If you would bring me comfort, tell me he lives!

Mrs. B. And if I did—I have no power to raise the dead—He died yesterday.

Bev. And I am heir to him?

Jar. To his whole estate, sir. But bear it patiently—pray, bear it patiently.

Bev. Well, well. [*Pausing.*] Why, fame says I am rich then?

Mrs. B. And truly so. Why do you look so wildly?

Bev. Do I? The news was unexpected. But has he left me all?

Jar. All, all, sir. He could not leave it from you.

Bev. I am sorry for it.

Mrs. B. Why are you disturbed so?

Bev. Has death no terrors in it?

Mrs. B. Not an old man's death. Yet, if it troubles you, I wish him living.

Bev. And I, with all my heart. For I have a tale to tell shall turn you into stone! or, if the power of speech remain, you shall kneel down and curse me.

Mrs. B. Alas! what tale is this? And why are we to curse you? I'll bless you for ever.

Bev. No; I have deserved no blessings. The world holds not such another wretch. All this large fortune, this second bounty of Heaven, that might have healed our sorrows, and satisfied our utmost hopes, in a cursed hour I sold last night.

Mrs. B. Impossible!

Bev. That devil, Stukely, with all hell to aid him, tempted me to the deed. To pay false debts of honour, and to redeem past errors, I sold the reversion—sold it for a scanty sum, and lost it among villains.

Cha. Why, farewell all then!

Bev. Liberty and life—Come, kneel and curse me.

Mrs. B. Then hear me, Heaven! [*Kneels.*] Look down with mercy on his sorrows! Give softness to his looks, and quiet to his heart! On me, on me, if misery must be the lot of either, multiply misfortunes! I'll bear them patiently, so he is happy! These hands shall toil for his support! And every duty of a fond and faithful wife be doubly done, to cheer and comfort him! So hear me! so reward me! [*Rises.*]

Bev. I would kneel too, but that offended Heaven would turn my prayers into curses. For I have done a deed to make life horrible to you—

Mrs. B. What deed?

Jar. Ask him no questions, madam. This last misfortune has hurt his brain. A little time will give him patience.

Enter STUKELY.

Bev. Why is this villain here?

Stu. To give you liberty and safety.—There, madam, is his discharge. [*Giving a paper to Mrs. BEVERLEY.*] The arrest last night was meant in friendship, but came too late.

Cha. What mean you, sir?

Stu. The arrest was too late, I say; I would have kept his hands from blood, but was too late.

Mrs. B. His hands from blood! Whose blood?

Stu. From Lewson's blood.

Cha. No, villain! Yet what of Lewson? Speak quickly.

Stu. You are ignorant then! I thought I heard the murderer at confession.

Cha. What murderer? And who is murdered? Not Lewson? Say he lives, and I'll kneel and worship you.

Stu. In pity, so I would; but that the tongues of all cry murder. I came in pity, not in malice, to save the brother, not kill the sister. Your Lewson's dead.

Cha. Oh, horrible.

Bev. Silence, I charge you. Proceed, sir.

Stu. No. Justice may stop the tale—and here's an evidence.

Enter BATES.

Bates. The news, I see, has reached you. But take comfort, madam. [*To CHARLOTTE.*] There's one without inquiring for you. Go to him, and lose no time.

Cha. O misery! misery!

[*Exit.*]

Mrs. B. Follow her, Jarvis. If it be true, that Lewson's dead, her grief may kill her.

Bates. Jarvis must stay here, madam. I have some questions for him.

Stu. Rather let him fly. His evidence may crush his master.

Bev. Why, ay; this looks like management.

Bates. He found you quarrelling with Lewson in the streets last night. [*To BEVERLEY.*]

Mrs. B. No; I am sure he did not.

Jar. Or if I did—

Mrs. B. 'Tis false, old man. They had no quarrel; there was no cause for quarrel.

Bev. Let him proceed, I say. Oh! I am sick! sick! Reach a chair. [*He sits.*]

Mrs. B. You droop and tremble, love. Yet you are innocent! If Lewson's dead, you killed him not.

Enter DAWSON.

Stu. Who sent for Dawson?

Bates. 'Twas I. We have a witness, too, you little think of—without there!

Stu. What witness?

Bates. A right one. Look at him.

Enter LEWSON and CHARLOTTE.

Stu. Lewson! O villains! villains!

[*To BATES and DAWSON.*]

Mrs. B. Risen from the dead? Why, this is unexpected happiness!

Cha. Or is it his ghost? [*To STUKELY.*] That sight would please you, sir.

Jar. What riddle's this?

Bev. Be quick and tell it. My minutes are but few.

Mrs. B. Alas! why so? You shall live long, and happily.

Lew. While shame and punishment shall rack that viper! [*Pointing to STUKELY.*] The tale is short. I was too busy in his secrets, and therefore doomed to die. Bates, to prevent the murder, undertook it. I kept aloof, to give it credit—

Cha. And gave me pangs unutterable.

Lew. I felt them all, and would have told you—But vengeance wanted ripening. The villain's

scheme was but half executed. The arrest by Dawson followed the supposed murder. And now, depending on his once wicked associates, he comes to fix the guilt on Beverley.

Mrs. B. Oh! execrable wretch!

Bates. Dawson and I are witnesses of this.

Lew. And of a thousand frauds. His fortune ruined by sharpers and false dice; and Stukely sole contriver and possessor of all.

Daw. Had he but stopt on this side murder, we had been villains still.

Lew. How does my friend? [To BEVERLEY.]

Bev. [Still sitting.] Why, well. Who's he that asks me?

Mrs. B. 'Tis Lewson, love. Why do you look so at him?

Bev. They told me he was murdered. [Wildly,

Mrs. B. Ay; but he lives to save us.

Bev. Lend me your hand. The room turns round.

Mrs. B. O Heaven!

Lew. This villain here disturbs him. Remove him from his sight—And, for your lives, see that you guard him. [STUKELY is taken off by DAWSON and BATES.] How is it, sir?

Bev. 'Tis here—and here. [Pointing to his head and heart.] And now it tears me.

Mrs. B. You feel convulsed too—What is't disturbs you?

Bev. O! I have been too hasty! A furnace rages in this heart—Down, restless flames! [Laying his hand on his heart.] Down to your native hell—There you shall rack me. Oh! for a pause from pain! Where's my wife? Can you forgive me, love?

Mrs. B. Alas! for what?

Bev. For meanly dying.

Mrs. B. No—do not say it.

Bev. As truly as my soul must answer it.—Had Jarvis stayed this morning, all had been well.

But pressed by shame—pent in a prison—tormented with my pangs for you—driven to despair and madness—I took the advantage of his absence, corrupted the poor wretch he left to guard me, and—swallowed poison.

Lew. O, fatal deed!

Bev. Ay, most accursed. And now I go to my account. Bend me, and let me kneel. [Kneels.] I'll pray for you too. Thou Power that madest me, hear me! If for a life of frailty, and this too hasty deed of death, thy justice dooms me, here I acquit the sentence; but if, enthroned in mercy where thou sittest, thy pity has beheld me, send me a gleam of hope, that in these last and bitter moments my soul may taste of comfort! and for these mourners here, Oh! let their lives be peaceful, and their deaths happy! Now I die.

Mrs. B. Restore him, Heaven! Oh, save him! save him! or let me die too.

Bev. No; live, I charge you. We have a little one. Though I have left him, you will not leave him. To Lewson's kindness I bequeath him. Is not this Charlotte? We have lived in love, though I have wronged you. Can you forgive me, Charlotte?

Cha. Forgive you! Oh, my poor brother!

Bev. Lend me your hand, love—so—raise me—No—I will not be! my life is finish'd. Oh! for a few short moments, to tell you how my heart bleeds for you. That even now, thus dying, as I am, dubious and fearful of hereafter, my bosom pang is for your miseries! Support her, Heaven! And now I go. Oh, mercy! mercy! [Dies.]

Lew. How is it, madam?

Cha. Her grief is speechless.

Lew. Remove her from this sight. Some ministering angel bring her peace!

[CHARLOTTE and JARVIS lead Mrs. B. away, but she rushes back, and throws herself on the corpse.]

THE MAN OF THE WORLD.

A COMEDY.

BY CHARLES MACKLIN.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SIR PERTINAX MACSYCOPHANT.

LORD LUMBERCOURT.

EGERTON.

SIDNEY.

MELVILLE.

COUNSELLOR PLAUSIBLE.

SERGEANT EITHERSIDE.

SAM.

JOHN.

TOMLINS.

LADY RODOLPHA LUMBERCOURT.

LADY MACSYCOPHANT.

CONSTANTIA.

BETTY HINT.

NANNY.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Library.

Enter BETTY and SAM.

Betty. The postman is at the gate, Sam; pray step and take in the letters.

Sam. John the gardener is gone for them, Mrs. Betty.

Betty. Bid John bring them to me, Sam: tell him I am here in the library.

Sam. I'll send him to your ladyship in a crack. *[Exit.]*

Enter NANNY.

Nanny. Miss Constantia desires to speak to you, Mrs. Betty.

Betty. How is she now?—any better, Nanny?

Nanny. Something;—but very low spirited still. I verily believe it is as you say.

Betty. O! I would take my book oath of it. I cannot be deceived in that point, Nanny.—Ay, ay, her business is done—she is certainly breeding, depend upon it.

Nanny. Why, so the housekeeper thinks too.

ACT. DRAMA.—NO. XXI.

Betty. Nay, I know the father, the man that ruined her.

Nanny. The deuce you do!

Betty. As sure as you are alive, Nanny; or I am greatly deceived—and yet—I can't be deceived neither.—Was not that the cook that came galloping so hard over the common just now?

Nanny. The same: how very hard he galloped; he has been but three quarters of an hour, he says, coming from Hyde-park-corner.

Betty. And what time will the family be down?

Nanny. He has orders to have dinner ready by five; there are to be lawyers, and a great deal of company here—he fancies there is to be a private wedding to-night, between our young Master Charles and Lord Lumbercourt's daughter, the Scotch lady, who, he says, is just come post from Bath, in order to be married to him.

Betty. Ay, ay, Lady Rodolpha—nay, like enough, for I know it has been talked of a good while: well, go tell Miss Constantia that I will be with her immediately.

Nanny. I shall, Mrs. Betty. *[Exit.]*

Betty. So!—I find they all believe the impertinent creature is breeding—that's pure! it will soon reach my lady's ears, I warrant.

Enter JOHN.

Well, John, ever a letter for me?

John. No, Mrs. Betty; but here is one for Miss Constantia.

Betty. Give it me—Hum! my lady's hand.

John. And here is one, which the postman says is for my young master—but it's a strange direction—*[Reading]* "To Charles Egerton, Esq."

Betty. O! yes, yes; this is for Master Charles, John; for he has dropped his father's name of Macsycophant, and has taken up that of Egerton—the parliament has ordered it.

John. The parliament!—pr'ythee, why so, Mrs. Betty?

Betty. Why, you must know, John, that my lady, his mother, was an Egerton, by her father; she stole a match with our old master, for which all her family, on both sides, have hated Sir Pertinax, and the whole crew of the Macsycophants, ever since; and so, John, my lady's uncle, Sir Stanley Egerton, dying an old bachelor, and, as I

said before, mortally hating our old master, and all the crew of the Macsycophants, left his whole estate to Master Charles, who was his godson; but on condition that he should drop his father's name of Macsycophant, and take up that of Egerton, and that is the reason, John, why the parliament has made him change his name.

John. I am glad that Master Charles has got the estate, however, for he is a sweet-tempered gentleman.

Betty. As ever lived.—But come, John; as I know you love Miss Constantia, and are fond of being where she is, I will make you happy; you shall carry this letter to her.

John. Shall I, Mrs. Betty? I am much obliged to you.—Where is she?

Betty. In the housekeeper's room, settling the dessert. Give me Mr. Egerton's letter, and I'll leave it on the table in his dressing-room: I see it is from his brother Sandy.—So—now go and deliver your letter to your sweetheart, John.

John. That I will; and I am much beholden to you for the favour of letting me carry it to her: for though she should never have me, yet I shall always love her, and wish to be near her, she is so sweet a creature. Your servant, Mrs. Betty.

[Exit.

Betty. Your servant, John.—Ha, ha, ha! poor fellow! he perfectly doats on her; and daily follows her about with nosegays and fruit, and the first of everything in the season. Ay, and my young master, Charles, too, is in as bad a way as the gardener:—in short, everybody loves her, and that's one reason why I hate her. For my part, I wonder what the deuce the men see in her—a creature that was taken in for charity; I'm sure she's not so handsome. I wish she was out of the family once; if she was, I might then stand a chance of being my lady's favourite myself—ay, and perhaps of getting one of my young masters for a sweetheart, or at least the chaplain: but as to him, there would be no such great catch if I should get him. I will try for him, however; and my first step shall be to tell the doctor all I have discovered about Constantia's intrigues with her spark at Hadley. Yes, that will do; for the doctor loves to talk with me—loves to hear me talk, too; and I verily believe—he, he, he! that he has a sneaking kindness for me, and this story will make him have a good opinion of my honesty, and that, I am sure, will be one step towards—O! bless me, here he comes, and my young master with him. I'll watch an opportunity to speak to him as soon as he is alone, for I will blow her up. I am as resolved, as great a favourite and as cunning as she is. [Exit.

Enter EGERTON, SIDNEY following, as if in earnest conversation.

Sid. Nay, dear Charles, but why are you so impetuous? Why do you break from me so abruptly?

Eger. I have done, sir; you have refused. I have nothing more to say upon the subject. I am satisfied.

Sid. Come, come, correct this warmth—it is the only weak ingredient in your nature, and you ought to watch it carefully. Because I will not abet an unwarrantable passion by an abuse of my sacred character, in marrying you beneath your rank, and in direct opposition to your father's hopes and happiness—you blame me, you angrily break from me, and call me unkind.

Eger. Dear Sidney, for my warmth I stand condemned; but for my marriage with Constantia, I think I can justify it upon every principle of filial duty, honour, and worldly prudence.

Sid. Only make that appear, Charles, and you know you may command me.

Eger. I am sensible how unseemly it appears in a son to descant on the unamiable passions of a parent; but, as we are alone, and friends, I cannot help observing, in my own defence, that when a father will not allow the use of reason to any of his family—when his pursuit of greatness makes him a slave abroad, only to be a tyrant at home—when a narrow partiality to Scotland, on every trivial occasion, provokes him to enmity even with his wife and children, only because they give a national preference where they think it most justly due; and when, merely to gratify his own ambition, he would marry his son into a family he detests; sure, Sidney, a son thus circumstanced (from the dignity of human reason, and the feelings of a loving heart) has a right—not only to protest against the blindness of a parent, but to pursue those measures that virtue and happiness point out.

Sid. The violent temper of Sir Pertinax, I own, cannot be defended on many occasions, but still—your intended alliance with Lord Lumbercourt—

Eger. [With impatience.] O! contemptible!—a trifling, quaint, haughty, voluptuous, servile tool! the mere lackey of party and corruption; who, for the prostitution of near thirty years, and the ruin of a noble fortune, has had the despicable satisfaction, and the infamous honour, of being kicked up and kicked down, kicked in and kicked out, just as the insolence, compassion, or convenience of leaders predominated: and now, being forsaken by all parties, his whole political consequence amounts to the power of franking a letter, and the right honourable privilege of not paying a tradesman's bill.

Sid. Well, but, dear Charles, you are not to wed my lord, but his daughter.

Eger. Who is as disagreeable to me for a companion, as her father for a friend or an ally.

Sid. What, her Scotch accent, I suppose, offends you?

Eger. No, upon my honour; not in the least; I think it entertaining in her: but, were it otherwise, in decency, and indeed in national affection, being a Scotchman myself, I can have no objection to her on that account: besides, she is my near relation.

Sid. So I understand. But pray, Charles, how came Lady Rodolpha, who I find was born in England, to be bred in Scotland?

Eger. From the dotage of an old, formal, obstinate, stiff, rich, Scotch grandmother, who, upon a promise of leaving this grandchild all her fortune, would have the girl sent to her to Scotland, when she was but a year old, and there has she been ever since, bred up with this old lady, in all the vanity and unlimited indulgence that fondness and admiration could bestow on a spoiled child, a fancied beauty, and a pretended wit: and is this a woman fit to make my happiness? this the partner that Sidney would recommend to me for life?—to you, who best know me, I appeal.

Sid. Why, Charles, it is a delicate point, unfit for me to determine; besides, your father has set his heart upon the match.

Eger. All that I know; but still I ask and in-

sist upon your candid judgment: is she the kind of woman that you think could possibly contribute to my happiness? I beg you will give me an explicit answer.

Sid. The subject is disagreeable; but, since I must speak, I do not think she is.

Eger. I know you do not; and I am sure you never will advise the match.

Sid. I never will—I never will.

Eger. You make me happy; which, I assure you, I never could be with your judgment against me in this point.

Sid. But pray, Charles, suppose I had been so indiscreet as to have agreed to marry you to Constantia, would she have consented, think you?

Eger. That I cannot say positively; but I suppose so.

Sid. Did you never speak to her upon that subject then?

Eger. In general terms only: never directly requested her consent in form. But I will this very moment; for I have no asylum from my father's arbitrary design, but my Constantia's arms. Pray do not stir from hence; I will return instantly. I know she will submit to your advice; and I am sure you will persuade her to my wish, as my life, my peace, my earthly happiness, depend on my Constantia. *[Exit.*

Sid. Poor Charles! he little dreams that I love Constantia too; but to what degree I knew not myself, till he importuned me to join their hands. Yes—I love—but must not be a rival, for he is dear to me as fraternal affinity.

Enter BETTY.

Betty. I beg pardon for my intrusion, sir. I hope, sir, I don't disturb your reverence?

Sid. Not in the least, Mrs. Betty.

Betty. I humbly beg you will excuse me, sir; but I wanted to break my mind to your honour—about a scruple that lies upon my conscience; and indeed I should not have presumed to trouble you, sir, but that I know you are my young master's friend, and my old master's friend, and, indeed, a friend to the whole family; for, to give you your due, sir, you are as good a preacher as ever went into a pulpit.

Sid. Ha, ha, ha! do you think so, Mrs. Betty?

Betty. Ay, in truth do I; and as good a gentleman, too, as ever came into a family, and one that never gives a servant a bad word, nor that does any one an ill turn, neither behind their back nor before their face.

Sid. Ha, ha, ha! why, you are a mighty well-spoken woman, Mrs. Betty, and I am mightily beholden to you for your good character of me.

Betty. Indeed, sir, it is no more than you deserve, and what all the world and all the servants say of you.

Sid. I am much obliged to them, Mrs. Betty; but, pray, what are your commands with me?

Betty. Why, I'll tell you, sir—to be sure, I am but a servant, as a body may say—and every tub should stand upon its own bottom; but—*[She lays her hand familiarly on his shoulder, speaking in a deep whisper]*—my young master is now in the china-room, in close conference with Miss Constantia. I know what they are about, but that is no business of mine; and, therefore, I made bold to listen a little—because, you know, sir, one would be sure, before one took away anybody's reputation.

Sid. Very true, Mrs. Betty—very true, indeed.

Betty. Oh! heavens forbid that I should take away any young woman's good name, unless I had a good reason for it; but, sir, *[In a tone of vulgar positiveness]* if I am in this place alive, as I listened, with my ear close to the door, I heard my young master ask Miss Constantia the plain marriage question; upon which I started and trembled, nay, my very conscience stirred within me so, that I could not help peeping through the key-hole.

Sid. Ha, ha, ha! and so your conscience made you peep through the key-hole, Mrs. Betty?

Betty. It did, indeed, sir; and there I saw my young master upon his knees—Lord bless us—and what do you think he was doing?—kissing her hand as if he would eat it, and protesting, and assuring her, he knew that you, sir, would consent to the match, and then the tears ran down her cheeks as fast—

Sid. Ay!

Betty. They did indeed. I would not tell your reverence a lie for the world.

Sid. I believe it, Mrs. Betty; and what did Constantia say to all this?

Betty. Oh!—Oh! she is sly enough; she looks as if butter would not melt in her mouth; but all is not gold that glisters—smooth water, you know, sir, runs deepest: I am sorry my young master makes such a fool of himself; but, um—take my word for it, he is not the man; for, though she looks as modest as a maid at a christening—yet—ah!—when sweethearts meet, in the dusk of the evening, and stay together a whole hour, in the dark grove, and embrace, and kiss, and weep at parting—why, then, you know, sir, it is easy to guess all the rest.

Sid. Why, did Constantia meet anybody in this manner.

Betty. *[With affected modesty.]* O! heavens! I beg, sir, you will not misapprehend me; for, I assure you, I do not believe they did any harm—that is, not in the grove; at least, not when I was there; and she may be honestly married, for aught I know. O! lud, sir, I would not say an ill thing of Miss Constantia for the world. I only say they did meet in the dark walk; and all the servants observe that Miss Constantia wears her stays very loose, looks very pale, is sick in the morning and after dinner; and, as sure as my name is Betty Hint, something has happened that I won't name; but, nine months hence, a certain person in this family may ask me to stand godmother: for I think I know what's what, when I see it, as well as another.

Sid. No doubt you do, Mrs. Betty.

Betty. I do, indeed, sir: *[Going]* and so, your servant, sir. *[Returning.]* But I hope your worship won't mention my name in this business; or that you had an item from me.

Sid. I shall not, Mrs. Betty.

Betty. For, indeed, sir, I am no busybody, nor do I love fending nor proving; and I assure you, sir, I hate all titling and tattling, and gossiping and backbiting, and taking away a person's good name.

Sid. I observe you do, Mrs. Betty.

Betty. I do, indeed, sir. I am the farthest from it in the world.

Sid. I dare say you are.

Betty. I am, indeed, sir; and so your humble servant.

Sid. Your servant, Mrs. Betty.

Betty. [*Aside, in an exulting air.*] So! I see he believes every word I say—that's charming. I'll do her business for her, I'm resolved. [*Exit.*]

Sid. What can this ridiculous creature mean by her dark walk, her private spark, her kissing, and all her slanderous insinuations against Constantia, whose conduct is as unblamable as innocence itself? I see envy is as malignant in a paltry waiting wench, as in the vainest or most ambitious lady of the court. It is always an infallible mark of the basest nature; and merit in the lowest, as well as in the highest station, must feel the shaft of envy's constant agents—falsehood and slander. [*Exit.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Library.*

Enter CONSTANTIA and EGERTON.

Con. Mr. Sidney is not here, sir.

Eger. I assure you I left him, and begged he would stay till I returned.

Con. His prudence, you see, sir, has made him retire; therefore we had better defer the subject till he is present; in the mean time, sir, I hope you will permit me to mention an affair that has greatly alarmed and perplexed me: I suppose you guess what it is?

Eger. I do not, upon my word.

Con. That is a little strange. You know, sir, that you and Mr. Sidney did me the honour of breakfasting with me this morning in my little study.

Eger. We had that happiness, madam.

Con. Just after you left me, upon opening my book of accounts, which lay in the draw of the reading-desk, to my great surprise, I there found this case of jewels, containing a most elegant pair of ear-rings, a necklace of great value, and two bank-bills in this pocket-book, the mystery of which, sir, I presume, you can explain?

Eger. I can.

Con. They were of your conveying, then?

Eger. They were, madam.

Con. I assure you they startled and alarmed me.

Eger. I hope it was a kind of alarm, such as blushing virtue feels, when, with her hand, she gives her heart and last consent.

Con. It was not, indeed, sir.

Eger. Do not say so, Constantia: come, be kind at once; my peace and worldly bliss depend upon this moment.

Con. What would you have me do?

Eger. What love and virtue dictate.

Con. O! sir, experience but too severely proves, that such unequal matches as ours, never produce aught but contempt and anger in parents, censure from the world, and a long train of sorrow and repentance in the wretched parties; which is but too often entailed upon their hapless issue.

Eger. But that, Constantia, cannot be our case: my fortune is independent and ample; equal to luxury and splendid folly. I have a right to choose the partner of my heart.

Con. But I have not, sir; I am a dependant on my lady—a poor, forsaken, helpless orphan; your benevolent mother found me, took me to her bosom,

and there supplied my parental loss, with every tender care, indulgent dalliance—and with all the sweet persuasion that maternal fondness, religious precept, polished manners, and hourly example could administer—she fostered me: [*Weeps*] and shall I now turn viper, and with black ingratitude sting the tender heart that thus hath cherished me? Shall I seduce her house's heir, and kill her peace? No; though I loved to the mad extreme of female fondness; though every worldly bliss that woman's vanity or man's ambition could desire, followed the indulgence of my love, and all the contempt and misery of this life, the denial of that indulgence, I would discharge my duty to my benefactress—my earthly guardian, my more than parent.

Eger. My dear Constantia, your prudence, your gratitude, and the cruel virtue of your self-denial, do but increase my love, my admiration, and my misery.

Con. Sir, I must beg you will give me leave to return these bills and jewels.

Eger. Pray do not mention them: sure my kindness and esteem may be indulged so far without suspicion or reproach—I beg you will accept of them; nay, I insist.

Con. I have done, sir; my station here is to obey. I know, sir, they are gifts of a virtuous mind; and mine shall convert them to the tenderest and most grateful use.

Eger. Hark! I hear a coach: it is my father. Dear girl, retire and compose yourself. I will send my lady and Sidney to you; and by their judgment we will be directed: will that satisfy you?

Con. I can have no will but my lady's. With your leave, I will retire; I would not see her in this confusion.

Eger. Dear girl, adieu! [*Exit* CONSTANTIA.

Enter SAM.

Sam. Sir Pertinax and my lady are come, sir; and my lady desires to speak with you in her own room: Oh! here she is, sir. [*Exit.*]

Enter Lady MACSYCOPHANT.

Lady M. [*Greatly agitated.*] Dear child, I am glad to see you: why did not you come to town yesterday, to attend the levee? your father is incensed to the utmost at your not being there.

Eger. Madam, it is with extreme regret I tell you, that I can be no longer a slave to his temper, his politics, and his scheme of marrying me to this woman; therefore you had better consent at once to my going out of the kingdom, and my taking Constantia with me—for without her I never can be happy.

Lady M. As you regard my peace, or your own character, I beg you will not be guilty of so rash a step. You promised me you never would marry her without my consent. I will open it to your father. Pray, dear Charles, be ruled: let me prevail.

Sir P. [*Without, in great anger.*] Sir, wull ye do as ye are bid, and haud your gab, you rascal! You are so full of gab, you scoundrel. Take the chesnut gelding, return to toon directly, and see what is become of my Lord Lumbercourt.

Lady M. Here he comes. I will get out of his way. But, I beg, Charles, while he is in this ill humour, that you will not oppose him, let him say what he will—when his passion is a little cool, I

will return, and try to bring him to reason—but do not thwart him.

Eger. Madam, I will not.

[Exit Lady MACSYCOPHANT.]

Sir P. [Without.] Here, you Tomlins, where is my son Egerton?

Tom. [Without.] In the library, sir.

Sir P. [Without.] As soon as the lawyers come, be sure bring me word.

Enter Sir PERTINAX, with great haughtiness, and in anger.—EGERTON bows two or three times most submissively low.

Sir P. Weel, sir! vary weel! vary weel: are nat ye a fine spark? are ye nat a fine spark, I say? ah! you are a—so you wou'd not come up till the levee?

Eger. Sir, I beg your pardon; but I was not very well; besides, I did not think my presence there was necessary.

Sir P. [Snapping him up.] Sir, it was necessary; I tauld you it was necessary; and, sir, I must now tell you that the whole tenor of your conduct is most offensive.

Eger. Sir, I am sorry you think so, sir; I am sure I do not mean to offend you.

Sir P. I care not what you intend. Sir, I tell you, you do offend. What is the meaning of this conduct, sir?—neglect the levee!—death, sir, you—what is your reason, I say, for thus neglecting the levee, and disobeying my commands?

Eger. [With a stifled filial resentment.] Sir, I am not used to levees; nor do I know how to dispose of myself; nor what to say or do in such a situation.

Sir P. [With a proud angry resentment.] Zounds, sir, do you not see what others do? gentle and simple, temporal and spiritual, lords, members, judges, generals, and bishops; aw crowding, bustling, and pushing foremost intil the middle of the circle, and there waiting, watching, and striving to catch a look or a smile fra the great mon, which they meet wi' an amicable reesibility of aspect—a modest cadence of body, and a conciliating co-operation of the whole mon; which expresses an officious promptitude for his service, and indicates that they luock upon themselves as the suppliant appendages of his power, and the enlisted Swiss of his poleetical fortune; this, sir, is what you ought to do, and this, sir, is what I never once omitted for this five-and-thirty years, let who would be minister.

Eger. [Aside.] Contemptible!

Sir P. What is that you mutter, sir?

Eger. Only a slight reflection, sir, not relative to you.

Sir P. Sir, your absenting yourself fra the levee at this juncture is suspicious—it is looked upon as a kind of disaffection, and aw your countrymen are highly offended at your conduct. For this, sir, they do not look upon you as a friend or weel-wisher either to Scotland or Scotchmen.

Eger. [With a quick warmth.] Then, sir, they wrong me, I assure you; but, pray, sir, in what particular can I be charged, either with coldness or offence to my country.

Sir P. Why, sir, ever since your mother's uncle, Sir Stanley Egerton, left you his three thousand pounds a-year, and that you have, in compliance with his will, taken up the name of Egerton, they think you are grown proud—that you have estranged yourself fra the Macsycophants—have associated

with your mother's family—with the opposeetion—and with those who do not wish well to Scotland; besides, sir, the other day, in a conversation, at dinner, at your cousin Campbell M'Kenzie's, before a whole table full of your ain relations, did you not publicly wish a total extinguishment to aw party, and of aw national distinctions whatever, relative to the three kingdoms?—[With great anger.]—And, you blockhead—was that a prudent wish before so many of your ain countrymen? or was it a filial language to hold before me?

Eger. Sir, with your pardon, I cannot think it unfilial or imprudent.—[With a most patriotic warmth.]—I own I do wish—most ardently wish for a total extinction of all party; particularly—that those of English, Irish, and Scotch, might never more be brought into contest or competition, unless, like loving brothers, in generous emulation for one common cause.

Sir P. How, sir! do you persist? what! wou'd you banish aw party, and aw distinction between English, Irish, and your ain countrymen?

Eger. [With great dignity of spirit.] I would, sir.

Sir P. Then damn you, sir, you are nae true Scot. Ay, sir, you may look as angry as you will, but again I say, you are nae true Scot.

Eger. Your pardon, sir, I think he is the true Scot and the true citizen, who wishes equal justice to the merit and demerit of every subject of Great Britain; amongst whom I know but of two distinctions.

Sir P. Weel, sir, and what are those—what are those?

Eger. The knave and the honest man.

Sir P. Pshaw! rideeculous.

Eger. And he who makes any other—let him be of the north, or of the south—of the east, or of the west—in place, or out of place, is an onemy to the whole, and to the virtues of humanity.

Sir P. Ay, sir, this is your brother's impudent doctrine, for the which I have banished him for ever fra my presence, my heart, and my fortune. Sir, I will have no son of mine, because truly he has been educated in an English seminary, presume, under the mask of candour, to speak against his native land, or against my principles. Scotchmen, sir, Scotchmen, wherever they meet throughout aw the globe, should unite, and stick together, as it were in a political phalanx. However, nae mair of that now; I will talk at large to you about that anon. In the meanwhile, sir, notwithstanding your contempt of my advice, and your disobedience till my commands, I will convince you of my paternal attention till your welfare, by my management of this voluptuary—this Lord Lumbercourt, whose daughter you are to marry. You ken, sir, that the fellow has been my patron above these five-and-thirty years.

Eger. True, sir.

Sir P. Vary weel. And now, sir, you see, by his prodigality, he is become my dependant; and, accordingly, I have made my bargain with him; the devil a baubee he has in the world but what comes through these clutches; for his whole estate, which has three implectic boroughs upon it—mark—is now in my custody at lurse; the which estate, on my paying off his debts, and allowing him a life rent of five thousand pounds per annum, is to be made over till me for my life, and at my death is to descend till ye and your issue. The peerage of Lumbercourt, you ken, will follow of course. So,

sir, you see, there are three impleecit boroughs, the whole patrimony of Lumbercourt, and a peerage at one slap. Why, it is a stroke—a hit—a hit. Zounds! sir, a mon may live a century, and not make sic an hit again.

Eger. It is a very advantageous bargain, indeed, sir; but what will my lord's family say to it?

Sir P. Why, mon, he cares not if his family were aw at the devil, so his luxury is but gratified; only let him have his race-horse to feed his vanity; his harridan to drink drams with him, scrat his face, and burn his perriwig, when she is in her maudlin hysterics; and three or four discontented patriotic dependants to abuse the ministry, and settle the affairs of the nation, when they are aw intoxicated; and then, sir, the fellow has aw his wishes, and aw his wants, in this world and the next.

Enter TOMLINS.

Tom. Lady Rodolpha is come, sir.

Sir P. And my lord?

Tom. Not yet, sir; he is about a mile behind, the servants say.

Sir P. Let me know the instant he arrives.

Tom. I shall, sir. *[Exit.*

Sir P. Step you out, Charles, and receive Lady Rodolpha; and, I desire you will treat her with as much respect and gallantry as possible; for my lord has hinted that you have been very remiss as a lover. Adzooks, Charles, you should administer a whole torrent of flattery till her; for a woman ne'er thinks a mon loves her, till he has made an idiot of her understanding by flattery: flattery is the prime bliss of the sex, the nectar and ambrosia of their charms, and you can ne'er gi' 'em o'er muckle on't; so, there's a guid lad, gang and mind your flattery. *[Exit EGERTON.]* Hah! I must keep a devilish tight hand upon this party. Ah! I am frightened out of my wits, lest his mother's family should seduce him to desert to their party, which would totally ruin my whole scheme, and break my heart. A fine time of day for a blockhead to turn patriot—when the character is exploded, marked, proscribed! Why the common people, the very vulgar, have found out the jest, and laugh at a patriot now-a-days, just as they do at a conjurer, a magician, or any other impostor in society.

Enter TOMLINS and Lord LUMBERCOURT.

Tom. Lord Lumbercourt.

[Exit.

Lord L. Sir Pert'nax, I kiss your hand.

Sir P. Your lordship's most devoted.

Lord L. Why, you stole a march upon me this morning; gave me the slip, Mac; though I never wanted your assistance more in my life. I thought you would have called upon me.

Sir P. My dear lord, I beg ten millions of pardons for leaving town before you; but ye ken that your lordship, at dinner yesterday, settled it that we should meet this morning at the levee.

Lord L. That I acknowledge, Mac; I did promise to be there, I own.

Sir P. You did, indeed; and accordingly I was at the levee, and waited there till every soul was gone, and, seeing you did not come, I concluded that your lordship was gone before.

Lord L. Why, to confess the truth, my dear Mac, those old sinners, Lord Freakish, General Jolly, Sir Anthony Soaker, and two or three more of that set, laid hold of me last night at the Opera; and, as the General says, "from the intelligence of

my head this morning," I believe we drank pretty deep ere we parted; ha, ha, ha!

Sir P. Ha, ha, ha! nay, if you were with that party, my lord, I do not wonder at not seeing your lordship at the levee.

Lord L. The truth is, Sir Pertinax, my fellow let me sleep too long for the levee. But I wish I had seen you before you left town; I wanted you dreadfully.

Sir P. I am heartily sorry that I was not in the way; but on what account did you want me?

Lord L. Ha, ha, ha! a cursed awkward affair—and—Ha, ha, ha!—yet I can't help laughing at it, neither, though it vexed me confoundedly.

Sir P. Vexed you, my lord! Zounds, I wish I had been with you! But, for Heaven's sake, my lord, what was it that could possibly vex your lordship?

Lord L. Why, that impudent, teasing, dunning rascal, Mahogany, my upholsterer:—you know the fellow?

Sir P. Perfectly, my lord.

Lord L. The impudent scoundrel has sued me up to some damned kind of a—something or other in the law, that I think they call an execution.

Sir P. The rascal!

Lord L. Upon which, sir, the fellow, by way of asking pardon—ha, ha, ha!—had the modesty to wait on me two or three days ago, to inform my honour—ha, ha, ha!—as he was pleased to dignify me, that the execution was now ready to be put in force against my honour; but that, out of respect to my honour, as he had taken a great deal of my honour's money, he would not suffer his lawyer to serve it, till he had first informed my honour, because he was not willing to affront my honour—ha, ha, ha!—a son of a w—!

Sir P. I never heard of so impudent a dog.

Lord L. Now, my dear Mac—ha, ha, ha!—as the scoundrel's apology was so very satisfactory, and his information so very agreeable, I told him that, in honour, I thought that my honour could not do less than to order his honour to be paid immediately.

Sir P. Vary weel, vary weel; you were as complaisant to the scoundrel till the full, I think, my lord.

Lord L. You shall hear, you shall hear, Mac:—so, sir, with great composure, seeing a smart oaken cudgel that stood very handily in a corner of my dressing-room, I ordered two of my fellows to hold the rascal, and another to take the cudgel, and return the scoundrel's civility with a good drubbing, as long as the stick lasted.

Sir P. Ha, ha, ha! admirable! as good a stroke of humour as ever I heard of. And, did they drub him, my lord?

Lord L. Most liberally, most liberally, sir; and there I thought the affair would have rested, till I should think proper to pay the scoundrel; but this morning, just as I was stepping into my chaise, my servants about me, a fellow, called a tipstaff, stepped up, and begged the favour of my footman, who threshed the upholsterer, and of the two that held him, to go along with him upon a little business to my Lord Chief Justice.

Sir P. The devil!

Lord L. And at the same instant, I, in my turn, was accosted by two other very civil scoundrels, who, with a most insolent politeness, begged my pardon, and informed me that I must not go into my own chaise!

Sir P. How, my lord, not into your ain carriage?

Lord L. No, sir; for that they, by order of the sheriff, must seize it, at the suit of a gentleman—one Mr. Mahogany, an upholsterer.

Sir P. An impudent villain!

Lord L. It is all true, I assure you; so you see, my dear Mac, what a damned country this is to live in, where noblemen are obliged to pay their debts just like merchants, cobblers, peasants, or mechanics—is not that a scandal, dear Mac, to this nation?

Sir P. My lord, it is not only a scandal, but a national grievance.

Lord L. Sir, there's not a nation in the world has such a grievance to complain of.

Sir P. Vary true, my lord, vary true; and it is monstrous that a mon of your lordship's condition is not entitled to run one of these mechanics through the body, when he is impertinent about his money; but our laws shamefully, on these occasions, make no distinction of persons amongst us.

Lord L. A vile policy, indeed, Sir Pertinax. But, sir, the scoundrel has seized upon the house, too; that I furnished for the girl I took from the Opera.

Sir P. I never heard of sic an a scoundrel.

Lord L. Ay, but what concerns me moat, I am afraid, my dear Mac, that the villain will send down to Newmarket, and seize my string of horses.

Sir P. Your string of horses? zounds! we must prevent that at all events, that would be sic a disgrace. I will despatch an express to town directly, to put a stop till the rascal's proceedings.

Lord L. Pr'ythee do, my dear Sir Pertinax.

Sir P. O! it shall be done, my lord.

Lord L. Thou art an honest fellow, Sir Pertinax, upon honour.

Sir P. O! my lord, it is my duty to oblige your lordship to the utmost stretch of my abeility.

Enter TOMLINS.

Tom. Colonel Toper presents his compliments to you, sir, and having no family down with him in the country, he and Captain Hardbottle, if not inconvenient, will do themselves the honour of taking a family diinner with you.

Sir P. They are two of our militia officers—does your lordship know them?

Lord L. By sight only.

Sir P. I am afraid, my lord, they will interrupt our business.

Lord L. Not at all: I should be glad to be acquainted with Toper; they say he's a damned jolly fellow.

Sir P. O! devilish jolly, devilish jolly; he and the captain are the two hardest drinkers in the country.

Lord L. So I have heard; let us have them by all means, Mac; they will enliven the scene. How far are they from you?

Sir P. Just across the meadows; not half a mile, my lord; a step, a step.

Lord L. O! let's have the jolly dogs, by all means.

Sir P. My compliments—I shall be proud of their company. [Exit TOMLINS.] Guif ye please, my lord, we will gang and chat a bit with the women: I have not seen Lady Rodolpha since she returned fra the Bath. I long to have a little news from her about the company there.

Lord L. O! she'll give you an account of them, I warrant you.

Lady R. [Without.] Ha, ha, ha! weel, I vow, cousin Egerton, you have a vast deal of shrewd humour. But, Lady Macsycophant, which way is Sir Pertinax?

Lady M. [Without.] Straight forward, madam.

Lord L. Here the hairbrain comes: it must be her by the noise.

Lady R. [Without.] Allons, gude folks; fallow me—sans ceremonie.

Enter LADY RODOLPHA, LADY MACSYCOPHANT, EGERTON, and SIDNEY.

Lady R. [To Sir P.] Sir Pertinax, your most devoted, most obsequious, most obedient vassal.

[Curtseys very low.]

Sir P. [Bowing formally.] Lady Rodolpha, down till the ground, my congratulations and duty attend you; and I should rejoice to kiss your ladyship's footsteps.

Lady R. Oh! Sir Pertinax, your humeility is most sublimely complaisant; at present unanswerable; but I shall intensely study to return it, fifty fold.

Sir P. Your ladyship does me singular honour. Weel, madam; ha! you look gaily. Weel, and how, how is your ladyship after your jaunt till Bath?

Lady R. Never better, Sir Pertinax; as weel as youth, health, riotous spirits, and a careless happy heart can make me.

Sir P. I am mightily glad till hear it, my lady.

Lord L. Ay, ay; Rodolpha is always in spirits, Sir Pertinax. *Vive la bagatelle* is the philosophy of our family—ha, Rodolpha—ha!

Lady R. Traith it is, my lord; and upon honour, I am determined it shall never be changed with my consent. Weel, I vow—ha, ha, ha! *Vive la bagatelle* would be a most brilliant motto for the chariot of a belle of fashion. What say you till my fancy, Lady Macsycophant?

Lady M. It would have novelty, at least, to recommend it, madam.

Lady R. Which of aw charms is the most delightful that can accompany wit, taste, love, or friendship; for novelty I take to be the true *je ne sçai quoi* of all worldly bliss. Cousin Egerton, should not you like to have a wife with *Vive la bagatelle* upon her wedding chariot?

Eger. O! certainly, madam.

Lady R. Yes, I think it would be quite out of the common, and singularly ailegant.

Eger. Indisputably, madam; for as a motto is a word to the wise, or rather a broad hint to the whole world of a person's taste and principles, *Vive la bagatelle* would be most expressive, at first sight, of your ladyship's characteristic.

Lady R. [Curtseys.] Oh! Maister Egerton, you touch my very heart with your approbation—ha, ha, ha!—that is the vary spirit of my intention, the instant I commence bride. Weel! I am immensely proud that my fancy has the approbation of so sound an understanding, and so polished a taste, as that of the all-accomplished—[Curtseys very low]—Mr. Egerton.

Sir P. Weel, but, Lady Rodolpha, I wanted to ask your ladyship some questions about the company at the Bath; they say you had aw the world there.

Lady R. O, yes! there was a vary great mob

there, indeed, but vary little company. Aw canaille, except our ain party. The place was crowded with your little purse-proud mechanics: an odd kind of queer-looking animals, that have started intill fortune fra lottery-tickets, rich prizes at sea, gambling in 'Change Alley, and sic like caprices of fortune; and away they aw crowd to the Bath, to learn genteelity, and the names, titles, intrigues, and bon-mots of us people of fashion—ha, ha, ha!

Lord L. Ha, ha, ha! I know them; I know the things you mean, my dear, extremely well. I have observed them a thousand times, and wondered where the devil they all came from—ha, ha, ha!

Lady M. Pray, Lady Rodolpha, what were your diversions at Bath?

Lady R. Guid traith, my lady, the company were my diversion; and better nae human follies ever afford—ha, ha, ha!—sic an a mixture, and sic oddities! ha, ha, ha! a perfect gallimaufry. Lady Kunegunda M'Kenzie and I used to gang about till every part of this human chaos, on purpose to reconnoitre the monsters, and pick up their frivolities—ha, ha, ha!

Sir P. Ha, ha, ha! why that must have been a high entertainment till your ladyship.

Lady R. Superlative and inexhaustible, Sir Pertinax—ha, ha, ha!—Madam, we had in one group, a peer and a sharper, a duchess and a pinmaker's wife, a boarding-school miss and her grandmother, a fat parson, a lean general, and a yellow admiral—ha, ha, ha! aw speaking together, and bawling and wrangling in fierce contention, as if the fame and fortune of aw the parties were to be the issue of the conflict.

Sir P. Ha, ha, ha! pray, madam, what was the object of their contention?

Lady R. O! a vary important one, I assure you; of no less consequence, madam, than how an odd trick at whist was lost, or might have been saved.

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady R. In another party, Sir Pertinax, ha, ha, ha! we had what was called the cabinet council, which was composed of a duke and a haberdasher, a red hot patriot and a sneering courtier, a discarded statesman and his scribbling chaplain, with a busy, bawling, muckle-headed, prerogative lawyer; all of whom were every minute ready to gang together by the lugs, about the in and the out meenistry; ha, ha, ha!

Sir P. Ha, ha, ha! weel, that is a droll motley cabinet, I vow.—Vary whimsical, upon honour. But they are all great politicians at Bath, and settle a meenistry there with as much ease as they do the tune of a country dance.

Lady R. Then, Sir Pertinax, in a retired part of the room—in a by corner—snug—we had a Jew and a bishop.

Sir P. A Jew and a bishop! ha, ha—a devilish guid connexion that;—and pray, my lady, what were they about?

Lady R. Why, sir, the bishop was striving to convert the Jew; while the Jew, by intervals, was stily picking up intelligence fra the bishop, about the change in the meenistry, in hopes of making a stroke in the stock.

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir P. Ha, ha, ha! admirable! admirable! I honour the amouse! ha! it was devilish clever of him, my lord, devilish clever. The Jew distilling the bishop's brains.

Lord L. Yes, yes; the fellow kept a sharp lookout. I think it was a fair trial of skill on both sides, Mr. Egerton.

Eger. True, my lord; but the Jew seems to have been in the fairer way to succeed.

Lord L. O! all to nothing, sir; ha, ha, ha! Well, child, I like your Jew and your bishop much. It's devilish clever. Let us have the rest of the history, pray, my dear.

Lady R. Guid traith, my lord, the sum total is—that there we aw danced, and wrangled, and flattered, and slandered, and gambled, and cheated, and mingled, and jumbled together, even like the animal assembly in Noah's ark.

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha!

Lord L. Ha, ha, ha! Well, you are a droll girl, Rodolpha: and, upon my honour, ha, ha, ha! you have given us as whimsical a sketch as ever was hit off. What say you, Mr. Sidney?

Sid. Upon my word, my lord, the lady has made me see the whole assembly in distinct colours.

Lady R. O! Maister Sidney, your approbation makes me as vain as a reigning toast before her looking-glass.

Enter TOMLINS.

Tom. Colonel Topper and Captain Hardbottle are come, sir.

Sir P. O! vary weel. Dinner directly.

Tom. It is ready, sir.

Sir P. My lord, we attend your lordship. [Exit.]

Lord L. Lady Mac, your ladyship's hand, if you please. [Exit with Lady M.]

Sir P. And here, Lady Rodolpha, is an Arcadian swain that has a hand at your ladyship's devotion.

Lady R. [Giving her hand to EGERTON.] And I, sir, have one at his. There, sir; as to hearts, ye ken, cousin, they are not brought into the account of human dealings now-a-days.

Eger. O! madam, they are mere temporary baubles, especially in courtship; and no more to be depended upon than the weather, or a lottery ticket.

Lady R. Ha, ha, ha!—two excellent similes, I vow, Mr. Egerton.—Excellent, for they illustrate the vagaries and inconstancy of my dissipated heart, as exactly as if you had meant to describe it. [Exit with EGERTON.]

Sir P. Ha, ha, ha! what a vast fund of spirits and guid humour she has, Maister Sidney.

Sid. A great fund, indeed, Sir Pertinax.

Sir P. Come, let us till dinner.—Hah! by this time to-morrow, Maister Sidney, I hope we shall have everything ready for you to put the last hand till the happiness of your friend and pupil; and then, sir, my cares will be over for this life; for as to my other son, I expect nae guid of him, nor should I grieve, were I to see him in his coffin:—but this match—O! it will make me the happiest of aw human beings. [Exeunt.]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Library.**Enter Sir PERTINAX and EGERTON.*

Sir P. Zounds! sir, I will not hear a word about it: I insist upon it you are wrong: you should have paid your court till my lord, and not have scrupled swallowing a bumper or twa, or twenty, till oblige him.

Eger. Sir, I did drink his toast in a bumper.

Sir P. Yes, you did; but how, how?—just as a bairn takes physic—with aversions and wry faces, which my lord observed: then, to mend the matter, the moment that he and the Colonel got intill a drunken dispute about religion, you sliely slunged away.

Eger. I thought, sir, it was time to go, when my lord insisted upon half pint bumpers.

Sir P. Sir, that was not levelled at you, but at the Colonel, in order to try his bottom; but they aw agreed that you and I should drink oot of sma' glasses.

Eger. But, sir, I beg pardon: I did not choose to drink any more.

Sir P. But, zoons! sir, I tell you there was a necessity for your drinking mair.

Eger. A necessity! in what respect, pray, sir?

Sir P. Why, sir, I have a certain point to carry, independent of the lawyers, with my lord, in this agreement of your marriage—about which I am afraid we shall have a warm squabble—and therefore I wanted your assistance in it.

Eger. But how, sir, could my drinking contribute to assist you in your squabble?

Sir P. Yes, sir, it would have contributed—and gently have contributed to assist me.

Eger. How so, sir?

Sir P. Nay, sir, it might have prevented the squabble entirely; for, as my lord is proud of you for a son-in-law, and is fond of your little French songs, your stories, and your bon-mots, when you are in the humour; and guin you had but stayed, and been a little jolly, and drank half a score bumpers with him, till he had got a little tipsy, I am sure, when we had him in that mood, we might have settled the point as I could wish it, among ourselves, before the lawyers came: but now, sir, I do not ken what will be the consequence.

Eger. But when a man is intoxicated, would that have been a seasonable time to settle business, sir?

Sir P. The most seasonable, sir: for, sir, when my lord is in his cups, his suspicion is asleep, and his heart is aw jollity, fun, and guid fellowship; and, sir, can there be a happier moment than that for a bargain, or to settle a dispute with a friend?—What is it you shrug up your shoulders at, sir?

Eger. At my own ignorance, sir; for I understand neither the philosophy nor the morality of your doctrine.

Sir P. I know you do not, sir; and, what is worse, you never wull understand it, as you proceed:—in one word, Charles, I have often told you, and now again I tell you, once for aw, that the manœuvres of pliability are as necessary to rise in the world, as wrangling and logical subtlety are to rise at the bar: why, you see, sir, I have ac-

quired a noble fortune—a princely fortune—and how do you think I raised it?

Eger. Doubtless, sir, by your abilities.

Sir P. Doubtless, sir, you are a blockhead: nae, sir, I'll tell you how I raised it:—sir, I raised it—by booing—[*Bows very low*—]—by booing: sir, I never could stand straight in the presence of a great mon, but always booded, and booded, and booded—as it were by instinct.

Eger. How do you mean by instinct, sir?

Sir P. How do I mean by instinct?—Why, sir, I mean by—by—by the instinct of interest, sir, which is the universal instinct of mankind. Sir, it is wonderful to think what a cordial, what an amicable—nay, what an infallible influence booing has upon the pride and vanity of human nature. Charles, answer me sincerely, have you a mind to be convinced of the force of my doctrine, by example and demonstration?

Eger. Certainly, sir.

Sir P. Then, sir, as the greatest favour I can confer upon you, I'll give you a short sketch of the stages of my booing, as an excitement, and a landmark for you to boo by, and as an infallible nostrum for a man of the world to rise in the world.

Eger. Sir, I shall be proud to profit by your experience.

Sir P. Vary weel, sir; sit ye down then, sit you down here; [*they sit*—]—and now, sir, you must recall to your thoughts, that your grandfather was a man, whose penurious income of captain's half-pay was the sum total of his fortune; and, sir, aw my provision fra him was a modicum of Latin, an expertness in arithmetic, and a short system of worldly counsel; the principal ingredients of which were, a persevering industry, a rigid economy, a smooth tongue, a pliability of temper, and a constant attention to make every mon well pleased with himself.

Eger. Very prudent advice, sir.

Sir P. Therefore, sir, I lay it before you. Now, sir, with these materials, I set out, a raw-boned stripling, fra the North, to try my fortune with them here in the South; and my first step in the world was a beggarly clerkship in Sawney Gordon's counting-house, here, in the city of London, which you'll say afforded but a barren sort of a prospect.

Eger. It was not a very fertile one, indeed, sir.

Sir P. The reverse, the reverse: weel, sir, seeing myself in this unprofitable situation, I reflected deeply; I cast about my thoughts morning, noon, and night, and marked every man, and every mode of prosperity; at last I concluded that a matrimonial adventure, prudently conducted, would be the readiest gait I could gang for the bettering of my condition, and accordingly I set about it: now, sir, in this pursuit, beauty! beauty!—ah! beauty often struck my een, and played about my heart; and fluttered, and beat, and knocked, and knocked; but the devil an entrance I ever let it get; for I observed, sir, that beauty is, generally, a—proud, vain, saucy, expensive, impertinent sort of a commodity.

Eger. Very justly observed.

Sir P. And therefore, sir, I left it to prodigals and coxcombs, that could afford to pay for it; and, in its stead, sir, mark I—I looked out for an ancient, weel-jointed, superannuated dowager; a consumptive, toothless, phthisic, wealthy widow; or a shrivelled, cadaverous piece of deformity, in the shape of an izzard, or an appersi—and—or, in short,

any thing, any thing that had the siller—the siller—for that, sir, was the north star of my affections. Do you take me, sir? was nae that right?

Eger. O! doubtless, doubtless, sir.

Sir P. Now, sir, where do you think I ganged to look for this woman with the siller?—nae till court, nae till play-houses or assemblies—nae, sir, I ganged till the kirk, till the Anabaptist, Independent, Bradlonian, and Muggletonian meetings; till the morning and evening service of churches and chapels of ease, and till the midnight, melting, conciliating love-feasts of the Methodists; and there, sir, at last I fell upon an old, slighted, antiquated, musty maiden, that looked—ha, ha, ha!—she looked just like a skeleton in a surgeon's glass-case. Now, sir, this miserable object was religiously angry with herself and aw the world; had nae comfort but in metaphysical visions and supernatural deliriums—ha, ha, ha! Sir, she was as mad—as mad as a bedlamite.

Eger. Not improbable, sir: there are numbers of poor creatures in the same condition.

Sir P. O, numbers, numbers. Now, sir, this cracked creature used to pray, and sing, and sigh, and groan, and weep, and wail, and gnash her teeth, constantly, morning and evening, at the Tabernacle at Moorfields: and as soon as I found she had the siller, aha! guid traith, I plumped me down upon my knees, close by her—cheek by jowl—and prayed, and sighed, and sung, and groaned, and gnashed my teeth as vehemently as she could do for the life of her; ay, and turned up the whites of mine een, till the strings awmost cracked again. I watched her motions, handed her till her chair, waited on her home, got most religiously intimate with her in a week—married her in a fortnight, buried her in a month;—touched the siller, and with a deep suit of mourning, a melancholy port, a sorrowful visage, and a joyful heart, I began the world again;—and this, sir, was the first boo—that is, the first effectual boo—I ever made till the vanity of human nature.—[*Rise.*]—Now, sir, do you understand this doctrine?

Eger. Perfectly well, sir.

Sir P. Ay, but was it not right? was it not ingenious, and weel hit off?

Eger. Certainly, sir: extremely well.

Sir P. My next boo, sir, was till your ain mother, whom I ran away with fra the boarding-school: by the interest of whose family I got a guid smart place in the treasury; and, sir, my very next step was intill parliament; the which I entered with as ardent and as determined an ambition as ever agitated the heart of Cæsar himself. Sir, I boomed, and watched, and hearkened, and ran about, backwards and forwards, and attended, and dangled upon the then great mon, till I got intill the very bowels of his confidence, and then, sir, I wriggled and wrought, and wriggled, till I wriggled myself among the very thick of them: ha! I got my snack of the clothing, the foraging, the contracts, the lottery tickets, and aw the political bousses: till at length, sir, I became a much wealthier mon than one half of the golden calves I had been so long a booing to: and was nae that booing to some purpose?

Eger. It was, indeed, sir.

Sir P. But are you convinced of the guid effects and of the utility of booing?

Eger. Thoroughly, sir.

Sir P. Sir, it is infallible. But, Charles, ah! while I was thus booing, and wriggling, and rais-

ing this princely fortune, ah! I met with many heart-sores and disappointments fra the want of literature, eloquence, and other popular abeilities. Sir, guin I could but have spoken in the hoose, I should have done the deed in half the time; but the instant I opened my mouth there they aw fell a laughing at me; aw which deficiencies, sir, I de-tearmained at any expense, to have supplied by the polished education of a son, who I hoped would one day raise the house of Maccyphont till the highest pitch of ministerial ambition. This, sir, is my plan: I have done my part of it; Nature has done hers; you are popular, you are eloquent, aw parties like and respect you: and now, sir, it only remains for you to be directed—completion follows.

Eger. Your liberality, sir, in my education, are obligations I shall ever remember with the deepest filial gratitude.

Sir P. Vary weel, sir: but, Charles, have you had any conversation yet with Lady Rodolpha, about the day of your marriage—your liveries—your equipage—or your domestic estabishment?

Eger. Not yet, sir.

Sir P. Poh! why there again, now, you are wrong—vary wrong.

Eger. Sir, we have not had an opportunity.

Sir P. Why, Charles, you are very tardy in this business.

Lord L. [*Sings without, flushed with wine.*] "What have we with day to do?"

Sir P. Oh, here comes my lord.

Lord L. "Sons of care, 'twas made for you."

Enter Lord LUMBERCOURT, drinking a cup of coffee; TOMLINS attending him.

"Sons of care, 'twas made for you."—Very good coffee, indeed, Mr. Tomlins.—"Sons of care, 'twas made for you." Here, Mr. Tomlins.

Tom. Will your lordship please to have another dish?

Lord L. No more, Mr. Tomlins.—[*Exit TOMLINS.*]—Ha, ha, ha, my host of the Scotch pints, we have had warm work.

Sir P. Yes, you pushed the bottle about, my lord, with the joy and vigour of a bacchanal.

Lord L. That I did, my dear Mac; no loss of time with me: I have but three motions, old boy, charge—toast—fire—and off we go: ha, ha, ha! that's my exercise.

Sir P. And fine warm exercise it is, my lord, especially with the half-pint glasses.

Lord L. Zounds! it does execution point blank: ay, ay, none of your pimping acorn glasses for me, but your manly, old English half-pint bumpers, my dear; they try a fellow's stamina at once: but where's Egerton?

Sir P. Just at hand, my lord; there he stands.

Lord L. My dear Egerton.

Eger. Your lordship's most obedient.

Lord L. I beg pardon, I did not see you: I am sorry you left us so soon after dinner: had you stayed, you would have been highly entertained. I have made such examples of the commissioner, the captain, and the colonel.

Eger. So I understand, my lord.

Lord L. But, Egerton, I have slipped from the company for a few moments, on purpose to have a little chat with you. Rodolpha tells me she fancies there is a kind of demur on your side, about your marriage with her.

Sir P. A demur! how so, my lord?

Lord L. Why, as I was drinking my coffee with

the women just now, I desired they would fix the wedding night, and the etiquette of the ceremony; upon which the girl burst into a loud laugh, telling me she supposed I was joking, for that Mr. Egerton had never yet given her a single glance or hint upon the subject.

Sir P. My lord, I have been just now talking to him about his shyness to the lady.

Enter TOMLINS.

Tom. Counsellor Plausible is come, sir, and Sergeant Eitherside.

Sir P. Why then we can settle the business this very evening, my lord.

Lord L. As well as in seven years; and, to make the way as short as possible, pray, Mr. Tomlins, present your master's compliments and mine to Lady Rodolpha, and let her ladyship know we wish to speak with her directly.—[*Exit TOMLINS.*]
—He shall attack her this instant, Sir Pertinax.

Sir P. Aye, this is doing business effectually, my lord.

Lord L. O! I will pit them in a moment, Sir Pertinax; that will bring them into the heat of the action at once, and save a great deal of awkwardness on both sides. O, here your dulcinea comes, sir.

Enter Lady RODOLPHA, singing.

Lady R. Weel, Sir Pertinax, I attend your commands, and yours, my paternal lord.—[*Lady R. curtsies very low.*]

Lord L. Why, then, my filial lady, we are to inform you that the commission for your ladyship and this enamoured cavalier, commanding you to serve your country, jointly and inseparably, in the honourable and forlorn hope of matrimony, is to be signed this very evening.

Lady R. This evening, my lord!

Lord L. This evening, my lady. Come, Sir Pertinax, let us leave them to settle their liveries, wedding suits, carriages, and all their amorous equipage for the nuptial campaign.

Sir P. Ha, ha, ha! excellent! excellent! Weel, I vow, my lord, you are a great officer:—this is as guid a manœuvre to bring on a rapid engagement as the ablest general of them aw could have started.

Lord L. Ay, ay! leave them together; they'll soon come to a right understanding, I warrant you, or the needle and loadstone have lost their sympathy.—

[*Exit with Sir PERTINAX.*—Lady RODOLPHA stands in amazement.

Eger. [*Aside.*] What a dilemma am I in!

Lady R. [*Aside.*] Why, this is downright tyranny! it has quite damped my spirits; and my betrothed, yonder, seems planet-struck, too, I think.

Eger. [*Aside.*] A whimsical situation, mine.

Lady R. [*Aside.*] Ha, ha, ha! methinks we look like a couple of cautious generals, that are obliged to take the field, but neither of us seems willing to come till action.

Eger. [*Aside.*] I protest I know not how to address her.

Lady R. [*Aside.*] He will nae advance, I see: what am I to do in this affair? guid traith, I will even do, as I suppose many brave heroes have done before me—clap a guid face on the matter; and so conceal an aching heart under a swaggering

countenance.—[*She advances with a smothered laugh.*]
—Sir, as we have, by the commands of our guid fathers, a business of some little consequence to transact, I hope you will excuse my taking the liberty of recommending a chair till you, for the repose of your body, in the embarrassed deliberation of your perturbed spirits.

Eger. [*Much embarrassed.*] Madam, I beg your pardon.—[*Hands her a chair, then one for himself.*]
—Please to sit, madam.—[*They sit down with great ceremony: he sits at a distance from her.*

Lady R. [*Aside.*] Aha! he's resolved not to come too near till me, I think.

Eger. [*Aside.*] A pleasant interview, this—hem, hem!

Lady R. [*Aside, mimicking.*] Hem! he will not open the congress, I see: then I will.—Come, sir, when will you begin?

Eger. [*Surprised.*] Begin! what, madam?

Lady R. To make love till me.

Eger. Love, madam!

Lady R. Ay, love, sir. Why, you have never said a word till me on the subject, nor cast a single glance at me, nor heaved one tender sigh, nor even secretly squeezed my loof: now, sir, th'of our fathers are so tyrannical as to dispose of us without the consent of our hearts, yet you, sir, I hope, have more humanity than to think of marrying me without administering some of the preliminaries usual on those occasions.

Eger. Madam, I own your reproach is just; I shall, therefore, no longer disguise my sentiments; but fairly let you know my heart. [*Rises.*

Lady R. [*Rising.*] That's right, that is right, cousin!—but sit you down, sit you down again;—[*They sit.*]—I shall return your frankness and your passion, cousin, with a melting tenderness equal till the amorous enthusiasm of an ancient heroine.

Eger. Madam, if you will hear me—

Lady R. But remember, you must begin with fervency, and a most rapturous vehemency; for you are to consider, cousin, that our match is nae to arise fra the union of hearts and a long decorum of ceremonious courtship, but is instantly to start at once, out of necessity, or mere accident—ha, ha, ha!—like a match in an ancient romance, where, you ken, cousin, the knight and the damsel are mutually smitten and dying for each other at first sight, or by an amorous sympathy, before they exchange a single glance. So, now cousin, with the true romantic enthusiasm, you are to suppose me the lady of the enchanted castle; and you—ha, ha, ha! you are to be the knight of the sorrowful countenance—ha, ha, ha!—and, upon honour, you look the character admirably—ha, ha, ha!

Eger. Trifling creature!

Lady R. Come, sir, why do you nae begin to ravish me with your valour, your vows, your knight-errantry, and your amorous frenzy?—Nay, nay, nay! guin you do nae begin at once, the lady of the enchanted castle will vanish in a twinkling.

Eger. [*Rises.*] Lady Rodolpha, I know your talent for raillery well;—[*She rises*]—but at present, in my case, there is a kind of cruelty in it.

Lady R. Raillery! upon honour, cousin, you mistake me quite and clean. I am serious, very serious; ay, and I have cause to be serious; nay, I will submit my case even to yourself. Can any puir lassie be in a mair lamentable condition, than to be sent four hundred miles, by the command of a positive grandmother, to marry a man who, I

find, has no more affection for me than if I had been his wife these seven years?

Eger. Madam, I am extremely sorry—

Lady R. [*Weeps.*] But it is vary weel, cousin—I see your unkindness and aversion plain enough; and, sir, I must tell you fairly, you are the ainly man that ever slighted my person, or that drew tears fra these een.—But it is vara weel, it's vara weel: I will return till Scotland to-morrow morning, and let my grandmother know how I hae been affronted by your slights, your contempts, and your aversions.

Eger. If you are serious, madam, your distress gives me a deep concern; but affection is not in our power, and you will forgive me when I tell you, I can never have that honour which is intended me, by a connexion with your ladyship.

Lady R. How, sir—are you serious? And so you persist in slighting me?

Eger. I beg your pardon, madam: but I must be explicit, and at once declare, that I never can give my hand where I cannot give my heart.

Lady R. [*Angrily.*] Why, then, sir, I must tell you, that your declaration is sic an affront as nae woman of spirit can, or ought to bear; and here I make a solemn vow, never to pardon it but on one condition.

Eger. If that condition be in my power, madam—

Lady R. [*Eagerly.*] Sir, it is in your power.

Eger. Then, madam, you may command me.

Lady R. [*In a peremptory tone.*] Why, then, sir, the condition is this, you must here give me your word and honour, that nae importunity, command, or menace of your father—in fine, that nae consideration whatsoever, shall induce you to take me, Rodolpha Lumbercourt, to be your wedded wife.

Eger. I most solemnly promise I never will.

Lady R. And I, sir, most solemnly and sincerely—[*Curtseys*—thank you for—[*Curtseys*—your resolution, and your agreeable aversion—ha, ha, ha! for you have made me as happy as a pair wretch relieved in the vara instant of intended execution.

Eger. Pray, madam, how am I to understand all this?

Lady R. Why, sir, your frankness and sincerity demand the same behaviour on my side, therefore, without further disguise or ambiguity, know, sir, that I myself—[*With a deep sigh*]—am as deeply smitten with a certain swain, as I understand you are with your Constantia.

Eger. Indeed, madam!

Lady R. O! sir, notwithstanding a' my show of courage and mirth, here I stand as errant a trembling Thisbe as ever sighed or mourned for her Pyramus: and, sir, a' my extravagant levity and ridiculous behaviour in your presence now, and ever since your father prevailed upon mine to consent till this match, has been a premeditated scheme to provoke your gravity and guid sense intill a cordial disgust, and a positive refusal.

Eger. But, madam, if I may presume so far, pray, who is your lover?

Lady R. Why, in that too, I shall surprise you, perhaps, more than ever. In the first place, he is a beggar, and in disgrace with an unforgiving father; and, in the next place, he is—[*Curtseys*]—your ain brother.—So you see, cousin Charles, th'of I cou'd nae mingle affections with you, I have nae ganged out of the family.—But now, sir,

let me ask one question—pray, how is your mither affected in this business?

Eger. She knows of my passion, and will, I am sure, be a friend to the common cause.

Lady R. Ah, that's lucky. Our first step then must be to take her advice upon our conduct, so as to keep our fathers in the dark till we can hit off some measure that will wind them about till our ain purpose, and the common interest of our ain passion; so come along, cousin Charles. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Library.

Enter Sir PERTINAX and Counsellor PLAUSIBLE.

Sir P. No, no.—Come away, Counsellor Plausible, come away, I say, let 'em chew upon it. Why, counsellor, did you ever see so impertinent, so meddling, and so obstinate a blockhead as that Serjeant Eitherside? Confound the fellow, he has put me out of aw temper.

Plaus. He is very positive, indeed, Sir Pertinax: and no doubt was intemperate and rude. But, Sir Pertinax, I would not break off the match notwithstanding, for certainly, even without the boroughs, it is an advantageous bargain both to you and your son.

Sir P. But, zounds! Plausible, do you think I will give up the nomination till three boroughs? Why, I would rather give him twenty, nay, thirty thousand pounds in any other part of the bargain:—especially at this juncture, when votes are likely to become so valuable. Why, man, if a certain affair comes on, they will rise above five hundred per cent.

Plaus. You judge very rightly, Sir Pertinax; but what shall we do in this case? for Mr. Serjeant insists that you positively agreed to my lord's having the nomination to the three boroughs during his own life.

Sir P. Why, yes: in the first sketch of the agreement, I believe I did consent: but at that time, mon, my lord's affairs did not appear to be half so desperate as I now find they turn out. Sir, he must acquiesce in whatever I demand, for I have got him into sic an hobble that he cannot—

Plaus. No doubt, Sir Pertinax, you have him absolutely in your power.

Sir P. Vara weel: and ought nae a man to make his vantage of it?

Plaus. No doubt you ought; no manner of doubt. But, Sir Pertinax, there is a secret spring in this business that you do not seem to perceive; and which, I am afraid, governs the matters respecting these boroughs.

Sir P. What spring do you mean, counsellor?

Plaus. Why, this Serjeant Eitherside: I have some reason to think, that my lord is tied down, by some means or other, to bring the Serjeant in, the very first vacancy, for one of these boroughs; now that, I believe, is the sole motive why the Serjeant is so strenuous that my lord should keep the boroughs in his own power; fearing that you might reject him for some man of your own.

Sir P. Odswounds and death! Plausible, you

are clever, devilish clever. By the blood, you have hit upon the vara string that has made aw this discord. Oh! I see it—I see it now. But hault—hault—bide a wee bit, a wee bit, mon; I have a thought come intill my head—yes, I think, Plausible, with a little twist in our negotiation, that this vara string, properly tuned, may be still made to produce the vara harmony we wish for. Yes, yes, I have it:—this Serjeant, I see, understands business; and, if I am not mistaken, knows how to take a hint.

Plaus. O! nobody better, Sir Pertinax.

Sir P. Why, then, Plausible, the short road is the best with sic a man. You must even come up till his mark at once, and assure him from me that I will secure him a seat for one of these vara boroughs.

Plaus. Oh! that will do, that will do, I'll answer for't.

Sir P. And further, I beg you will let him know that I think myself obliged to consider him, in this affair, as acting for me as weel as my lord, as a common friend till baith; and for the services he has already done us, make my special compliments till him; and, pray let this amicable bit of paper be my faithful advocate to convince him of what my gratitude further intends for his great—[*Gives him a bank-note*—equity in adjusting this agreement betwixt my lord and me.

Plaus. Ha, ha, ha!—upon my word, Sir Pertinax, this is noble. Ay, ay! this is an eloquent bit of paper, indeed.

Sir P. Maister Plausible, in aw human dealings, the most effectual method is that of ganging at once till the vara bottom of a mon's heart; for, if we expect that men should serve us, we must first win their affections by serving them. O! here they baith come.

Enter Lord LUMBERCOURT and Serjeant EITHERSIDE.

Lord L. My dear Sir Pertinax, what could provoke you to break off this business so abruptly? You are really wrong in the point; and if you will give yourself time to recollect, you will find that my having the nomination to the boroughs for my life, was a preliminary article: I appeal to Mr. Serjeant Eitherside here, whether I did not always understand it so.

Serj. I assure you, Sir Pertinax, that in all his lordship's conversation with me upon this business, and in his positive instructions, both he and I always understood the nomination to be in my lord, *durante vita*.

Sir P. Why, then, my lord, to shorten the dispute, aw that I can say in answer till your lordship is, that there has been a total mistake betwixt us in that point: and, therefore, the treaty must end here. I give it up. O! I wash my hands of it for ever.

Plaus. Well, but, gentlemen, gentlemen, a little patience. Sure this mistake, somehow or other, may be rectified. Pr'ythee, Mr. Serjeant, let you and I step into the next room by ourselves, and reconsider the clause relative to the boroughs, and try if we cannot hit upon a medium that will be agreeable to both parties.

Serj. [With great warmth.] Mr. Plausible, I have considered the clause fully; am entirely master of the question; my lord cannot give up the point. It's unkind and unreasonable to expect it.

Plaus. Nay, Mr. Serjeant, I beg you will not misunderstand me. Do not think I want his lordship to give up any point without an equivalent. Sir Pertinax, will you permit Mr. Serjeant and me to retire a few moments to reconsider this point?

Sir P. With aw my heart, Maister Plausible; anything to oblige his lordship—anything to accommodate his lordship—anything.

Plaus. What say you, my lord?

Lord L. Nay, I submit it entirely to you and Mr. Serjeant.

Plaus. Come, Mr. Serjeant, let us retire.

Lord L. Ay, ay, go, Mr. Serjeant, and hear what Mr. Plausible has to say.

Serj. Nay, I'll wait on Mr. Plausible, my lord, with all my heart; but I am sure I cannot suggest the shadow of a reason for altering my present opinion:—impossible, impossible.

Plaus. [Pulls EITHERSIDE, and shows him the bank note.] Well, well, Mr. Serjeant, do not be positive. I am sure, reason and your client's convenience, will always make you alter your opinion.

Serj. Ay, ay—reason and my client's convenience, Mr. Plausible, will always controul my opinion, depend upon it—ay, ay! there you are right, sir, I attend you. [Exit Lawyers.

Sir P. I am sorry, my lord, extremely sorry, indeed, that this mistake has happen'd,

Lord L. Upon my honour, and so am I, Sir Pertinax.

Sir P. But come, now, after aw, your lordship must allow you have been in the wrong: come, my dear lord, you must allow me that now.

Lord L. How so, my dear Sir Pertinax?

Sir P. Not about the boroughs, my lord; for those I do not mind of a bawbee; but about your distrust of my friendship.—Why, do you think, now, I appeal till your ain breast, my lord—do you think, I say, that I should ever have slighted your lordship's nomination till these boroughs?

Lord L. Why, really, I do not think you would, Sir Pertinax; but one must be directed by one's lawyer, you know.

Sir P. Ha! my lord, lawyers are a dangerous species of animals to have any dependence upon: they are always starting punctilios and difficulties among friends. Why, my lord, it is their interest that aw mankind should be at variance; for disagreement of every kind is the vara manure with which they enrich and fatten the land of litigation; and, as they find that that constantly promotes the best crop, depend upon it, they will always be sure to lay it on as thick as they can.

Lord L. Come, come, my dear Sir Pertinax, you must not be angry with the Serjeant for his insisting so warmly on this point—for those boroughs, you know, are my sheet anchor.

Sir P. I know it, my lord; and, as an instance of my promptness to study, and of my acquaintance till your lordship's inclination, as I see that this Serjeant Eitherside wishes you weel, and you of him, I think, now, he would be as guid a man to be returned for one of those boroughs as could be pitched upon; and, as such, I humbly recommend him till your lordship's consideration.

Lord L. Why, my dear Sir Pertinax, to tell you the truth, I have already promised him. He must be in for one of them, and that is one reason why I insisted so strenuously; he must be in.

Sir P. And why not? odswunds! why not? is nae your word a fiat? and will it nae be always so till me? are ye nae my friend, my patron—and

are we nae, by this match of our children, to be united intill one interest?

Lord L. So I understand it, I own, Sir Pertinax.

Sir P. My lord, it can nae be otherwise; then, for Heaven's sake, as your lordship and I can have but one interest for the future, let us have nae mair words about these paltry boroughs, but conclude the agreement just as it stands: otherwise there must be new writings drawn up, new consultations of lawyers; new objections and delays will arise; creditors will be impatient and impertinent, so that we shall nae finish the Lord knows when.

Lord L. You are right, you are right; say no more, Mac, say no more. Split the lawyers—you judge the point better than all Westminster Hall could. It shall stand as it is: yes, you shall settle it your own way; for your interest and mine are the same, I see plainly.

Sir P. No doubt of it, my lord.

Lord L. O! here the lawyers come.

Enter Counsellor PLAUSIBLE and Serjeant EITHERSIDE.

Lord L. So, gentlemen—Well, what have you done!—How are your opinions now?

Serj. My lord, Mr. Plausible has convinced me—fully convinced me.

Plaus. Yes, my lord, I have convinced him: I have laid such arguments before Mr. Serjeant as were irresistible.

Serj. He has, indeed, my lord; besides, as Sir Pertinax gives his honour that your lordship's nomination shall be sacredly observed, why, upon a nearer review of the whole matter, I think it will be the wiser measure to conclude the agreement just as it is drawn.

Lord L. I am very glad you think so, Mr. Serjeant, because that is my opinion too: so, my dear Eitherside, do you and Mr. Plausible dispatch the business now as soon as possible.

Serj. My lord, every thing will be ready in less than an hour. Come, Mr. Plausible, let us go and fill up the blanks, and put the last hand to the writings on our part.

Plaus. I attend you, Mr. Serjeant.

[Exeunt Lawyers.]

Lord L. And, while the lawyers are preparing the writings, Sir Pertinax, I will go and saunter with the women.

Sir P. Do, do, my lord; and I will come to you presently.

Lord L. Very well, my dear Mac, I shall expect you. *[Exit.]*

Sir P. So! a little flattery, mixed with the finesse of a gilded promise on one side, and a quantum sufficit of the aurum palpabile on the other, have at last made me the happiest father in Great Britain. Ha! my heart expands itself, as it were, through every part of my whole body, at the completion of this business, and feels nothing but dignity and elevation.—Hauld! hauld! bide a wee—bide a wee! I have but one little matter mair in this affair to adjust; and then, Sir Pertinax, you may dictate till fortune herself, and send her to govern fools! while you show and convince the world that wise men always govern her. What's there?

Enter SAM.

Tell my son Egerton I would speak with him here in the library. *[Exit SAM.]* Now I have settled the grand point with my lord, this, I think, is the

proper juncture to feel the political pulse of my spark, and, once for aw, to set it to the exact measure that I would have it constantly beat.

Enter EGERTON.

Come hither, Charles.

Eger. Your pleasure, sir.

Sir P. About two hours since I told you, Charles, that I received a letter express, complaining of your brother's activity at an election in Scotland, against a particular friend of mine, which has given great offence; and, sir, you are mentioned in the letter as well as he: to be plain, I must roundly tell you, that on this interview depends my happiness as a father and as a man; and my affection to you, sir, as a son, for the remainder of our days.

Eger. I hope, sir, I shall never do anything either to forfeit your affection, or disturb your happiness.

Sir P. I hope so too: but to the point. The fact is this: there has been a motion made this vara day to bring on the grand affair, which is settled for Friday seven-night. Now, sir, as you are popular, have talents, and are weel heard, it is expected, and I insist upon it, that you endeavour to atone, sir, for your late misconduct, by preparing, and taking a larger share in that question, and supporting it with aw your power.

Eger. Sir, I hope you will not so exert your influence, as to insist upon my supporting a measure by an obvious, prostituted sophistry, in direct opposition to my character and conscience.

Sir P. Conscience! why, you are mad! Did you ever hear any man talk of conscience in political matters? Conscience, quotha? I have been in parliament these three and thraty years, and never heard the term made use of before. Sir, it is an unparliamentary word, and you will be laughed at for it.

Eger. Then, sir, I must frankly tell you, that you work against my nature; you would connect me with men I despise, and press me into measures I abhor; for know, sir, that the malignant ferment which the venal ambition of the times provokes in the heads and hearts of other men, I detest.

Sir P. What are you about, sir? malignant ferment and venal ambition! Sir, every man should be ambitious to serve his country, and every man should be rewarded for it: and pray, sir, would nae you wish to serve your country? Answer me that. I say, would nae you wish to serve your country?

Eger. Only show me how I can serve my country, and my life is hers. Were I qualified to lead her armies, to steer her fleets, and to deal her honest vengeance on her insulting foes; or could my eloquence pull down a state leviathan, mighty by the plunder of his country, black with the treasons of her disgrace, and send his infamy down to a free posterity, as a monumental terror to corrupt ambition, I would be foremost in such service, and act with the unremitting ardour of a Roman spirit!

Sir P. Why, are you mad, sir? you have certainly been bit by some mad Whig or other. Oh! you are young, vara young, in these matters; but experience will convince you, sir, that every man in public business has twa consciences—a religious and a political conscience. Why, you see a merchant now, or a shopkeeper, that kens the science o' the world, always looks upon an oath at a custom-house, or behind a counter, only as an oath in

business, a thing of course, a mere thing of course, that has nothing to do with religion; and just so it is at an election: for instance, now, I am a candidate, pray observe, and I gang till a perriwig-maker, a hatter, or a hosier, and I give ten, twenty, or thraty guineas, for a perriwig, a hat, or a pair of hose; and so on, through a majority of voters; jara weel, what is the consequence?—why this commercial intercourse, you see, begets a friendship betwixt us—a commercial friendship—and in a day or twa, these men gang and give their suffrages; weel, what is the inference? Pray sir, can you, or any lawyer, divine, or casuist, ca' this a bribe?—nae, sir, in fair political reasoning, it is ainly generosity on the one side, and gratitude on the other; so, sir, let me have nae more of your religious or philosophical refinements, but prepare, attend, and speak till the question, or you are nae son of mine. Sir, I insist upon it.

Enter SAM.

Sam. Sir, my lord says the writings are now ready, and his lordship and the lawyers are waiting for you and Mr. Egerton.

Sir P. Vara weel, we'll attend his lordship.—*[Exit SAM.]*—Come, sir, let us gang down and finish this business.

Eger. *[Stopping Sir P.]* Sir, with your permission, I beg you will first hear a word or two upon this subject.

Sir P. Weel, sir, what would you say?

Eger. I have often resolved to let you know my aversion to this match—

Sir P. How, sir?

Eger. But my respect, and fear of disobliging you, have hitherto kept me silent.

Sir P. Your aversion!—your aversion, sir! How dare you use sic language to me? Your aversion!—Look ye, sir, I shall cut the matter vara short: consider, my fortune is nae inheritance; aw mine ain acquisition; I can make ducks and drakes of it: so do not provoke me, but sign the articles directly.

Eger. I beg your pardon, sir, but I must be free on this occasion, and tell you at once, that I can no longer dissemble the honest passion that fills my heart for another woman.

Sir P. How! another woman? and, you villain, how dare you love another woman without my leave? But what other woman?—what is she?—Speak, sir, speak.

Eger. Constantia.

Sir P. Constantia! oh, you profligate!—what, a creature taken in for charity!

Eger. Her poverty is not her crime, sir, but her misfortune: her birth is equal to the noblest; therefore, sir—

Sir P. Haud your jabbering, you villain, haud your jabbering; none of your roinance or refinement till me. I have but one question to ask you—but one question, and then I have done with you for ever—for ever—therefore, think before you answer—will you marry the lady, or will you break my heart?

Eger. Sir, my presence shall not offend you any longer; but when reason and reflection take their turn, I am sure you will not be pleased with yourself for this unparental passion. *[Going.]*

Sir P. Tarry, I command you; and I command you, likewise, not to stir, till you have given me answer, a definitive answer:—will you marry the lady, or will you not?

Eger. Since you command me, sir, know, then, that I cannot, will not marry her. *[Exit.]*

Sir P. *[Throws himself in a chair in a furious passion—then rises and stands.]* Oh, the villain has shot me through the head! he has cut my vitals! I shall run distracted! the fellow destroys aw my measures, aw my schemes: there never was sic a bargain as I have made with this foolish lord: possession of his whole estate, with three boroughs upon it—six members. Why, what an acquisition! what consequence, what dignity, what weight till the house of Macsycophant! O, damn the fellow!—three boroughs, only for sending down six broomsticks!—O, miserable—O, miserable, ruined, undone! For these five-and-twenty years, ever since this fellow came intill the world, have I been secretly preparing him for ministerial dignity; and, with the fellow's eloquence, abilities, popularity, these boroughs, and proper connexions, he might certainly, in a little time, have done the deed; and sure never were times so favourable, every thing conspires, for aw the auld political post-horses are broken-winded and foundered, and cannot get on; and as till the rising generation, the vanity of surpassing one another in what they foolishly call taste and elegance, binds them hard and foot in the chains of luxury, which will always set them up till the best bidder; so that, if they can but get wherewithal to supply their dissipation, a minister may convert the political morals of aw sic voluptuaries, intill a vote that would sell the nation till Prester John, and their boasted liberties till the great Mogul. *[Exit.]*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Library.

Enter Sir PERTINAX and BETTY HINT.

Sir P. Come this way, Betty—come this way: you are a guid girl, and I will reward you for this discovery. Oh, the villain! offer her marriage!

Betty. It is true, indeed, sir, I would not tell your honour a lie for the world; but, in truth, it lay upon my conscience, and I thought it my duty to tell your worship.

Sir P. You are right, you are right; it was your duty to tell me, and I'll reward you for it. But you say Maister Sidney is in love with her too: pray how came you by that intelligence?

Betty. O, sir, I know when folks are in love, let them strive to hide it as much as they will. I know it by Mr. Sidney's eyes, when I see him stealing a sly look at her—by his trembling—his breathing short—his sighing when they are reading together. Besides, sir, he has made love-verses upon her, in praise of her virtue, and her playing upon the music. Ay! and I suspect another thing, sir—she has a sweetheart, if not a husband, not far from hence.

Sir P. Wha—Constantia?

Betty. Ay, Constantia, sir. Lord, I can know the whole affair, sir, only for sending over to Hadley, to farmer Hilford's youngest daughter, Sukey Hilford.

Sir P. Then send this instant, and get me a particular account of it.

Betty. That I will, sir.

Sir P. In the mean time, keep a strict watch upon Constantia, and be sure you bring me word of whatever new matter you can pick up about her, my son, or this Hadley husband or sweetheart.

Betty. Never fear, sir.

[Exit.]

Sir P. This love of Sidney's for Constantia is not unlikely. There is something promising in it. Yes, I think it is nae impossible to convert it into a special and immediate advantage. It is but trying. Wha's there? If it misses, I am but where I was.

Enter TOMLINS.

Where is Maister Sidney?

Tom. In the dining-room, Sir Pertinax.

Sir P. Tell him I would speak with him. [Exit

TOMLINS.] 'Tis more than probable. Spare to speak and spare to speed. Try—try—always try the human heart; try as guid a maxim in politics as in war. Why suppose this Sidney now should be privy till his friend Charles's love for Constantia—what then—guid traith, it is natural to think that his ain love will demand the preference—ay, and obtain it, too. Yes, self—self is an eloquent advocate on these occasions, and seldom loses his cause. I hae the general principle of human nature at least to encourage me in the experiment; for only make it a man's interest to be a rascal, and I think we may safely depend upon his integrity—in serving himself.

Enter SIDNEY.

Sid. Sir Pertinax, your servant:—Mr. Tomlins told me you desired to speak with me.

Sir P. Yes, I wanted to speak with you upon a vera singular business. Maister Sidney, give me your hand. Guin it did nae look like flattery, which I detest, I would tell you, Maister Sidney, that you are an honour till your cloth, your country, and till human nature.

Sid. Sir, you are very obliging.

Sir P. Sit you down, Maister Sidney; sit you down here by me. [They sit.] My friend, I am under the greatest obligations till you for the care you have taken of Charles. The principles, religious, moral, and political, that you have infused intill him, demand the warmest return of gratitude both fra him and fra me.

Sid. Your approbation, sir, next to that of my own conscience, is the best test of my endeavours, and the highest applause they can receive.

Sir P. Sir, you deserve it, richly deserve it. And now, sir, the same care that you have had of Charles, the same my wife has taken of her favourite Constantia—and sure, never were accomplishments, knowledge, or principles, social and religious, infused intill a better nature.

Sid. In truth, sir, I think so too.

Sir P. She is besides a gentlewoman, and of as guid a family as any in this country.

Sid. So I understand, sir.

Sir P. Sir, her father had a vast estate; the which he dissipated and melted in feastings, and friendships, and charities, and hospitalities, and sic kind of nonsense—but to the business. Maister Sidney, I love you—yes, I love you—and I have been looking out and contriving how to settle you in the world. Sir, I want to see you comfort-

ably and honourably fixed at the head of a respectable family; and guin you were mine ain son a thousand times, I cou'd nae make a more valuable present till you for that purpose, as a partner for life, than this same Constantia, with sic a fortune down with her as you yourself shall deem to be competent, and an assurance of every canonical contingency in my power to confer or promote.

Sid. Sir, your offer is noble and friendly; but though the highest station would derive lustre from Constantia's charms and worth, yet—were she more amiable than love could paint her in the lover's fancy—and wealthy beyond the thirst of the miser's appetite—I could not, would not wed her.

[Rises.]

Sir P. Not wed her!—odswunds, man!—you surprise me! Why so—what hinders?

Sid. I beg you will not ask a reason for my refusal, but, briefly and finally, it cannot be; nor is it a subject I can long converse upon.

Sir P. Weel, weel, weel, sir, I have done, I have done. [SIDNEY sits down.] Sit you down, man; sit you down again; sit you down; I shall mention it no more;—not but I must confess honestly till you, friend Sidney, that the match, had you consented to my proposal, besides profiting you, would have been of singular service till me likewise. However, you may still serve me as effectually as if you had married her.

Sid. Then, sir, I am sure I will, most heartily.

Sir P. I believe it, friend Sidney, and I thank you: I have nae friend to depend upon but yourself. My heart is almost broke—I cannot help these tears—And, to tell you the fact at once, your friend Charles is struck with a most dangerous malady—a kind of insanity—You see I cannot help weeping when I think of it—in short—this Constantia, I am afraid, has cast an evil eye upon him. Do you understand me?

Sid. Not very well, sir.

Sir P. Why, he is grievously smitten with the love of her; and, I am afraid, will never be cured without a little of your assistance.

Sid. Of my assistance! pray, sir, in what manner?

Sir P. In what manner?—lord, Maister Sidney, how can you be so dull? Now, then, my vara guid friend, guin you would but give him that hint, and take an opportunity to speak a good word for him intill the wench; and guin you wou'd likewise cast about a little, now, and contrive to bring them together once! why, in a few days after, he would nae care a pinch of snuff for her. [SIDNEY starts up.] What is the matter with you, man? What the devil gars you start, and look so astounded?

Sid. Sir, you amaze me! In what part of my mind or conduct have you found that baseness, which entitles you to treat me with this indignity?

Sir P. Indignity! What indignity do you mean, sir? Is asking you to serve a friend with a wench an indignity? Sir, am I not your patron and benefactor, eh?

Sid. You are, sir, and I feel your bounty at my heart; but the virtuous gratitude that sowed the deep sense of it there, does not inform me that, in return, the tutor's sacred function, or the social virtue of the man, must be debased into the pupil's pander, or the patron's prostitute.

Sir P. [Rising.] How! what, sir?—do you dispute? Are you nae my dependent, eh? and do you

hesitate about an ordinary civility, which is practised every day by men and women of the first fashion? Sir, let me tell you, however nice you may be, there is nae a client about the court that wou'd nae jump at sic an opportunity to oblige his patron.

Sid. Indeed, sir, I believe the doctrine of pimping for patrons, as well as that of prostituting eloquence and public trust for private lucre, may be learned in your party schools; for where faction and public venality are taught as measures necessary to good government and general prosperity, there every vice is to be expected.

Sir P. Oho! oho! vara weel, vara weel; fine slander upon ministers! fine sedition against government! O, ye villain!—You—you—you are a black sheep, and I'll mark you. I am glad you show yourself. Yes, yes; you have taken off the mask at last: you have been in my service for many years, and I never knew your principles before.

Sid. Sir, you never affronted them before; if you had, you should have known them sooner.

Sir P. It is vara weel; I have done with you. Ay, ay; now I can account for my son's conduct—his aversions till courts, till ministers, levees, public business, and his disobedience till my commands. Ah! you are a Judas—a perfidious fellow: you have ruined the morals of my son, you villain! But I have done with you. However, this I will prophesy at our parting, for your comfort, that guin you are so very squeamish about bringing a lad and a lass together, or about doing sic an harmless innocent job for your patron, you will never rise in the church.

Sid. Through my conduct, sir, should not make me rise in her power, I am sure it will in her favour, in the favour of my own conscience, too, and in the esteem of all worthy men; and that, sir, is a power and dignity beyond what patrons, or any minister can bestow. [Exit.]

Sir P. What a rigorous, saucy, stiff-necked rascal it is! I see my folly now; I am undone by mine ain policy. This Sidney is the last man that should have been about my son. The fellow, indeed, hath given him principles that might have done vara weel among the ancient Romans, but are damn'd unfit for the modern Britons. Well, guin I had a thousand sons, I never wou'd suffer one of these English university-bred fellows to be about a son of mine again; for they have sic an a pride of literature and character, and sic saucy English notions of liberty continually fermenting in their thoughts, that a man is never sure of them. But what am I to do? Zoons! he must nae marry this beggar; I cannot set down tamely under that. Stay—haud a wee. By the blood, I have it! Yes, I have hit upon it.

Enter BETTY HINT.

Betty. O, sir! I have got the whole secret out.

Sir P. About what?

Betty. About Miss Constantia. I have just got all the particulars from farmer Hilford's youngest daughter, Sukey Hilford.

Sir P. Weel, weel, but what is the story?—quick—quick—what is it?

Betty. Why, sir, it is certain that Miss Constantia has a sweetheart, or a husband; a sort of a gentleman, or a gentleman's gentleman, they don't

ACT. DRAMA.—NO. XXIII.

know which, that lodges at Gaffer Hodge's; for Sukey says she saw them together last night, in the dark walk, and Mrs. Constantia was all in tears.

Sir P. Zoons, I am afraid this is too guid news to be true.

Betty. O! sir, 'tis certainly true.—Besides, sir, she has just writ a letter to her gallant, and I have sent John Gardener to her, who is to carry it to him to Hadley. Now, sir, if your worship would seize it—see, see, sir—here John comes, with the letter in his hand.

Sir P. Step you out, Betty, and leave the fellow till me.

Betty. I will, sir,

[Exit.]

Enter JOHN, with a packet and a letter.

John. [Putting the packet into his pocket.] There, go you into my pocket. There's nobody in the library, so I'll e'en go through the short way. Let me see—what is the name?—Mel—Meltil—O, no! Melville, at Gaffer Hodge's.

Sir P. What letter is that, sir?

John. Letter, sir!

Sir P. Give it me, sir.

John. An't please you, sir, it is not mine.

Sir P. Deliver it this instant, sirrah, or I'll break your head.

John. There, there, your honour.

Sir P. Begone, rascal. This, I suppose, will let us intill the whole business.

John. [Aside.] You have got the letter, old Surly, but the packet is safe in my pocket. I'll go and deliver that, however, for I will be true to poor Mrs. Constantia in spite of you. [Exit.]

Sir P. [Reading the letter.] Um—um—“and bless my eyes with the sight of you.” Um—um—“throw myself into your dear arms.”—Zoons, this letter is invaluable. Aha, madam! yes, this will do—this will do, I think. Let me see how it is directed—“To Mr. Melville.” Vary weel.

Enter BETTY.

O, Betty, you are an excellent wench—this letter is worth a million.

Betty. Is it as I suspected—to her gallant?

Sir P. It is, it is. Bid Constantia pack out of the house this instant, and let them get a chaise ready to carry her wherever she pleases. But first send my wife and son hither.

Betty. I shall, sir.

Sir P. Do so; begone. [Exit BETTY.] Aha, Maister Charles. I believe I shall cure you of your passion for a beggar now. I think he cannot be so infatuated as to be a dupe. Let me see, how am I to act now? Why, like a true politician, I must pretend most sincerity where I intend most deceit.

Enter EGERTON and Lady MACSYCOPHANT.

Weel, Charles, notwithstanding the misery you have brought upon me, I have sent for you and your mother, in order to convince you both of my affection and my readiness to forgive, nay, and even to indulge your perverse passion. Sir, since I find this Constantia has got hold of your heart, and that your mother and you think that you can never be happy without her, why, I'll nae longer oppose your inclinations.

Eger. Dear sir, you snatch me from the sharp—
2 A

est misery ; on my knees, let my heart thank you for this goodness.

Lady M. Let me express my thanks too, and my joy ; for had you not consented to his marrying her, we all should have been miserable.

Sir P. Weel, I am glad I have found a way to please you both at last. But, my dear Charles, suppose, now, that this spotless vestal—this wonder of virtue—this idol of your heart, should be a concealed wanton after aw ? or should have an engagement of marriage, or an intrigue with another man, and is only making a dupe of you aw this time—I say, only suppose it, Charles—what would you think of her ?

Eger. I should think her the most deceitful, and most subtle of her sex : and, if possible, would never think of her again.

Sir P. Will you give me your honour of that ?

Eger. Most solemnly, sir.

Sir P. Enough ; I am satisfied. You make me young again. Your prudence has brought tears of joy fra my very vitals. I was afraid you were fascinated with the charms of a crack. Do you ken this hand ?

Eger. Mighty well, sir.

Sir P. And you, madam ?

Lady M. As well as I do my own, sir : it is Constantia's.

Sir P. It is so ; and a better evidence it is than any that can be given by the human tongue. Here is a warm, rapturous, lascivious letter, under the hypocritical syren's ain hand—her ain hand, sir. Ay, ay ; here—take and read it yourself.

Eger. [Reads.] “ I have only time to tell you, that the family have come down sooner than I expected, and that I cannot bless my eyes with the sight of you till the evening. The notes and jewels, which the bearer of this will deliver to you, were presented to me since I saw you, by the son of my benefactor.”—

Sir P. [Interrupting.] Now mark.

Eger. [Reads.] “ All which I beg you will convert to your immediate use.”—

Sir P. Mark, I say.

Eger. [Reads.] “ For my heart has no room for any wish or fortune, but what contributes to your relief and happiness.”—

Sir P. Oh, Charles, Charles ! do you see, sir, what a dupe she makes of you ? But mark what follows.

Eger. [Reads.] “ O, how I long to throw myself into your dear, dear arms ; to sooth your fears, your apprehensions, and your sorrows. I have something to tell you of the utmost moment, but will reserve it till we meet this evening in the dark walk.”

Sir P. In the dark walk—in the dark walk—ah, an evil-eyed curse upon her ! Yes, yes, she has been often in the dark walk, I believe. But read on.

Eger. [Reads.] “ In the mean time, banish all fears, and hope the best from fortune, and your ever dutiful

“ CONSTANTIA HARRINGTON.”

Sir P. There—there's a warm epistle for you :—in short, the hussy, you must know, is married till the fellow.

Eger. Not unlikely, sir.

Lady M. Indeed, by her letter I believe she is.

Sir P. Now, madam, what amends can you make me for countenancing your son's passion for sic a strumpet ? And you, sir, what have you to say

for your disobedience and your frenzy ? O, Charles, Charles !

Eger. Pray, sir, be patient ; compose yourself a moment : I will make you any compensation in my power.

Sir P. Then instantly sign the articles of marriage.

Eger. The lady, sir, has never yet been consulted ; and I have some reason to believe that her heart is engaged to another man.

Sir P. Sir, that's nae business of yours. I know she will consent, and that's aw we are to consider. O, here comes my lord.

Enter Lord LUMBERCOURT.

Lord L. Sir Pertinax, everything is ready, and the lawyers wait for us.

Sir P. We attend your lordship. Where is Lady Rodolpha ?

Lord L. Giving some female consolation to poor Constantia. Why, my lady—ha, ha, ha !—I hear your vestal has been flirting.

Sir P. Yes, yes, my lord ; she's in vary guid order for any man that wants a wife and an heir till his estate intill the bargain.

Enter TOMLINS.

Tom. Sir, there is a man below that wants to speak to your honour upon particular business.

Sir P. I cannot speak till anybody now—he must come another time :—haud—stay—what, is he a gentleman ?

Tom. He looks something like one, sir—a sort of a gentleman—but he seems to be in a kind of a passion ; for when I asked his name, he answered hastily—It is no matter, friend ; go tell your master there is a gentleman here that must speak to him directly.

Sir P. Must ? ha !—vary peremptory indeed :—pr'ythee, let us see him, for curiosity's sake.

[Exit.]

Enter Lady RODOLPHA.

Lady R. O ! my Lady Macsycophant, I am come an humble advocate for a weeping piece of female frailty, wha begs she may be permitted to speak till your ladyship, before you finally reprobate her.

Sir P. I beg your pardon, Lady Rodolpha, but it must not be ; see her she shall not.

Lady M. Nay, there can be no harm, my dear, in hearing what she has to say for herself.

Sir P. I tell you it shall not be.

Lady M. Well, my dear, I have done.

Enter TOMLINS and MELVILLE.

Tom. Sir, that is my master.

[Exit.]

Sir P. Weel, sir, what is your urgent business with me ?

Mel. To shun disgrace, and punish baseness.

Sir P. Punish baseness ! what does the fellow mean ? Wha are you, sir ?

Mel. A man, sir, and one whose fortune once bore as proud a sway as any within this country's limits.

Lord L. You seem to be a soldier, sir.

Mel. I was, sir ; and have the soldier's certificate

to prove my service—rags and scars. In my heart for ten long years, in India's parching clime, I bore my country's cause, and in noblest dangers sustained it with my sword; at length, ungrateful peace has laid me down where welcome war first took me up—in poverty, and the dread of cruel creditors. Paternal affection brought me to my native land, in quest of an only child: I found her, as I thought, amiable as parental fondness could desire; but foul seduction has snatched her from me, and hither am I come, fraught with a father's anger, and a soldier's honour, to seek the seducer, and glut revenge.

Lady M. Pray, sir, who is your daughter?

Mel. I blush to own her—but—Constantia.

Eger. Is Constantia your daughter, sir?

Mel. She is; and was the only comfort that nature, fortune, or my own extravagance had left me.

Sir P. Guid traith, then, I fancy you will find but very little comfort fra her; for she is nae better than she should be. She has had nae damage in this mansion. I am told she is with bairn; but you may gang till Hadley, till one farmer Hodge's, and there you may learn the whole story, and wha the father of the bairn is, fra a cheeld they call Melville.

Mel. Melville!

Sir P. Yes, sir, Melville.

Mel. O, would to Heaven she had no crime to answer but her commerce with Melville! No, sir, he is not the man; it is your son, your Egerton, that has seduced her; and here, sir, are the evidence of his seduction.

Eger. Of my seduction.

Mel. Of yours, sir, if your name be Egerton.

Eger. I am that mau, sir; but pray what is your evidence?

Mel. These bills, and these gorgeous jewels, not to be had in her menial state, but at the price of chastity! Not an hour since she sent them, imprudently sent them, by a servant of this house: contagious infamy started from their touch.

Eger. Sir, do you but clear her conduct with Melville, and I will instantly satisfy your fears concerning the jewels and her virtue.

Mel. Sir, you give me new life; you are my better angel, I believe in your words—your looks. Know, then, I am that Melville.

Sir P. How, sir, you that Melville that was at farmer Hodge's?

Mel. The same, sir; it was he brought my Constantia to my arms; lodged and secreted me—once my lowly tenant, now my only friend. The fear of inexorable creditors made me change my name from Harrington to Melville, till I could see and consult some who once called themselves my friends.

Eger. Sir, suspend your fears and anger but for a few minutes; I will keep my word with you religiously, and bring your Constantia to your arms, as virtuous and as happy as you could wish her.

[Exit with Lady MACSYCOPHANT.

Sir P. The clearing up of this wench's virtue is damned unlucky; I am afraid it will ruin aw our affairs again; however, I have one stroke still in my head that will secure the bargain with my lord, let matters gang as they will.—[Aside.]—But I wonder, maister Melville, that you did nae pick up some little matter of siller in the Indies. Ah! there have been bonny fortunes snapt up there, of late years, by some of the military blades.

Mel. It is very true, sir; but it is an observation among soldiers, that there are some men who never meet with anything in the service but blows and ill-fortune. I was one of those, even to a proverb.

Sir P. Ah! 'tis pity, sir, a great pity, now, that you did nae get a mogul, or some sic an animal, intill your clutches. Ah! I should like to have the strangling of a nabob, the rummaging of his gold dust, his jewel-closet, and aw his magazines of bars and ingots. Ha, ha, ha! guid traith, naw, sic an a fellow would be a bonny cheeld to bring till this town, and to exhibit him riding on an elephant; upon honour, a man might raise a poll-tax by him, that would gang near to pay the debts of the nation. [Retires back.

Enter EGERTON, CONSTANTIA, Lady MACSYCOPHANT, and SIDNEY.

Eger. Sir, I promised to satisfy your fears concerning your daughter's virtue; and my best proof is, that I have made her the partner of my heart, and the tender guardian of my earthly happiness for life.

Sir P. [Rushes forward.] How! married!

Eger. I know, sir, at present, we shall meet your anger; but time, reflection, and our dutiful conduct, we hope, will reconcile you to our happiness.

Sir P. Never, never; and, could I make you, her, and aw your issue beggars, I would move hell, heaven, and earth, to do it.

Lord L. Why, Sir Pertinax, this is a total revolution, and will entirely ruin my affairs.

Sir P. My lord, with the consent of your lordship and Lady Rodolpha, I have an expedient to offer, that will not only punish that rebellious villain, but answer every end that your lordship and the lady proposed by the intended match with him.

Lord L. I doubt it much, Sir Pertinax—I doubt it much. But, what is it, sir? What is your expedient?

Sir P. My lord, I have another son, Sandy—Eh, he's a guid lad—and, provided the lady and your lordship have nae objection till him, every article of that rebel's intended marriage shall be amply fulfilled upon Lady Rodolpha's union with my younger son.

Lord L. Why, that is an expedient, indeed, Sir Pertinax. But what say you, Rodolpha?

Lady R. Nay, nay, my lord, as I ha nae reason to have the least affection till my cousin Egerton, and as my intended marriage with him was entirely an act of obedience till my grandmother, provided my cousin Sandy will be as agreeable till her ladyship as my cousin Charles here would have been, I have nae the least objection till the change. Ay, ay; one brother is as good to Rodolpha as another.

Sir P. I'll answer, madam, for your grandmother. Now, my lord, what say you?

Lord L. Nay, Sir Pertinax, so the agreement stands, all is right again. Come, child, let us be gone. Ay, ay; so my affairs are made easy, it is equal to me whom she marries. I say, Sir Pertinax, let them be but easy, and rat me if I care if she incorporates with the clam of Tartary. [Exit.

Sir P. As to you, my Lady Macsycophant, I suppose you concluded, before you gave your consent till this match, that there would be an end of aw intercourse betwixt you and me. You shall

have a jointure; but not a bawbee besides, living or dead, shall you, or any of your issue, ever see of mine: and so, madam, live with your Constantia, with your son, and with that damned black sheep there.

[Exit.]

Lady R. Weel, cousin Egerton, in spite of the ambitious frenzy of your father, and the thoughtless dissipation of mine, Don Cupid has at last carried his point in favour of his devotees. But I must now take my leave; and so, guid folks, I will leave you with the fag end of an auld north-country wish: "May mutual love and guid humour be the guest of your hearts, the theme of your tongues, and the blithsome subjects of aw your tricksey dreams through the rugged road of this deceitful world; and may our fathers be an example till ourselves, to treat our bairns better than they have treated us."

[Exit.]

Eger. You seem melancholy, sir.

Mel. These precarious turns of fortune, sir, will press upon the heart; for, notwithstanding my Constantia's happiness, and mine in her's, I own I cannot help feeling some regret, that my misfortunes should be the cause of any disagreement between a father and the man to whom I am under the most endearing obligations.

Eger. You have no share in his disagreement; if affluence can procure content and ease, they are within our reach. My fortune is ample, and shall be dedicated to the happiness of this domestic circle.—

"My scheme, though mock'd by knave, coquette,
and fool,

To thinking minds will prove this golden rule:
In all pursuits, but chiefly in a wife,
Not wealth, but morals, make the happy life."

END OF THE MAN OF THE WORLD.

D O U G L A S.

A TRAGIC PLAY.

BY JOHN HOME.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LORD RANDOLPH.
GLENALVON.
OLD NORVAL.
YOUNG NORVAL.
FIRST OFFICER.
SECOND OFFICER.
PEASANT.

LADY RANDOLPH.
ANNA.
OFFICERS, SERVANTS, &c.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Court of a Castle, surrounded with Woods.*

Enter Lady RANDOLPH.

Lady R. Ye woods and wilds, whose melancholy gloom
Accords with my soul's sadness, and draws forth
The voice of sorrow from my bursting heart,
Farewell awhile; I will not leave you long;
For in your shades I deem some spirit dwells,
Who, from the chiding stream, or groaning oak,
Still hears and answers to Matilda's moan.
Oh, Douglas! Douglas! if departed ghosts
Are e'er permitted to review this world,
Within the circle of that wood thou art,
And with the passion of immortals hear'st
My lamentations; hear'st thy wretched wife
Weep for her husband slain, her infant lost.
My brother's timeless death I seem to mourn,
Who perish'd with thee on this fatal day.
Oh, disregard me not; though I am call'd
Another's now, my heart is wholly thine;
Incapable of change, affection lies
Buried, my Douglas, in thy bloody grave.
But Randolph comes, whom fate has made my lord,
To chide my anguish, and defraud the dead.

Enter Lord RANDOLPH.

Lord R. Again these weeds of woe! Say, dost thou well
To feed a passion which consumes thy life?
The living claim some duty; vainly thou
Bestow'st thy cares upon the silent dead.

Lady R. Silent, alas! is he, for whom I mourn:
Childless, without memorial of his name,
He only now in my remembrance lives.

Lord R. Time, that wears out the trace of deepest anguish,
Has pass'd o'er thee in vain.

Sure thou art not the daughter of Sir Malcolm—
Strong was his rage, eternal his resentment:
For, when thy brother fell, he smiled to hear
That Douglas' son in the same field was slain.

Lady R. Oh! rake not up the ashes of my fathers:
Implacable resentment was their crime,
And grievous has the expiation been.

Lord R. Thy grief wrests to its purposes my words.

I never ask'd of thee that ardent love,
Which in the breasts of fancy's children burns,
Decent affection, and complacent kindness,
Were all I wish'd for—but I wish'd in vain.
Hence with the less regret my eyes behold
The storm of war that gathers o'er this land:
If I should perish by the Danish sword,
Matilda would not shed one tear the more.

Lady R. Thou dost not think so: woful as I am,
I love thy merit, and esteem thy virtues—
But whither go'st thou now?

Lord R. Straight to the camp,
Where every warrior on tip-toe stands
Of expectation, and impatient asks
Each who arrives, if he is come to tell,
The Danes are landed.

Lady R. Oh, may adverse winds
Far from the coast of Scotland drive their fleet!
And every soldier of both hosts return
In peace and safety to his pleasant home!

Lord R. Thou speak'st a woman's, hear a warrior's wish:

Right from their native land, the stormy north,
May the wind blow, till every keel is fix'd
Immoveable in Caledonia's strand!
Then sha'ld our foes repent their bold invasion,

And roving armies shun the fatal shore.
 Lady, farewell : I leave thee not alone :
 Yonder comes one, whose love makes duty light.

[Exit.

Enter ANNA.

Anna. Forgive the rashness of your Anna's love :
 Urged by affection, I have thus presumed
 To interrupt your solitary thoughts ;
 And warn you of the hours that you neglect,
 And lose in sadness.

Lady R. So to lose my hours
 Is all the use I wish to make of time.

Anna. To blame thee, lady, suits not with my
 state :

But sure I am, since death first prey'd on man,
 Never did sister thus a brother mourn.
 What had your sorrows been, if you had lost,
 In early youth, the husband of your heart ?

Lady R. Oh !

Anna. Have I distress'd you with officious love,
 And ill-tim'd mention of your brother's fate ?
 Forgive me, lady : humble though I am,
 The mind I bear partakes not of my fortune :
 So fervently I love you, that to dry
 These piteous tears, I'd throw my life away.

Lady R. What power directed thy unconscious
 tongue

To speak as thou hast done ? To name—

Anna. I know not ;

But since my words have made my mistress tremble,
 I will speak no more ; but silent mix
 My tears with hers.

Lady R. No, thou shalt not be silent.

I'll trust thy faithful love, and thou shalt be
 Henceforth th' instructed partner of my woes.
 But what avails it ? Can thy feeble pity
 Roll back the flood of never-ebbing time ?
 Compel the earth and ocean to give up
 Their dead alive ?

Anna. What means my noble mistress ?

Lady R. Didst thou not ask what had my sor-
 rows been,

If I, in early youth, had lost a husband ?—
 In the cold bosom of the earth is lodged,
 Mangled with wounds, the husband of my youth ;
 And in some cavern of the ocean lies
 My child and his !

Anna. Oh ! lady most revered !

The tale, wrapt up in your amazing words,
 Deign to unfold.

Lady R. Alas ! an ancient feud,
 Hereditary evil, was the source
 Of my misfortunes. Ruling fate decreed,
 That my brave brother should in battle save
 The life of Douglas' son, our house's foe :
 The youthful warriors vow'd eternal friendship.
 To see thy vaunted sister of his friend,
 Impatient, Douglas to Balarno came,
 Under a borrow'd name.—My heart he gain'd,
 Nor did I long refuse the hand he begg'd :
 My brother's presence authorized our marriage.
 Three weeks, three little weeks, with wings of
 down,

Had o'er us flown, when my loved lord was call'd
 To fight his father's battles ; and with him,
 In spite of all my tears, did Malcolm go,
 Scarce were they gone, when my stern sire was told,
 That the false stranger was Lord Douglas' son.
 Frantic with rage, the baron drew his sword,
 And question'd me. Alone, forsaken, faint,
 Kneeling beneath his sword, falt'ring, I took

An oath equivocal, that I ne'er would
 Wed one of Douglas' name. Sincerity !
 Thou first of virtues, let no mortal leave
 Thy onward path ! although the earth should gape,
 And from the gulf of hell destruction cry
 To take dissimulation's winding way.

Anna. Alas ! how few of woman's fearful kind
 Durst own a truth so hardy !

Lady R. The first truth
 Is easiest to avow. This moral learn,
 This precious moral, from my tragic tale—
 In a few days the dreadful tidings came,
 That Douglas and my brother both were slain.
 My lord ! my life ! my husband !—Mighty Heaven !
 What had I done to merit such affliction ?

Anna. My dearest lady ! many a tale of tears
 I've listened to ; but never did I hear
 A tale so sad as this.

Lady R. In the first days
 Of my distracting grief, I found myself—
 As women wish to be, who love their lords.
 But who durst tell my father ? The good priest,
 Who join'd our hands, my brother's ancient tutor,
 With his lov'd Malcolm, in the battle fell ;
 They two alone were privy to the marriage.
 On silence and concealment I resolved,
 Till time should make my father's fortune mine.
 That very night on which my son was born,
 My nurse, the only confidant I had,
 Set out with me to reach her sister's house :
 But nurse nor infant have I ever seen,
 Or heard of, Anna, since that fatal hour.

Anna. Not seen, or heard of ! Then perhaps he
 lives.

Lady R. No, it was dark December ; wind and
 rain

Had beat all night. Across the Carron lay
 The destin'd road ; and in its swelling flood
 My faithful servant perished with my child.
 Oh ! had I died, when my lov'd husband fell !
 Had some good angel oped to me the book
 Of providence, and let me read my life,
 My heart had broke, when I beheld the sum
 Of ills which, one by one, I have endured !

Anna. That Power, whose ministers good angels
 are,

Hath shut the book, in mercy to mankind.
 But we must leave this theme : Glenalvon comes :
 I saw him bend on you his thoughtful eyes,
 And hitherwards he slowly stalks his way.

Lady R. I will avoid him. An ungracious person
 Is doubly irksome in an hour like this.

Anna. Why speaks my lady thus of Randolph's
 heir ?

Lady R. Because he's not the heir of Randolph's
 virtues.

Subtle and shrewd, he offers to mankind
 An artificial image of himself ;
 And he with ease can vary to the taste
 Of different men, its features ;
 Yet is he brave and politic in war,
 And stands aloft in these unruly times.
 Why I describe him thus I'll tell hereafter ;
 Stay, and detain him till I reach the castle.

[Exit Lady RANDOLPH.

Anna. Oh, happiness ! where art thou to be
 found !

I see thou dwellest not with birth and beauty,
 Though graced with grandeur, and in wealth ar-
 ray'd :

Nor dost thou, it would seem, with virtue dwell,
 Else had this gentle lady miss'd thee not.

Enter GLENALVON.

Gle. What dost thou muse on, meditating maid?
Like some entranced and visionary seer,
On earth thou stand'st, thy thoughts ascend to
heaven.

Anna. Would that I were, e'en as thou say'st, a
seer,

To have my doubts by heavenly vision clear'd!

Gle. What dost thou doubt of? What hast thou
to do

With subjects intricate? Thy youth, thy beauty,
Cannot be questioned: think of these good gifts;
And then thy contemplations will be pleasing.

Anna. Let women view yon monument of woe,
Then boast of beauty; who so fair as she?
But I must follow; this revolving day
Awakes the memory of her ancient woes.

[Exit ANNA.]

Gle. [Solus.] So!—Lady Randolph shuns me;
by and by

I'll woo her as the lion woos his bride.
The deed's a doing now, that makes me lord
Of these rich valleys, and a chief of power.
The season is most apt; my sounding steps
Will not be heard amidst the din of arms.
Randolph has liv'd too long: his better fate
Had the ascendant once, and kept me down:
When I had seiz'd the dame, by chance he came,
Rescued, and had the lady for his labour:
I 'scap'd unknown! a slender consolation!
Heav'n is my witness that I do not love
To sow in peril, and let others reap
The jocund harvest. Yet I am not safe:
By love, or something like it, stung, inflamed,
Madly I blabb'd my passion to his wife,
And she has threatened to acquaint him of it.
The way of woman's will I do not know:
But well I know the baron's wrath is deadly.
I will not live in fear; the man I dread
Is as a Dane to me: ay, and the man
Who stands betwixt me and my chief desire.
No bar but he; she has no kinsman near;
No brother in his sister's quarrel bold;
And for the righteous cause, a stranger's cause,
I know no chief that will defy Glenalvon. [Exit.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Court, &c.

Enter Servants and a Stranger at one door, and Lady
RANDOLPH and ANNA at another.

Lady R. What means this clamour? Stranger,
speak secure:

Hast thou been wrong'd? Have these rude men
presumed

To vex the weary traveller on his way?

1 *Serv.* By us no stranger ever suffer'd wrong:
This man, with outery wild, has call'd us forth;
So sore afraid he cannot speak his fears.

Enter Attendants, Lord RANDOLPH, and a Young
Man, with their swords drawn and bloody.

Lady R. Not vain the stranger's fears! How
fares my lord?

Lord R. That it fares well, thanks to this gallant
youth,

Whose valour saved me from a wretched death!

As down the winding dale I walk'd alone,

At the crossway, four arm'd men attacked me:

Rovers, I judge, from the licentious camp;

Who would have quickly laid Lord Randolph low,

Had not this brave and generous stranger come

Like my good angel in the hour of fate,

And, mocking danger, made my foes his own.

They turn'd upon him; but his active arm
Struck to the ground, from whence they rose no
more,

The fiercest two: the others fled again,

And left him master of the bloody field.

Speak, Lady Randolph; upon beauty's tongue

Dwell accents pleasing to the brave and bold.

Speak, noble dame, and thank him for thy lord.

Lady R. My lord, I cannot speak what now I
feel;

My heart o'erflows with gratitude to Heav'n,

And to this noble youth.

Have you not learned of him whom we should
thank?

Whom call the saviour of Lord Randolph's life?

Lord R. I ask'd that question, and he answer'd
not;

But I must know who my deliverer is.

[To the Stranger.]

Str. A low-born man, of parentage obscure,

Who naught can boast but his desire to be

A soldier, and to gain a name in arms.

Lord R. Whoe'er thou art, thy spirit is ennobled

By the great King of kings! thou art ordain'd

And stamp'd a hero by the sovereign hand

Of nature! Blush not, flower of modesty

As well as valour, to declare thy birth.

Str. My name is Norval! on the Grampian hills

My father feeds his flocks: a frugal swain,

Whose constant cares were to increase his store,

And keep his only son, myself, at home.

For I had heard of battles, and I long'd

To follow to the field some warlike lord:

And Heav'n soon granted what my sire denied.

This moon, which rose last night, round as my
shield,

Had not yet filled her horns, when, by her light,

A band of fierce barbarians, from the hills,

Rush'd like a torrent down upon the vale,

Sweeping our flocks and herds. The shepherds fled

For safety and for succour. I alone,

With bended bow, and quiver full of arrows,

Hover'd about the enemy, and mark'd

The road he took: then hastened to my friends,

Whom, with a troop of fifty chosen men,

I met advancing. The pursuit I led,

Till we o'ertook the spoil-encumbered foe.

We fought and conquer'd. Ere a sword was drawn,

An arrow from my bow had pierced their chief,

Who wore that day the arms which now I wear.

Returning home in triumph, I disdain'd

The shepherd's slothful life; and, having heard

That our good king had summon'd his bold peers

To lead their warriors to the Carron side,

I left my father's house, and took with me

A chosen servant to conduct my steps:

Yon trembling coward, who forsook his master.

Journeying with this intent, I pass'd these towers,

And, Heav'n-directed, came this day to do

The happy deed that gilds my humble name.

Lord R. He is as wise as brave. Was ever tale
With such a gallant modesty rehearsed?

My brave deliverer! thou shalt enter now
A nobler list, and, in a monarch's sight,
Contend with princes for the prize of fame.
I will present thee to our Scottish king,
Whose valiant spirit ever valour loved—
Ha! my Matilda! wherefore starts that tear?

Lady R. I cannot say: for various affections,
And strangely mingled, in my bosom swell;
I joy, that thou art safe; and I admire
Him and his fortunes, who hath wrought thy
safety,

Obscure and friendless, he the army sought,
Bent upon peril, in the range of death
Resolved to hunt for fame, and with his sword
To gain distinction which his birth denied.
In this attempt, unknown he might have perish'd,
And gain'd, with all his valour, but oblivion.
Now graced by thee, his virtues serve no more
Beneath despair. The soldier now of hope,
He stands conspicuous;
On this my mind reflected, whilst you spoke,
And bless'd the wonder-working hand of Heaven.

Lord R. Pious and grateful ever are thy thoughts!
My deeds shall follow where thou point'st the way.
Next to myself, and equal to Glenalvon,
In honour and command shalt Norval be.

Nor. I know not how to thank you. Rude I am
In speech and manners; never, till this hour,
Stood I in such a presence; yet, my lord,
There's something in my breast, which makes me
bold

To say, that Norval ne'er will shame thy favour.

Lady R. I will be sworn thou wilt not. Thou
shalt be

My knight; and ever, as thou didst to-day,
With happy valour guard the life of Randolph.

Lord R. Well hast thou spoke. Let me forbid
reply. [To NORVAL.]

We are thy debtors still; thy high desert
O'ertops our gratitude. I must proceed,
As was at first intended, to the camp;
Some of my train, I see, are speeding hither,
Impatient, doubtless, of their lord's delay.
Go with me, Norval, and thine eyes shall see
The chosen warriors of thy native land,
Who languish for the fight, and beat the air
With brandish'd swords.

Nor. Let us begone, my lord.

Lord R. [To Lady RANDOLPH.] About the time
that the declining sun

Shall his broad orbit o'er yon hills suspend,
Expect us to return. This night once more
Within these walls I rest; my tent I pitch
To-morrow in the field. Prepare the feast.
Free is his heart, who for his country fights:
He, in the eve of battle, may resign
Himself to social pleasure; sweetest then,
When danger to a soldier's soul endears
The human joy that never may return.

[Exit RANDOLPH and NORVAL.]

Lady R. Wretch that I am! Alas! why am I so?
At every happy parent I repine!

How bless'd the mother of yon gallant Norval!
She for a living husband bore her pains,
And heard him bless her when a man was born;
She nursed her smiling infant on her breast,
Tended the child, and rear'd the pleasing boy;
She, with affection's triumph, saw the youth
In grace and comeliness surpass his peers:
Whilst I to a dead husband bore a son,
And to the roaring waters gave my child.

Anna. Alas! alas! why will you thus resume

Your grief afresh? I thought that gallant youth
Would, for a while, have won you from your woe.
On him intent you gazed, with a look
Much more delighted than your pensive eye
Has deign'd on other objects to bestow.

Lady R. Delighted, say'st thou? Oh! even
there mine eye

Found fuel for my life-consuming sorrow;
I thought that, had the son of Douglas lived,
He might have been like this young gallant stranger.
While thus I mused, a spark from fancy fell
On my sad heart, and kindled up a fondness
For this young stranger, wand'ring from his home,
And like an orphan cast upon my care.
I will protect thee (said I to myself).

With all my power, and grace with all my favour.
Anna. Sure, Heaven will bless so generous a
resolve.

You must, my noble dame, exert your power;
You must awake: devices will be framed,
And arrows pointed at the breast of Norval.

Lady R. Glenalvon's false and crafty head will
work

Against a rival in his kinsman's love,
If I deter him not: I only can.
Bold as he is, Glenalvon will beware
How he pulls down the fabric that I raise.
I'll be the artist of young Norval's fortune.

Enter GLENALVON.

Gle. Where is my dearest kinsman, noble Ran-
dolph?

Lady R. Have you not heard, Glenalvon, of the
base—

Gle. I have: and, that the villains may not 'scape,
With a strong band I have begirt the wood.
If they lurk there, alive they shall be taken,
And torture force from them th' important secret,
Whether some foe of Randolph hired their swords,
Or if—

Lady R. That care becomes a kinsman's love.
I have a counsel for Glenalvon's ear. [Exit ANNA.]

Gle. To him your counsels always are commands.

Lady R. I have not found so; thou art known
to me.

Gle. Known!

Lady R. And most certain is my cause of know-
ledge.

Gle. What do you know? By Heaven,
You much amaze me! No created thing,
Yourself except, durst thus accost me.

Lady R. Is guilt so bold? and dost thou make a
merit

Of thy pretended meekness? Thus to me,
Who, with a gentleness which duty blames,
Have hitherto concealed what, if divulged,
Would make thee nothing; or, what's worse than
that,

An outcast beggar, and unpitied too:
For mortals shudder at a crime like thine.

Gle. Thy virtue awes me. First of womankind!
Permit me yet to say, that the fond man,
Whom love transports beyond strict virtue's bounds,
If he is brought by love to misery,
In fortune ruin'd, and in mind forlorn,
Unpitied cannot be. Pity's the alms,
Which, on such beggars, freely is bestowed;
For mortals know, that love is still their lord,
And o'er their vain resolves advances still;
As fire, when kindled by our shepherds, moves
Through the dry heath before the fanning wind.

Lady R. Reserve these accents for some other ear:

To love's apology I listen not.
Mark thou my words; for it is meet thou shouldst.
His brave deliverer Randolph here retains.
Perhaps his presence may not please thee well;
But at thy peril practise aught against him;
Let not thy jealousy attempt to shake
And loosen the good root he has in Randolph:
Whose favourites I know thou hast supplanted.
Thou look'st at me, as if thou fain wouldst pry
Into my heart. 'Tis open as my speech.
I give this early caution, and put on
The curb, before thy temper breaks away.
The friendless stranger my protection claims:
His friend I am, and be not thou his foe. [Exit.

Gle. Child that I was, to start at my own shadow,
And be the shallow fool of coward conscience!
I am not what I have been; what I should be.
The darts of destiny have almost pierced
My marble heart. Had I one grain of faith
In holy legends, and religious tales,
I should conclude, there was an arm above
That fought against me, and malignant turn'd
To catch myself, the subtle snare I set.
Why, rape and murder are not simple means!
Th' imperfect rape to Randolph gave a spouse;
And the intended murder introduced
A favourite, to hide the son from me;
And, worst of all, a rival. Burning hell!
This were thy centre, if I thought she loved him!
'Tis certain she contemns me; nay, commands me,
And waves the flag of her displeasure o'er me,
In his behalf. And shall I thus be braved?
Curb'd, as she calls it, by dame Chastity?
Infernal fiends, if any fiends there are
More fierce than love, ambition, and revenge,
Rise up, and fill my bosom with your fires!
Darkly a project peers upon my mind,
Like the red moon when rising in the east,
Cross'd and divided by strange-coloured clouds.
I'll seek the slave who came with Norval hither,
And for his cowardice was spurned from him.
I've known such follower's rankled bosom breed
Venom most fatal to his heedless lord. [Exit.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Court, &c., as before.*

Enter ANNA.

Anna. Thy vassals, grief, great nature's order
break,
And change the noontide to the midnight hour.
Whilst Lady Randolph rests, I will walk forth,
And taste the air that breathes on yonder bank.

Enter Servant.

Serv. One of the vile assassins is secured,
That struck this morning at Lord Randolph's life.
We found the villain lurking in the wood;
With dreadful imprecations he denies
All knowledge of the crime. But this is not
His first essay: these jewels were conceal'd
In the most secret places of his garment;
Belike the spoils of some that he has murder'd.

Anna. Let me look on them. Ha! here is a
heart,

The chosen crest of Douglas' valiant name!
These are no vulgar jewels. Guard the wretch.
[Exit ANNA.

Enter Servants with a Prisoner.

Pri. I know no more than does the child unborn
Of what you charge me with.

1 Ser. You say so, sir!

But torture soon shall make you speak the truth.
Behold, the lady of Lord Randolph comes;
Prepare yourself to meet her just revenge.

Enter Lady RANDOLPH and ANNA.

Anna. Summon your utmost fortitude before
You speak with him.

Your dignity, your fame,
Are now at stake. Think of the fatal secret
Which in a moment from your lips may fly.

Lady R. Thou shalt behold me, with a desperate
heart,
Hear how my infant perished. See, he kneels.

[The Prisoner kneels.

Pri. Heav'n bless that countenance, so sweet
and mild!

A judge like thee makes innocence more bold.

[Rises.

Oh, save me, lady, from these cruel men,
Who have attack'd and seized me; who accuse
Me of intended murder. As I hope
For mercy at the judgment-seat of Heaven,
The tender lamb, that never nipp'd the grass,
Is not more innocent than I of murder.

Lady R. Of this man's guilt what proof can ye
produce.

1 Ser. We found him lurking in the hollow glen.
When view'd and call'd upon, amazed he fled;
We overtook him, and inquired from whence
And what he was: he said he came from far,
And was upon his journey to the camp.
Not satisfied with this, we search'd his clothes,
And found these jewels; whose rich value plead
Most powerfully against him. Hard he seems,
And old in villany. Permit us to try
His stubbornness against the torture's force.

Pri. Oh, gentle lady, by your lord's dear life,
Which these weak hands, I swear, did ne'er assail,
And by your children's welfare, spare my age!
Let not the iron tear my ancient joints,
And my gray hairs bring to the grave with pain.

Lady R. Account for these; thine own they
cannot be;

For these I say: be steadfast to the truth:
Detected falsehood is most certain death.

[ANNA removes the Servants, and returns.

Pri. Alas! I'm sore beset! let never man,
For sake of lucre, sin against his soul!
Eternal Justice is in this most just!
I, guiltless now, must former guilt reveal.

Lady R. Oh! Anna, hear!—Once more I charge
thee, speak

The truth direct; for these to me foretell
And certify a part of thy narration,
With which, if the remainder tallies not,
An instant and a dreadful death abides thee.

Pri. Then, thus abjured, I'll speak to you as just
As if you were the minister of Heaven,
Sent down to search the secret sins of men.
Some eighteen years ago, I rented land
Of brave Sir Malcolm, then Balmoro's lord;
But, falling to decay, his servants seized
All that I had, and then turn'd me and mine
(Four helpless infants, and their weeping mother)

Out to the mercy of the winter winds.
A little hovel by the river's side
Received us: there, hard labour, and the skill
In fishing, which was formerly my sport,
Supported life. While thus we poorly lived,
One stormy night, as I remember well,
The wind and rain beat hard upon our roof;
Red came the river down, and loud and oft
The angry spirit of the water shriek'd.
At the dead hour of night was heard the cry
Of one in jeopardy. I rose, and ran
To where the circling eddy of a pool,
Beneath the ford, used oft to bring within
My reach whatever floating thing the stream
Had caught. The voice was ceased; the person
lost;

But looking sad and earnest on the waters,
By the moon's light I saw, whirl'd round and
round,

A basket: soon I drew it to the bank,
And, nestled curious, there an infant lay.

Lady R. Was he alive?

Pri. He was.

Lady R. Inhuman that thou art!
How couldst thou kill what waves and tempests
spar'd?

Pri. I am not so inhuman.

Lady R. Didst thou not?

Pri. The needy man, who has known better days,
One whom distress has spited at the world,
Is he, whom tempting fiends would pitch upon
To do such deeds as make the prosperous men
Lift up their hands, and wonder who could do them.
And such a man was I; a man declined,
Who saw no end of black adversity:
Yet, for the wealth of kingdoms, I would not
Have touch'd that infant with a hand of harm.

Lady R. Ha! dost thou say so? Then perhaps
he lives!

Pri. Not many days ago he was alive.

Lady R. Oh! heavenly powers! did he then die
so lately?

Pri. I did not say he died: I hope he lives.
Not many days ago these eyes beheld
Him, flourishing in youth, and health, and beauty.

Lady R. Where is he now?

Pri. Alas! I know not where.

Lady R. Oh! fate! I fear thee still. Thou rid-
dler, speak
Direct and clear, else I will search thy soul.

Pri. Fear not my faith, though I must speak my
shame.

Within the cradle where the infant lay,
Was stored a mighty store of gold and jewels;
Tempted by which, we did resolve to hide,
From all the world, the wonderful event,
And like a peasant breed this noble child.
That none might mark the change of our estate,
We left the country, travelled to the north,
Bought flocks and herds, and gradually brought
forth

Our secret wealth. But Heaven's all-seeing eye
Beheld our avarice, and smote us sore.
For one by one all our own children died,
And he, the stranger, sole remain'd the heir
Of what indeed was his. Fain then would I,
Who with a father's fondness loved the boy,
Have trusted him, now in the dawn of youth,
With his own secret: but my anxious wife,
Foreboding evil, never would consent.
Meanwhile the stripling grew in years and beauty;
And, as we oft observed, he bore himself,

Not as the offspring of our cottage blood;
For nature will break out: mild with the mild,
But with the froward he was fierce as fire,
And night and day he talk'd of war and arms.
I set myself against his warlike bent:
But all in vain; for when a desperate band
Of robbers from the savage mountains came—

Lady R. Eternal Providence! what is thy name?

Pri. My name is Norval; and my name he bears.

Lady R. 'Tis he! 'tis he himself! It is my son;
Oh! sovereign mercy! 'twas my child I saw!

Pri. If I, amidst astonishment and fear,
Have of your words and gestures rightly judged,
Thou art the daughter of my ancient master;
The child I rescued from the flood is thine!

Lady R. With thee dissimulation now were vain.
I am, indeed, the daughter of Sir Malcolm;
The child thou rescu'dst from the flood is mine.

Pri. Bless'd be the hour that made me a poor
man!

My poverty hath sav'd my master's house!

Lady R. Thy words surprise me: sure thou dost
not feign!

The tear stands in thine eye: such love from thee
Sir Malcolm's house deserved not, if aright
Thou told'st the story of thine own distress.

Pri. Sir Malcolm of our barons was the flower:
The fastest friend, the best and kindest master.

But ah! he knew not of my sad estate.
After the battle, where his gallant son,
Your own brave brother, fell, the good old lord
Grew desperate and reckless of the world;
And never, as he erst was wont, went forth
To overlook the conduct of his servants.
By them I was thrust out, and them I blame:
May Heaven so judge me as I judge my master!
And God so love me as I love his race!

Lady R. His race shall yet reward thee.
Remember'st thou a little lonely hut,
That like a holy hermitage appears
Among the cliffs of Carron?

Pri. I remember

The cottage of the cliffs.

Lady R. 'Tis that I mean;
There dwells a man of venerable age,
Who in my father's service spent his youth:
Tell him I sent thee, and with him remain,
Till I shall call upon thee to declare,
Before the king and nobles, what thou now
To me hast told. No more but this, and thou
Shalt live in honour all thy future days;
Thy son so long, shall call thee father still.
And all the land shall bless the man who saved
The son of Douglas, and Sir Malcolm's heir.
Remember well my words: if thou shouldst meet
Him, whom thou call'st thy son, still call him so;
And mention nothing of his noble father.

Pri. Fear not that I shall mar so fair an harvest,
By putting in my sickle ere 'tis ripe.
Why did I leave my home and ancient dame?
'To find the youth, to tell him all I knew,
And make him wear these jewels in his arms,
Which might, I thought, be challenged, and so
bring

To light the secret of his noble birth.

[*Lady RANDOLPH goes towards the Servants.*]

Lady R. This man is not th' assassin you sus-
pected,

Though chance combined some likelihoods against
him.

He is the faithful bearer of the jewels
To their right owner, whom in haste he seeks.

'Tis meet that you should put him on his way,
Since your mistaken zeal has dragged him hither.

[*Exeunt Stranger and Servants.*]

My faithful Anna! dost thou share my joy?
I know thou dost. Unparallel'd event!
Reaching from Heaven to earth, Jehovah's arm
Snatch'd from the waves, and brings me to my son!
Judge of the widow, and the orphan's father,
Accept a widow's and a mother's thanks
For such a gift!—What does my Anna think
Of the young eaglet of a valiant nest?
How soon he gaz'd on bright and burning arms,
Spurn'd the low dunghill where his fate had thrown
him,

And tower'd up to the region of his sire!

Anna. How fondly did your eyes devour the boy?
Mysterious nature, with the unseen cord
Of powerful instinct, drew you to your own.

Lady R. The ready story of his birth believed,
Suppress'd my fancy quite, nor did he owe
To any likeness my so sudden favour:
But, now I long to see his face again,
Examine every feature, and find out
The lineaments of Douglas, or my own.
But, most of all, I long to let him know
Who his true parents are, to clasp his neck,
And tell him all the story of his father.

Anna. With wary caution you must bear yourself

In public, lest your tenderness break forth,
And in observers stir conjectures strange.
To-day the baron started at your tears.

Lady R. He did so, Anna! well thy mistress
knows

If the least circumstance, mote of offence,
Should touch the baron's eye, his sight would be
With jealousy disorder'd.

Anna. That demon haunts you still:
Behold Glenalvon.

Lady R. Now I shun him not.

This day I brav'd him in behalf of Norval:
Perhaps too far: at least my nicer fears
For Douglas thus interpret. [Exit ANNA.]

Enter GLENALVON.

Gle. Noble dame!
The hovering Dane at last his men hath landed:
No band of pirates; but a mighty host,
That comes to settle where their valour conquers;
To win a country, or to lose themselves.

Lady R. How many mothers shall bewail their
sons!

How many widows weep their husbands slain!
Ye dames of Denmark, e'en for you I feel,
Who, sadly sitting on the sea-beat shore,
Long look for lords that never shall return.

Gle. Oft has th' unconquer'd Caledonian sword
Widow'd the North. The children of the slain
Come, as I hope, to meet their fathers' fate.
The monster war, with her infernal brood,
Loud yelling fury, and life-ending pain,
Are objects suited to Glenalvon's soul.

Scorn is more grievous than the pains of death;
Reproach more piercing than the pointed sword.

Lady R. I scorn thee not but when I ought to
scorn;

Nor e'er reproach, but when insulted virtue
Against audacious vice asserts herself.
I own thy worth, Glenalvon; none more apt
Than I to praise thy eminence in arms,
And be the echo of thy martial fame.

No longer vainly feed a guilty passion;
Go and pursue a lawful mistress, Glory.
Upon the Danish crests redeem thy fault,
And let thy valour be the shield of Randolph.

Gle. One instant stay, and hear an alter'd man.
When beauty pleads for virtue, vice abash'd
Flies its own colours, and goes o'er to virtue.
I am your convert; time will show how truly:
Yet one immediate proof I mean to give.
That youth for whom your ardent zeal to-day,
Somewhat too haughtily, defied your slave,
Amidst the shock of armies I'll defend,
And turn death from him with a guardian arm.

Lady R. Act thus, Glenalvon, and I am thy
friend:

But that's thy least reward. Believe me, sir,
The truly generous is the truly wise;
And he, who loves not others, lives unblest'd.

[Exit Lady RANDOLPH.]

Gle. [*Solus.*] Amen! and virtue is its own re-
ward.

I think, that I have hit the very tone
In which she loves to speak. Honey'd assent,
How pleasing art thou to the taste of man,
And woman also! flattery direct
Seldom disgusts. They little know mankind,
Who doubt its operation: 'tis my key,
And opens the wicket of the human heart.
How far I have succeeded now, I know not.
Yet I incline to think her stormy virtue
Is lull'd awhile; 'tis her alone I fear:
Whilst she and Randolph live, and live in faith
And amity, uncertain is my tenure.

That slave of Norval's I have found most apt:
I show'd him gold, and he has pawn'd his soul
To say and swear whatever I suggest.
Norval, I'm told, has that alluring look,
'Twixt man and woman, which I have observed
To charm the nicer and fantastic dames,
Who are, like Lady Randolph, full of virtue.
In raising Randolph's jealousy, I may
But point him to the truth. He seldom errs,
Who thinks the worst he can of womankind.

[Exit.]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Court.—*Flourish of Trumpets.*

Enter Lord RANDOLPH, attended.

Lord R. Summon an hundred horse by break of
day

To wait our pleasure at the castle gate.

Lady R. Alas! my lord! I've heard unwelcome
news:

The Danes are landed.

Lord R. Ay, no inroad this
Of the Northumbrian, bent to take a spoil:

No sportive war, no tournament essay
Of some young knight, resolv'd to break a spear,
And stain with hostile blood his maiden arms.
The Danes are landed: we must beat them back,
Or live the slaves of Denmark.

Lady R. Dreadful times!

Lord R. The fenceless villages are all forsaken:

The trembling mothers and their children lodged
In well-girt towers and castles : whilst the men
Retire indignant. Yet, like broken waves,
They but retire more awful to return.

Lady R. Immense, as fame reports, the Danish
host!

Lord R. Were it as numerous as loud fame re-
ports,

An army knit like ours would pierce it through :
Brothers that shrink not from each other's side,
And fond companions, fill our warlike files :
For his dear offspring, and the wife he loves,
The husband and the fearless father arm.
In vulgar breasts heroic ardour burns,
And the poor peasant mates his daring lord.

Lady R. Men's minds are temper'd, like their
swords, for war.

Hence, early graves ; hence the lone widow's life ;
And the sad mother's grief-embitter'd age.
Where is our gallant guest ?

Lord R. Down in the vale
I left him managing a fiery steed,
Whose stubbornness had foil'd the strength and
skill

Of every rider. But behold he comes,
In earnest conversation with Glenalvon.

Enter NORVAL and GLENALVON.

Glenalvon, with the lark arise : go forth
And lead my troops that lie in yonder vale :
Private I travel to the royal camp :

Norval, thou go'st with me. But say, young man,
Where didst thou learn so to discourse of war,
And in such terms as I o'erheard to-day ?
War is no village science, nor its phrase
A language taught among the shepherd swains.

Nor. Small is the skill my lord delights to praise
In him he favours. Hear from whence it came.
Beneath a mountain's brow, the most remote
And inaccessible, by shepherds trod,

In a deep cave, dug by no mortal hand,
A hermit lived ; a melancholy man,
Who was the wonder of our wand'ring swains :
Austere and lonely, cruel to himself,

Did they report him ; the cold earth his bed,
Water his drink, his food the shepherd's alms.
I went to see him, and my heart was touch'd
With reverence and pity. Mild he spake,
And, entering on discourse, such stories told
As made me oft revisit his sad cell.

For he had been a soldier in his youth ;
And fought in famous battles, when the peers
Of Europe, by the bold Godfredo led,
Against th' usurping infidel display'd
The blessed cross, and won the Holy Land.
Pleased with my admiration, and the fire
His speech struck from me, the old man would
shake

His years away, and act his young encounters ;
Then having show'd his wounds, he'd sit him
down,

And all the live-long day discourse of war
To help my fancy, in the smooth green turf
He cut the figures of the marshall'd hosts ;
Described the motions, and explain'd the use
Of the deep column, and the lengthen'd line,
The square, the crescent, and the phalanx firm.
For all that Saracen or Christian knew
Of war's vast art was to this hermit known.

[*Trumpets at a distance.*]

Lord R. From whence these sounds ?

Enter an Officer.

Offi. My lord, the trumpets of the troops of Lorn :
Their valiant leader hails the noble Randolph.

Lord R. Mine ancient guest ! does he the war-
riors lead ?

Has Denmark roused the brave old knight to arms ?

Offi. No ; worn with warfare, he resigns the
sword ;

His eldest hope, the valiant John of Lorn,
Now leads his kindred bands.

Lord R. Glenalvon, go.

With hospitality's most strong request

Entreat the chief. [*Exit GLENALVON.*]

Offi. My lord, requests are vain.

He urges on, impatient of delay,
Stung with the tidings of the foe's approach.

Lord R. May victory sit on the warrior's plume !
Bravest of men ! his flocks and herds are safe ;
Remote from war's alarms his pastures lie,
By mountains inaccessible secured ;
Yet foremost he into the plain descends
Eager to bleed in battles not his own.

Such were the heroes of the ancient world
Contemners they of indolence and gain ;
But still for love of glory and of arms,
Prone to encounter peril, and to lift
Against each strong antagonist the spear.
I'll go and press the hero to my breast.

[*Exit with Officer.*]

Lady R. The soldier's loftiness, the pride and
pomp
Investing awful war, Norval, I see,
Transport thy youthful mind.

Nor. Ah ! should they not ?
Bless'd be the hour I left my father's house ;
I might have been a shepherd all my days,
And stole obscurely to a peasant's grave ;
Now, if I live, with mighty chiefs I stand ;
And, if I fall, with noble dust I lie.

Lady R. There is a generous spirit in thy breast,
That could have well sustain'd a prouder fortune.
Since lucky chance has left us here alone,
Unseen, unheard, by human eye or ear,
I will amaze thee with a wond'rous tale.

Nor. Let there be danger, lady, with the secret,
That I may hug it to my grateful heart,
And prove my faith. Command my sword, my life :
These are the sole possessions of poor Norval.

Lady R. Know'st thou these gems ?

Nor. Durst I believe my eyes,
I'd say I knew them, and they were my father's.

Lady R. Thy father's, say'st thou ? Ah, they
were thy father's !

Nor. I saw them once, and curiously inquired
Of both my parents, whence such splendour came.
But I was check'd, and more could never learn.

Lady R. Then learn of me ; thou art not Nor-
val's son.

Nor. Not Norval's son !

Lady R. Nor of a shepherd sprung.

Nor. Lady, who am I, then ?

Lady R. Noble thou art,

For noble was thy sire.

Nor. I will believe—

Oh, tell me further ! Say, who was my father ?

Lady R. Douglas !

Nor. Lord Douglas, whom to-day I saw ?

Lady R. His younger brother.

Nor. And in yonder camp ?

Lady R. Alas !

Nor. You make me tremble—Sighs and tears !
Lives my brave father ?

Lady R. Ah, too brave indeed !

He fell in battle ere thyself was born.

Nor. Ah me, unhappy, ere I saw the light !

But does my mother live ? I may conclude,

From my own fate, her portion has been sorrow.

Lady R. She lives ! but wastes her life in constant woe,

Weeping her husband slain, her infant lost.

Nor. You that are skill'd so well in the sad story

Of my unhappy parents, and with tears

Bewail their destiny, now have compassion

Upon the offspring of the friends you loved.

Oh, tell me who and where my mother is !

Oppress'd by a base world, perhaps she bends

Beneath the weight of other ills than grief,

And, desolate, implores of Heav'n the aid

Her son should give. It is, it must be so—

Your countenance confesses that she is wretched !

Oh, tell me her condition ! Can the sword—

Who shall resist me in a parent's cause ?

Lady R. Thy virtue ends her woe—My son !
my son !

Nor. Art thou my mother ?

Lady R. I am thy mother, and the wife of Douglas ! *[Falls upon his neck.]*

Nor. Oh, Heaven and earth ! how wond'rous is my fate !

Ever let me kneel !

Lady R. Image of Douglas ! Fruit of fatal love !
All that I owe thy sire I pay to thee.

Nor. Respect and admiration still possess me,

Checking the love and fondness of a son ;

Yet I was filial to my humble parents.

But did my sire surpass the rest of men,

As thou excellest all of womankind ?

Lady R. Arise, my son. In me thou dost behold
The poor remains of beauty once admired.

Yet in my prime I equalled not thy father :

His eyes were like the eagle's, yet sometimes

Likely the dove's ; and, as he pleased, he won

All hearts with softness, or with spirit awed.

Nor. How did he fall ? Sure 'twas a bloody field
When Douglas died. Oh, I have much to ask !

Lady R. Hereafter thou shalt hear the lengthen'd tale

Of all thy father's and thy mother's woes.

At present this :—thou art the rightful heir

Of yonder castle, and the wide domains,

Which now Lord Randolph, as my husband, holds.

But thou shalt not be wrong'd ; I have the power

To right thee still. Before the king I'll kneel,

And call Lord Douglas to protect his blood.

Nor. The blood of Douglas will protect itself.

Lady R. But we shall need both friends and favour, boy,

To wrest thy lands and lordship from the gripe

Of Randolph and his kinsman. Yet I think

My tale will move each gentle heart to pity,

My life incline the virtuous to believe.

Nor. To be the son of Douglas is to me

Inheritance enough. Declare my birth,

And in the field I'll seek for fame and fortune.

Lady R. Thou dost not know what perils and injustice

Await the poor man's valour. Oh, my son !

The noblest blood in all the land's abashed,

Having no lackey but pale poverty.

Too long hast thou been thus attended, Douglas,

Too long hast thou been deemed a peasant's child ;

The wanton heir of some inglorious chief
Perhaps has scorn'd thee in thy youthful sports.

Whilst thy indignant spirit swelled in vain.

Such contumely thou no more shalt bear :

But how I purpose to redress thy wrongs

Must be hereafter told. Prudence directs

That we should part before yon chief's return.

Retire, and from thy rustic follower's hand

Receive a billet, which thy mother's care,

Anxious to see thee, dictated before

This casual opportunity arose

Of private conference. Its purport mark ;

For, as I there appoint, we meet again.

Leave me, my son ; and frame thy manners still

To Norval's, not to noble Douglas' state.

Nor. I will remember. Where is Norval now ?

That good old man !

Lady R. At hand conceal'd he lies,

An useful witness. But beware, my son,

Of yon Glenalvon ; in his guilty breast

Resides a villain's shrewdness, ever prone

To false conjecture. He hath griev'd my heart.

Nor. Has he indeed ? Then let yon false Glenalvon

Beware of me. *[Exit.]*

Lady R. There burst the smother'd flame,—

Oh, thou all-righteous and eternal king !

Who father of the fatherless art call'd,

Protect my son !—Thy inspiration, Lord !

Hath fill'd his bosom with that sacred fire,

Which in the breasts of his forefathers burn'd :

Set him on high like them, that he may shine

The star and glory of his native land !

Then let the minister of death descend,

And bear my willing spirit to its place.

Yonder they come. How do bad women find

Unchanging aspects to conceal their guilt

When I, by reason and by justice urged,

Full hardly can dissemble with these men

In nature's pious cause ?

Enter Lord RANDOLPH and GLENALVON.

Lord R. Yon gallant chief,

Of arms enamour'd, all repose disclaims.

Lady R. Be not, my lord, by his example sway'd.

Arrange the business of to-morrow now,

And when you enter speak of war no more. *[Exit.]*

Lord R. 'Tis so, by Heav'n ! her mien, her voice,
her eye,

And her impatience to begone, confirm it.

Gle. He parted from her now. Behind the
mount,

Amongst the trees, I saw him glide along.

Lord R. For sad sequester'd virtue she's re-
nown'd.

Gle. Most true, my lord.

Lord R. Yet this distinguish'd dame

Invites a youth, the acquaintance of a day,

Alone to meet her at the midnight hour.

This assignation *[Shows a letter]* the assassin freed,

Her manifest affection for the youth,

Might breed suspicions in a husband's brain,

Whose gentle consort all for love had wedded ;

Much more in mine. Matilda never lov'd me.

Let no man after me a woman wed,

Whose heart he knows he has not ; though she
brings

A mine of gold, a kingdom for her dowry.

For, let her seem, like the night's shadowy queen,

Cold and contemplative—he cannot trust her ;

She may, she will, bring shame and sorrow on him ;

The worst of sorrow and the worst of shames !

Gle. Yield not, my lord, to such afflicting thoughts,

But let the spirit of an husband sleep,
Till your own senses make a sure conclusion.
This billet must to blooming Norval go:
At the next turn awaits my trusty spy;
I'll give it him refitted for his master.
In the close thicket take your secret stand;
The moon shines bright, and your own eyes may judge

Of their behaviour.

Lord R. Thou dost counsel well.

Gle. Permit me now to make one slight essay;
Of all the trophies, which vain mortals boast,
By wit, by valour, or by wisdom won,
The first and fairest in a young man's eye
Is woman's captive heart. Successful love
With glorious fumes intoxicates the mind,
And the proud conqueror in triumph moves,
Air-born, exalted above vulgar men.

Lord R. And what avails this maxim?

Gle. Much, my lord:

Withdraw a little; I'll accost young Norval,
And with ironical derisive counsel
Explore his spirit. If he is no more
Than humble Norval, by thy favour raised,
Brave as he is, he'll shrink astonish'd from me.
But if he be the favourite of the fair,
Loved by the first of Caledonia's dames,
He'll turn upon me, as the lion turns
Upon the hunter's spear.

Lord R. 'Tis shrewdly thought.

Gle. When we grow loud, draw near. But let my lord

His rising wrath restrain.—

[*Lord RANDOLPH retires.*]

'Tis strange, by Heaven!

That she should run full tilt her fond career
To one so little known. She, too, that seem'd
Pure as the winter stream, when ice, emboss'd,
Whitens its course. Even I did think her chaste,
Whose charity exceeds not. Precious sex!
Whose deeds lascivious pass Glenalvon's thoughts!

Enter NORVAL.

His port I love: he's in a proper mood
To chide the thunder, if at him it roar'd.— [*Aside.*]
Has Norval seen the troops.

Nor. The setting sun

With yellow radiance lighten'd all the vale
And, as the warriors mov'd, each polish'd helm,
Corslet, or spear, glanced back his gilded beams.
The hill they climbed, and, halting at its top,
Of more than mortal size, tow'ring, they seem'd
An host angelic, clad in burning arms.

Gle. Thou talk'st it well; no leader of our host
In sounds more lofty speaks of glorious war.

Nor. If I shall e'er acquire a leader's name,
My speech will be less ardent. Novelty
Now prompts my tongue, and youthful admiration
Vents itself freely; since no part is mine
Of praise pertaining to the great in arms.

Gle. You wrong yourself, brave sir; your martial deeds

Have rank'd you with the great. But mark me, Norval:

Lord Randolph's favour now exalts your youth
Above his veterans of famous service.

Let me, who know these soldiers, counsel you.
Give them all honour: seem not to command;
Else they will scarcely brook your late-sprung power,
Which nor alliance props, nor birth adorns.

Nor. Sir, I have been accustom'd all my days
To hear and speak the plain and simple truth:
And, though I have been told that there are men
Who borrow friendship's tongue to speak their scorn,

Yet in such language I am little skill'd.
Therefore I thank Glenalvon for his counsel,
Although it sounded harshly. Why remind
Me of my birth obscure? Why slur my power
With such contemptuous terms?

Gle. I did not mean

To gall your pride, which now I see is great.

Nor. My pride!

Gle. Suppress it as you wish to prosper.
Your pride's excessive. Yet, for Randolph's sake,
I will not leave you to its rash direction.
If thus you swell, and frown at high-born men,
Think you, will they endure a shepherd's scorn?

Nor. A shepherd's scorn!

Gle. Yes, if you presume
To bend on soldiers these disdainful eyes,
As if you took the measure of their minds,
And said in secret, you're no match for me,
What will become of you?

Nor. If this were told — [*Aside.*]
Hast thou no fears for thy presumptuous self?

Gle. Ha! dost thou threaten me?

Nor. Didst thou not hear?

Gle. Unwillingly I did; a nobler foe
Had not been questioned thus. But such as thee —
Nor. Whom dost thou think me?

Gle. Norval.

Nor. So I am —

And who is Norval in Glenalvon's eye?

Gle. A peasant's son, a wandering beggar-boy;

At best no more: even if he speaks the truth.

Nor. False as thou art, dost thou suspect my truth?

Gle. Thy truth; thou'rt all a lie; and false as hell

Is the vain-glorious tale thou told'st to Randolph.

Nor. If I were chain'd, unarm'd, and bedrid old,
Perhaps I should revile; but, as I am,
I have no tongue to rail. The humble Norval
Is of a race, who strive not but with deeds.

Did I not fear to freeze thy shallow valour,
And make thee sink too soon beneath my sword,
I'd tell thee — what thou art. I know thee well.

Gle. Didst thou not know Glenalvon, born to command

Ten thousand slaves like thee —

Nor. Villain, no more!

Draw and defend thy life. I did design
To have defy'd thee in another cause;
But Heaven accelerates its vengeance on thee.
Now for my own and Lady Randolph's wrongs.

Enter Lord RANDOLPH.

Lord R. Hold, I command you both. The man
that stirs

Makes me his foe.

Nor. Another voice than thine,
That threat had vainly sounded, noble Randolph.

Gle. Hear him, my lord; he's wondrous condescending!

Mark the humility of shepherd Norval!

Nor. Now you may scoff in safety. [*Sheathes his sword.*]

Lord R. Speak not thus,
Taunting each other; but unfold to me
The cause of quarrel; then I will judge betwixt you.

Nor. Nay, my good lord, though I revere you much,
My cause I plead not, nor demand your judgment.
I blush to speak; I will not, cannot speak
The opprobrious words, that I from him have borne.
To the liege lord of my dear native land
I owe a subject's homage—but even him
And his high arbitration I'd reject.
Within my bosom reigns another lord;
Honour, sole judge and umpire of itself.
If my free speech offend you, noble Randolph,
Revoke your favours, and let Norval go
Hence as he came, alone, but not dishonoured.

Lord R. Thus far I'll mediate with impartial voice:

The ancient foe of Caledonia's land
Now waves his banners o'er her frightened fields;
Suspend your purpose till your country's arms
Repel the bold invader: then decide
The private quarrel.

Gle. I agree to this.

Nor. And I.

Enter Servant.

Serv. The banquet waits.

Lord R. We come.

[*Exit with Servant.*]

Gle. Norval,

Let not our variance mar the social hour,
Nor wrong the hospitality of Randolph.
Nor frowning anger, nor yet wrinkled hate,
Shall stain my countenance. Smooth thou thy brow:
Nor let our strife disturb the gentle dame.

Nor. Think not so lightly, sir, of my resentment.
When we contend again, our strife is mortal.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Wood.

Enter DOUGLAS.

Dou. This is the place, the centre of the grove;
Here stands the oak, the monarch of the wood.
How sweet and solemn is this midnight scene:
The silver moon, unclouded, holds her way
Through skies where I could count each little star.
The fanning west wind scarcely stirs the leaves;
The river, rushing o'er its pebbled bed,
Imposes silence, with a stilly sound.
In such a place as this, at such an hour,
If ancestry can be in aught believed,
Descending spirits have conversed with man,
And told the secrets of the world unknown.

Enter Old NORVAL.

Old Nor. 'Tis he. But what if he should chide
me hence.
His just reproach I fear.

[*DOUGLAS turns aside, and sees him.*]

Forgive, forgive;
Canst thou forgive the man, the selfish man,
Who bred Sir Malcolm's heir a shepherd's son?

Dou. Welcome to me. Thou art my father still:
Thy wished-for presence now completes my joy.
Welcome to me; my fortunes thou shalt share,
And ever honoured with thy Douglas live.

Old Nor. And dost thou call me father? Oh, my son!

I think that I could die, to make amends
For the great wrong I did thee. 'Twas my crime
Which in the wilderness so long conceal'd
The blossom of thy youth.

Dou. Not worse the fruit,
That in the wilderness the blossom blow'd.
Amongst the shepherds, in the humble cot,
I learn'd some lessons, which I'll not forget,
When I inhabit yonder lofty towers.
I, who was once a swain, will ever prove
The poor man's friend; and when my vassals bow,
Norval shall smooth the crested pride of Douglas.

Old Nor. Let me but live to see thine exaltation!
Yet grievous are my fears. Oh, leave this place,
And those unfriendly towers!

Dou. Why should I leave them?

Old Nor. Lord Randolph and his kinsman seek
your life.

Dou. How know'st thou that?

Old Nor. I will inform you how.

When evening came, I left the secret place
Appointed for me by your mother's care,
And fondly trod in each accustomed path
That to the castle leads. Whilst thus I ranged,
I was alarm'd with unexpected sounds
Of earnest voices. On the persons came.
Unseen I lurk'd, and heard them name
Each other as they talk'd, Lord Randolph this,
And that Glenalvon. Still of you they spoke,
And of the lady; threat'ning was their speech,
Though but imperfectly my ear could hear it.
'Twas strange, they said, a wonderful discovery,
And ever and anon they vow'd revenge!

Dou. Revenge! For what?

Old Nor. For being what you are,
Sir Malcolm's heir: how else have offended.
When they were gone, I hid me to my cottage,
And there sat musing how I best might find
Means to inform you of their wicked purpose,
But I could think of none. At last, perplexed,
I issued forth, encompassing the tower
With many a weary step and wishful look.
Now Providence hath brought you to my sight,
Let not your too courageous spirit scorn
The caution which I give.

Dou. I scorn it not;
My mother warned me of Glenalvon's baseness;
But I will not suspect the noble Randolph.
In our encounter with the vile assassins,
I mark'd his brave demeanour; him I'll trust.

Old Nor. I fear you will too far.

Dou. Here in this place
I wait my mother's coming; she shall know
What thou hast told; her counsel I will follow,
And cautious ever are a mother's counsels.
You must depart: your presence may prevent
Our interview.

Old Nor. My blessing rest upon thee!
Oh, may Heaven's hand, which saved thee from
the wave

And from the sword of foes, be near thee still;
Turning mischance, if aught hangs o'er thy head,
All upon mine!

[*Exit.*]

Dou. He loves me like a parent;
And must not, shall not, lose the son he loves,
Although his son has found a nobler father.
Eventful day! how hast thou changed my state!
Once on the cold and winter-shaded side
Of a bleak hill, mischance had rooted me,
Never to thrive, child of another soil;

Transplanted now to the gay sunny vale,
Like the green thorn of May my fortune flowers.
Ye glorious stars! high Heaven's resplendent host!
To whom I oft have of my lot complain'd,
Hear and record my soul's unaltered wish!
Dead or living, let me but be renown'd!
May Heaven inspire some fierce gigantic Dane,
To give a bold defiance to our host:
Before he speaks it out I will accept;
Like Douglas conquer, or like Douglas die.

Enter Lady RANDOLPH.

Lady R. My son! I heard a voice—

Dou. The voice was mine.

Lady R. Didst thou complain alone to nature's ear,

That thus in dusky shades, at midnight hours,
By stealth the mother and the son should meet?

[*Embraces him.*]

Dou. No; on this happy day, this better birth-day,

My thoughts and words are all of hope and joy.

Lady R. Sad fear and melancholy still divide
The empire of my breast with hope and joy.

Now hear what I advise—

Dou. First, let me tell

What may the tenour of your counsel change.

Lady R. My heart forebodes some evil!

Dou. 'Tis not good—

At eve, unseen by Randolph and Glenalvon,
The good old Norval in the grove o'erheard
Their conversation: oft they mentioned me,
With dreadful threatenings; you they sometimes
named;

'Twas strange, they said, a wonderful discovery;
And ever and anon they vowed revenge!

Lady R. Defend us, gracious Heaven! we are
betray'd;

They have found out the secret of thy birth:

It must be so. That is the great discovery:

Sir Malcolm's heir is come to claim his own,

And they will be revenged. Perhaps even now,

Armed and prepared for murder, they but wait

A darker and more silent hour, to break

Into the chamber where they think thou sleep'st.

This moment, this, Heaven hath ordained to save
thee!

Fly to the camp, my son!

Dou. And leave you here?

No; to the castle let us go together:

Call up the ancient servants of your house,

Who in their youth did eat your father's bread,

Then tell them loudly, that I am your son,

If in the breasts of men one spark remains

Of sacred love, fidelity, or pity,

Some in your cause will arm. I ask but few,

To drive these spoilers from my father's house.

Lady R. O Nature, Nature! what can check
thy force?

Thou genuine offspring of the daring Douglas!

But rush not on destruction; save thyself,

And I am safe. To me they mean no harm.

Thy stay but risks thy precious life in vain.

That winding path conducts thee to the river;

Cross where thou see'st a broad and beaten way,

Which, running eastward, leads thee to the camp;

Instant demand admittance to Lord Douglas;

Show him these jewels, which his brother wore.

Thy look, thy voice, will make him feel the truth,

Which I, by certain proof, will soon confirm.

Dou. I yield me, and obey; but yet my heart
Bleeds at this parting. Something bids me stay

And guard a mother's life. Oft have I read
Of wondrous deeds by one bold arm achieved.
Our foes are two. No more; let me go forth,
And see if any shield can guard Glenalvon.

Lady R. If thou regard'st thy mother, or rever'st
Thy father's memory, think of this no more.

One thing I have to say before we part:

Long wert thou lost; and thou art found, my child,

In a most fearful season. War and battle

I have great cause to dread. Too well I see

Which way the current of thy temper sets;

To-day I've found thee. Oh! my long-lost hope,

If thou to giddy valour giv'st the rein,

To-morrow I may lose my son for ever!

The love of thee, before thou saw'st the light,

Sustain'd my life when thy brave father fell.

If thou shalt fall, I have not love nor hope

In this waste world! My son, remember me!

Dou. What shall I say? How can I give you
comfort?

The god of battles of my life dispose

As may be best for you! for whose dear sake,

I will not bear myself as I resolved.

But yet consider as no vulgar name

That which I boast sounds amongst martial men,

How will inglorious caution suit my claim?

The post of fate unshrinking I maintain.

My country's foes must witness who I am;

On the invaders' heads I'll prove my birth,

Till friends and foes confess the genuine strain.

If in this strife I fall, blame not your son,

Who, if he liv'd not honour'd, must not live.

Lady R. I will not utter what my bosom feels.

Too well I love that valour which I warn.

Farewell, my son! my counsels are but vain.

[*Embracing.*]

And as high Heav'n hath will'd it, all must be.

Gaze not on me, thou wilt mistake the path:

I'll point it out again. [*Exeunt.*]

[*Just as they are separating,*

*Enter from the Wood, Lord RANDOLPH and
GLENALVON.*

Lord R. Not in her presence.

Now—

Gle. I am prepar'd.

Lord R. No: I command thee, stay:

I go alone: it never shall be said

That I took odds to combat mortal man.

The noblest vengeance is the most complete.

[*Exit—GLENALVON makes some steps to the same
side of the stage, listens, and speaks.*]

Gle. Demons of death, come settle on my sword,
And to a double slaughter guide it home!

The lover and the husband both must die.

Lord R. [*Behind the scenes.*] Draw, villain! draw!

Dou. [*Without.*] Assail me not, Lord Randolph;
Not as thou lov'st thyself. [*Clashing of swords.*]

Gle. Now is the time—

[*He runs out.*]

Enter Lady RANDOLPH, faint and breathless.

Lady R. Lord Randolph, hear me; all shall be
thine own;

But spare! O spare my son!

Enter DOUGLAS, with a sword in each hand.

Dou. My mother's voice!

I can protect thee still.

Lady R. He lives! he lives!

For this, for this, to Heav'n eternal praise!

But sure, I saw thee fall.

Dou. It was Glenalvon.

Just as my arm had master'd Randolph's sword,
The villain came behind me; but I slew him.

Lady R. Behind thee! Ah! thou'rt wounded!
Oh, my child,

How pale thou look'st! And shall I lose thee now?

Dou. Do not despair: I feel a little faintness;
I hope it will not last. [*Leaning on his sword.*]

Lady R. There is no hope!

And we must part! The hand of death is on thee!

O, my belov'd child! O, Douglas, Douglas!

[*DOUGLAS growing more and more faint.*]

Dou. Too soon we part: I have not long been
Douglas.

O destiny! hardly thou deal'st with me:

Clouded and hid, a stranger to myself,

In low and poor obscurity I've lived.

Lady R. Has Heaven preserved thee for an end
like this?

Dou. Oh, had I fallen as my brave fathers fell,
Like them I should have smiled and welcomed
death:

Turning with fatal arm the tide of battle.

But thus to perish by a villain's hand!

Cut off from nature's and from glory's course,

Which never mortal was so fond to run!

Lady R. Hear, justice, hear! are these the fruits
of virtue? [*DOUGLAS falls.*]

Dou. Unknown I die; no tongue shall speak of
me;

Some noble spirits, judging by themselves,

May yet conjecture what I might have proved,

And think life only wanting to my fame:

But who shall comfort thee?

Lady R. Despair, despair!

Dou. Oh, had it pleased high Heaven to let me
live

A little while!—my eyes, that gaze on thee;

Grow dim apace!—my mother— [*Dies.*]

Enter Lord RANDOLPH and ANNA.

Lord R. Thy words, thy words of truth have
pierced my heart,

I am the stain of knighthood and of arms.

Oh! if my brave deliverer survives

The traitor's sword—

Anna. Alas! look there, my lord.

Lord R. The mother and her son! how curst I
am!

Was I the cause? No: I was not the cause.

Yon matchless villain did seduce my soul—

To frantic jealousy.

Anna. My lady lives.

Lord R. But my deliverer's dead.

Lady R. [*Recovering.*] Where am I now? Still
in this wretched world!

Grief cannot break a heart so hard as mine.

Lord R. Oh, misery!

Amidst thy raging grief I must proclaim

My innocence!

Lady R. Thy innocence!

Lord R. My guilt

Is innocence compared with what thou think'st at it.

Lady R. Of thee I think not: what have I to do

With thee, or any thing? My son! my son!

My beautiful! my brave! how proud was I

Of thee, and of thy valour! my fond heart

O'erflowed this day with transport, when I thought

Of growing old amidst a race of thine.

A little while

Was I a wife! a mother not so long?

What am I now?—I know.—But I shall be

That only whilst I please; for such a son,

And such a husband, make a woman bold.

[*Runs out.*]

Lord R. Follow her, Anna; I myself would
follow,

But in this rage she must abhor my presence.

[*Exit ANNA.*]

Cursed, cursed Glenalvon, he escaped too well,

Though slain and baffled by the hand he hated.

Foaming with rage and fury to the last,

Cursing his conqueror, the felon died.

Enter ANNA.

Anna. My lord! my lord!

Lord R. Speak; I can hear of horror.

Anna. Horror, indeed!

Lord R. Matilda?—

Anna. Is no more:

She ran, she flew like lightning up the hill,

Nor halted till the precipice she gain'd,

Beneath whose low'ring top the river falls

Ingulf'd in rifted rocks.

Oh, had you seen her last despairing look!

Upon the brink she stood, and cast her eyes

Down on the deep; then, lifting up her head

And her white hands to Heaven, seeming to say,

Why am I forced to this? she plunged herself

Into the empty air.

Lord R. I will not vent,

In vain complaints, the passion of my soul.

I'll to the battle, where the man, that makes

Me turn aside, must threaten worse than death.

Thou, faithful to thy mistress, take this ring,

Full warrant of my power. Let every rite

With cost and pomp upon their funerals wait;

For Randolph hopes he never shall return.

[*Exeunt.*]

END OF DOUGLAS.

ISABELLA;
OR, THE FATAL MARRIAGE.

A TRAGEDY.

BY THOMAS SOUTHERN.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

COUNT BALDWIN.
BIRON.
BIRON'S Son.
CARLOS.
VILLEROY,
MAURICE.
BELFORD.
Officer.
SAMPSON.
ISABELLA.
Nurse.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Street.

Enter VILLEROY and CARLOS.

Car. This constancy of yours will establish an immortal reputation among the women.

Vil. If it would establish me with Isabella—

Car. Follow her, follow her: Troy town was won at last.

Vil. I have followed her these seven years, and now but live in hopes.

Car. But live in hopes! Why hope is the ready road, the lover's baiting place; and, for aught you know, but one stage short of the possession of your mistress.

Vil. But my hopes, I fear, are more of my own making than hers; and proceed rather from my wishes, than any encouragement she has given me.

Car. That I can't tell: the sex is very various: there are no certain measures to be prescribed or followed, in making our approaches to the women. All that we have to do, I think, is to attempt them in the weakest part. Press them but hard, and they will all fall under the necessity of a surrender

at last. That favour comes at once; and sometimes when we least expect it.

Vil. I shall be glad to find it so. [*Going.*] I'm going to visit her.

Car. What interest a brother-in-law can have with her, depend upon.

Vil. [*Turns.*] I know your interest, and I thank you.

Car. You are prevented; see the mourner comes: She weeps, as seven years were seven hours; So fresh, unfading is the memory Of my poor brother's, Biron's death; I leave you to your opportunity. [*Exit VILLEROY.* Though I have taken care to root her from our house,

I would transplant her into Villeroy's— There is an evil fate that waits upon her, To which I wish him wedded—only him: His upstart family, with haughty brow, (Though Villeroy and myself are seeming friends,) Looks down upon our house; his sister too, Whose hand I ask'd, and was with scorn refused, Lives in my breast, and fires me to revenge.—

[*Looking.*

They bend this way.—

Perhaps, at last, she seeks my father's doors;

They shall be shut, and he prepared to give

The beggar and her brat a cold reception.

That boy's an adder in my path. [*Going.*] They come,

I'll stand apart, and watch their motions. [*Exit.*

Enter VILLEROY and ISABELLA, with her Child.

Isa. Why do you follow me? you know I am A bankrupt every way; too far engaged Ever to make return: I own you have been More than a brother to me, my friend: And at a time when friends are found no more, A friend to my misfortunes.

Vil. I must be. Always your friend.

Isa. I have known and found you Truly my friend; and would I could be yours: But the unfortunate cannot be friends.

Pray begone,
Take warning, and be happy.

Vil. Happiness!

There's none for me without you.—

What serve the goods of fortune for? To raise
My hopes, that you at last will share them with me.

Isa. I must not hear you.

Vil. Thus, at this awful distance, I have served
A seven years' bondage. Do I call it bondage,
When I can never wish to be redeem'd?
No, let me rather linger out a life
Of expectation, that you may be mine,
Than be restored to the indifference
Of seeing you, without this pleasing pain:
I've lost myself, and never would be found,
But in these arms.

Isa. Oh, I have heard all this!

—But must no more—the charmer is no more:
My buried husband rises in the face
Of my dear boy, and chides me for my stay:
Canst thou forgive me, child! [*Embracing Child.*]

Vil. What can I say!

The arguments that make against my hopes
Prevail upon my heart, and fix me more;
When yet a virgin, free, and undisposed,
I loved, but saw you only with mine eyes:
I could not reach the beauties of your soul:
I have since lived in contemplation,
And long experience of your growing goodness:
What then was passion, is my judgment now,
Through all the several changes of your life,
Confirm'd and settled in adoring you.

Isa. Nay, then I must begone. If you are my
friend,

If you regard my little interest,
No more of this.

I'm going to my father: he needs not an excuse
To use me ill: pray leave me to the trial.

Vil. I'm only born to be what you would have
me,

The creature of your power, and must obey,
In every thing obey you. I am going:
But all good fortune go along with you. [*Exit.*]

Isa. I shall need all your wishes—

[*Crosses to Count BALDWIN'S house.—Knocks.*
Lock'd! and fast!

Where is the charity that used to stand
In our forefathers' hospitable days
At great men's doors,
Like the good angel of the family,
With open arms taking the needy in,
To feed and clothe, to comfort and relieve them?
Now even their gates are shut against the poor.

[*Knocks again.*]

SAMPSON opens the door and comes out.

Samp. Well, what's to do now, I trow? You
knock as loud as if you were invited; and that's
more than I heard of; but I can tell you, you may
look twice about for a welcome in a great man's
family, before you find it, unless you bring it along
with you.

Isa. I hope I bring my welcome along with me:
Is your lord at home?

Samp. My lord at home!

Isa. Count Baldwin lives here still?

Samp. Ay, ay, Count Baldwin does live here:
and I am his porter; but what's that to the pur-
pose, good woman, of my lord's being at home?

Isa. Why don't you know me, friend?

Samp. Not I, not I, mistress; I may have seen
you before, or so; but men of employment must

forget their acquaintances; especially such as we
are never to be the better for.

[*Going to shut the door.*]

Nurse appears at the door.

Nurse. Handsomer words would become you,
and mend your manners, Sampson: do you know
who you prate to?

Isa. I am glad you know me, Nurse.

Nurse. [*Coming out.*] Marry, Heav'n forbid,
madam, that I should ever forget you, or my little
jewel: pray go in. [*ISABELLA goes in with her*
Child.] Now my blessing go along with you,
wherever you go, or whatever you are about. Fie,
Sampson, how could'st thou be such a Saracen?
A Turk would have been a better Christian, than
to have done so barbarously by so good a lady.

Samp. Why, look you, Nurse, I know you of
old: by your good will, you would have a finger
in every body's pie, but mark the end on't: if I
am called to account about it, I know what I have
to say.

Nurse. Marry come up here; say your pleasure,
and spare not. Refuse his eldest son's widow and
poor child the comfort of seeing him? She does
not trouble him so often.

Samp. Not that I am against it, Nurse, but we
are but servants, you know; we must have no
likings, but our lord's, and must do as we are
ordered. But what is the business, Nurse? You
have been in the family before I came into the
world: what's the reason, pray, that this daughter-
in-law, who has so good a report in every body's
mouth, is so little set by by my lord?

Nurse. Why, I tell you, Sampson, more or less.
I'll tell the truth, that's my way, you know, with-
out adding or diminishing.

Samp. Aye, marry, Nurse.

Nurse. My lord's eldest son, Biron by name, the
son of his bosom, and the son that he would have
loved best, if he had as many as king Pyramus of
Troy—this Biron, as I was saying, was a lovely
sweet gentleman, and, indeed, nobody could blame
his father for loving him: he was a son for the
king of Spain; Heaven bless him, for I was his
nurse. But now I come to the point, Sampson;
this Biron, without asking the advice of his friends,
hand over head, as young men will have their
vagaries, not having the fear of his father before
his eyes, as I may say, wilfully marries this Isa-
bella.

Samp. How, wilfully! he should have had her
consent, methinks.

Nurse. No, wilfully marries her; and which
was worse, after she had settled all her fortune
upon a nunnery, which she broke out of to run
away with him. They say they had the church's
forgiveness, but I had rather it had been his
father's.

Samp. Why, in good truth, I think our young
master was not in the wrong but in marrying with-
out a portion.

Nurse. That was the quarrel, I believe, Sampson;
upon this, my old lord would never see him: dis-
inherited him; took his younger brother, Carlos,
into favour, whom he never cared for before; and,
at last, forced Biron to go to the siege of Candy,
where he was killed.

Samp. Alack-a-day, poor gentleman!

Nurse. For which my old lord hates her, as if
she had been the cause of his going there.

Samp. Alas, poor lady; she has suffered for it; she has lived a great while a widow.

Nurse. A great while indeed, for a young woman, Sampson.

Samp. Gad so; here they come; I won't venture to be seen.

[*They retire and confer in the back ground.*]

Enter from the door Count BALDWIN, followed by ISABELLA and her Child.

C. Bald. Whoever of your friends directed you, Misguided and abused you—There's your way:

[*Pointing to door.*]

What could you expect from me?

Isa. Oh, I have nothing to expect on earth!

But misery is very apt to talk:

I thought I might be heard.

C. Bald. What can you say?

Is there in eloquence, can there be in words,

A recompensing pow'r, a remedy,

A reparation of the injuries,

The great calamities, that you have brought

On me and mine? You have destroyed those hopes

I fondly raised, through my declining life,

To rest my age upon; and most undone me.

Isa. I have undone myself too.

C. Bald. Speak it again;

Say still you are undone; and I will hear you,

With pleasure hear you.

Isa. Would my ruin please you?

C. Bald. Beyond all other pleasures.

Isa. Then you are pleased—for I am most undone.

C. Bald. I pray'd but for revenge, and Heav'n has heard,

And sent it to my wishes: these gray hairs

Would have gone down in sorrow to the grave,

Which you have dug for me, without the thought,

The thought of leaving you more wretched here.

Isa. Indeed I am most wretched—

I lost with Biron all the joys of life:

But now its last supporting means are gone.

All the kind helps that Heav'n in pity raised,

In charitable pity to our wants,

At last have left us: now bereft of all,

But this last trial of a cruel father,

To save us both from sinking. Oh, my child!

Kneel with me, knock at nature in his heart:

[*Both kneel to him.*]

Let the resemblance of a once-loved son

Speak in this little one, who never wrong'd you,

And plead the fatherless and widow's cause.

Oh, if you ever hope to be forgiven,

As you will need to be forgiven too,

Forget our faults, that Heaven may pardon yours!

C. Bald. How dare you mention Heaven? Call to mind

Your perjured vows; your plighted, broken faith

To Heav'n, and all things holy; were you not

Devoted, wedded to a life recluse,

The sacred habit on, profess'd and sworn,

A votary for ever? Can you think

The sacrilegious wretch, that robs the shrine,

Is thunder-proof?

Isa. There, there, began my woes.

Oh! had I never seen my Biron's face,

Had he not tempted me, I had not fall'n,

But still continued innocent and free

Of a bad world, which only he had pow'r

To reconcile, and make me try again.

C. Bald. Your own inconstancy

Reconciled you to the world:

He had no hand to bring you back again,

But what you gave him. Circe, you prevail'd
Upon his honest mind; and what he did

Was first inspired by you.

Isa. Not for myself—for I am past the hopes

Of being heard—but for this innocent—

And then I never will disturb you more.

C. Bald. I almost pity the unhappy child:

But being yours—

Isa. Look on him as your son's;

And let his part in him answer for mine.

Oh, save, defend him, save him from the wrongs

That fall upon the poor!

C. Bald. It touches me—

And I will save him.—[*Snatches the Child's hand.*]

—But to keep him safe,

Never come near him more.

Isa. What! take him from me?

No, we must never part;—[*Pulls the Child away from him.*—] 'tis the last hold

Of comfort I have left; and when he fails

All goes along with him: Oh! could you be

The tyrant to divorce life from my life?

I live but in my child.

No, let me pray in vain, and beg my bread

From door to door, to feed his daily wants,

Rather than always lose him.

C. Bald. Then have your child, and feed him
with your prayers. Away!

Isa. Then Heaven have mercy on me!

[*Exit, with Child.*]

C. Bald. You rascal slave, what do I keep you
for? How came this woman in?

Samp. [*Both advance.*] Why, indeed, my lord, I
did as good as tell her before, my thoughts upon
the matter—

C. Bald. Did you so, sir? Now then tell her
mine: tell her I sent you to her. There's one
more to provide for. Begone, go all together.

Take any road but this to beg or starve in, but
never, never see me more.

[*Exit into his house.*]

[*Exit SAMPSON and Nurse, weeping.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Street.*

Enter VILLEROY and CARLOS.

Vil. My friend, I fear to ask—but Isabella—

The lovely widow's tears, her orphan's cries,

Thy father must feel for them?—No, I read,

I read their cold reception in thine eyes—

Thou pitiest them—though Baldwin—but I spare
him

For Carlos's sake; thou art no son of his.

There needs not this to endear thee more to me.

[*Embrace.*]

Car. My Villeroy, the fatherless, the widow,
Are terms not understood within these gates—

You must forgive him; sir, he thinks this woman

Is Biron's fate, that hurried him to death—

I must not think on't, lest my friendship stagger.

My friend's, my sister's mutual advantage,

Have reconciled my bosom to its task.

Vil. Advantage! think not I intend to raise

An interest from Isabella's wrongs.

Your father may have interested ends

In her undoing ; but my heart has none ;
Her happiness must be my interest,
And that I would restore.

Car. Why, so, I mean.

These hardships, that my father lays upon her,
I'm sorry for, and wish I could prevent ;
But he will have his way. Since there's no hope
From her prosperity, her change of fortune
May alter the condition of her thoughts,
And make for you.

Vil. She is above her fortune.

Car. Try her again. Women commonly love
According to the circumstances they are in.

Vil. Common women may.

No, though I live but in the hopes of her,
And languish for th' enjoyment of those hopes ;
I'd rather pine in a consuming want
Of what I wish, than have the blessing mine,
From any reason but consenting love.
Oh ! let me never have it to remember,
I could betray her coldly to comply :
When a clear gen'rous choice bestows her on me,
I know too well the unequalled gift :
I would not have it, but to value it.

Car. Take your own way ; remember, what I
offer'd

Came from a friend.

Vil. I understand it so.

I'll serve her for herself, without the thought
Of a reward. [Exit.]

Car. Agree that point between you.
If you marry her any way, you do my business.
I know him—What his generous soul intends
Ripens my plots—I'll first to Isabella,—
I must keep up appearances with her too. [Exit.]

SCENE II.—A Room in ISABELLA's House.

ISABELLA sitting, and Nurse discovered. ISABELLA's
Son at play.

Isa. Sooner, or later, all things pass away,
And are no more. The beggar and the king,
With equal steps, tread forward to their end ;
The reconciling grave
Swallows distinction first, that made us foes ;
Then all alike lie down in peace together.
When will that hour of peace arrive for me ?
In Heav'n I shall find it. Not in Heaven,
If my old tyrant father can dispose
Of things above. But there his interest
May be as poor as mine, and want a friend
As much as I do here. [Weeping.]

Nurse. Good madam, be comforted.

Isa. [Rises.] Do I deserve to be this outcast
wretch,
Abandon'd thus, and lost ? But 'tis my lot,
The will of Heav'n, and I must not complain :
I will not for myself : let me bear all
The violence of your wrath ; but spare my child :
Let not my sins be visited on him :
They are ; they must ; a general ruin falls
On every thing about me : thou art lost,
Poor Nurse, by being near me.

Nurse. I can work, or beg, to do you service.

Isa. Could I forget

What I have been, I might the better bear
What I am destined to. Wild hurrying thoughts
Start every way from my distracted soul,
To find out hope, and only meet despair.
What answer have I ?

Enter SAMPSON.

Samp. Why, truly, very little to the purpose :
like a Jew as he is, he says you have had more
already than the jewels are worth: he wishes you
would rather think of redeeming 'em, than expect
any more money upon 'em. [Exit SAMPSON.]

Isa. So :—poverty at home, and debts abroad !
My present fortune bad ; my hopes yet worse !
What will become of me ?
This ring is all I have left of value now ;
'Twas given me by my husband ; his first gift
Upon our marriage : I've always kept it
With my best care, the treasure next my life :
And now but part with it to support life,
Which only can be dearer. [Takes off the ring.]

Take it, Nurse,
'Twill stop the cries of hunger for a time ;
Take care of it :
Manage it as the last remaining friend
That would relieve us. [Exit Nurse.] Heav'n can
only tell

Where we shall find another [goes back and sits.]

My dear boy ! [Embraces him.]
The labour of his birth was lighter to me
Than of my fondness now ; my fears for him
Are more than, in that hour of hovering death,
They could be for myself—He minds me not,
His little sports have taken up his thoughts :
Oh, may they never feel the pangs of mine ! [Rises.]
Thinking will make me mad : why must I think,
When no thought brings me comfort ?

Enter Nurse.

Nurse. Oh, madam ! you are utterly ruined and
undone ; your creditors of all kinds are come in
upon you ; they have mustered up a regiment of
rogues, that are come to plunder your house, and
seize upon all you have in the world: they are
below. What will you do, madam ?

Isa. Do ! nothing ! no, for I am born to suffer.

Enter CARLOS, hastily.—Nurse goes back.

Car. Oh, sister ? can I call you by that name,
And be the son of this inhuman man.

Invererate to your ruin ?
Do not think I am akin to his barbarity.
I must abhor my father's usage of you.

Can you think
Of any way that I may serve you in ?
But what enrages most my sense of grief,
My sorrow for your wrongs, is, that my father,
Foreknowing well the storm that was to fall,
Has ordered me not to appear for you.

Isa. I thank your pity ; my poor husband fell
For disobeying him ; do not you stay
To venture his displeasure too for me.

Car. You must resolve on something. [Exit.]

Isa. Let my fate
Determine for me ; I shall be prepared.
The worst that can befall me is to die.
Hark, they are coming : let the torrent roar :
It can but overwhelm me in its fall ;
And life and death are now alike to me.

[Exit.—Nurse follows, leading the Child.]

SCENE III.—Antechamber in Isabella's House.

Enter CARLOS and VILLEROY, with Officers.

Vil. No farther violence—
The debt in all is but four thousand crowns ;

Were it ten times the sum, I think you know
My fortune very well can answer it.

You have my word for this : I'll see you paid.

Offi. That's as much as we can desire : so we
have the money, no matter whence it comes.

Vil. To-morrow you shall have it.

Car. Thus far all's well—

And now my sister comes to crown the work.

Isa. [Without.] Where are these rav'n'ing blood-
hounds, that pursue

In a full cry, gaping to swallow me ?

*Enter ISABELLA, Nurse, and Child.—Nurse and
Child stand a little back.*

I meet your rage, and come to be devour'd ;
Say, which way are you to dispose of me ;
To dungeons, darkness, death ?

Car. Have patience.

Isa. Patience !

Offi. You'll excuse us, we are but in our office.

Debts must be paid.

Isa. My death will pay you all. [*Distraughtly.*]

Offi. While there is law to be had, people will
have their own.

Vil. 'Tis very fit they should ; but pray be gone.

To-morrow certainly. [*Exeunt Officers.*]

Isa. What of to-morrow ?

Must I be reserved for fresh afflictions ?

Vil. For long happiness of life, I hope.

Isa. There is no hope for me.

The load grows light, when we resolve to bear :
I'm ready for my trial.

Car. Pray, be calm,

And know your friends.

Isa. My friends ! Have I a friend ?

Car. A faithful friend ; in your extremest need,

Villeroi came in to save you—

Isa. Save me ! How ?

Car. By satisfying all your creditors.

Isa. Which way ? for what ?

Vil. Let me be understood,

And then condemn me : you have given me leave

To be your friend ; and in that only name

I now appear before you. I could wish

There had been no occasion of a friend,

Because I know you hate to be obliged ;

And still more loath to be obliged by me.

Isa. 'Twas that I would avoid— [*Aside.*]

Vil. I'm most unhappy that my services

Can be suspected to design upon you ;

I have no farther ends than to redeem you

From fortune's wrongs ; to show myself at last,

What I have long profess'd to be, your friend :

Allow me that ; and to convince you more,

That I intend only your interest,

Forgive what I have done, and in amends

(If that can make you any, that can please you)

I'll tear myself for ever from my hopes,

Stifle this flaming passion in my soul,

And mention my unlucky love no more.

Isa. This generosity will ruin me. [*Aside.*]

Vil. Nay, if the blessing of my looking on you

Disturbs your peace, I will do all I can

To keep away, and never see you more. [*Going.*]

Car. [Stopping him.] You must not go.

Vil. Could Isabella speak

Those few short words, I should be rooted here,

And never move but upon her commands.

Car. [Goes to her.] Speak to him, sister ; do not
throw away

A fortune that invites you to be happy.

In your extremity he begs your love ;

And has deserved it nobly. Think upon

Your lost condition, helpless and alone.

Though now you have a friend, the time must come

That you will want one ; him you may secure

To be a friend, a father, a husband to you.

Isa. A husband !

Car. You have discharged your duty to the dead,

And to the living ! 'tis a wilfulness

Not to give way to your necessities,

That force you to this marriage.

Nurse. [Leading forward the Child.] What must
become of this poor innocence ?

[To the Child.]

Car. He wants a father to protect his youth,

And rear him up to virtue : you must bear

The future blame, and answer to the world,

When you refuse the easy, honest means

Of taking care of him.

Isa. Do not think I need

Your reasons to confirm my gratitude. —

I have a soul that's truly sensible

Of your great worth, and busy to contrive,

[To VILLEROY.]

If possible, to make you a return.

Vil. Oh, easily possible !

Isa. It cannot be your way : my pleasures are

Buried, and cold in my dead husband's grave ;

And I should wrong the truth, myself, and you,

To say that I can ever love again.

I owe this declaration to myself :

But as a proof that I owe all to you,

If, after what I have said, you can resolve

To think me worth your love—[VILLEROY advances

to her.]—Where am I going ?

You cannot think it ; 'tis impossible.

Vil. Impossible !

Isa. You should not ask me now, nor should I
grant ;

I am so much obliged, that to consent

Would want a name to recommend the gift :

'Twould show me poor, indebted, and compelled,

Designing, mercenary : and I know

You would not wish to think I could be bought.

Vil. Be bought ! where is the price that can pre-
tend

To bargain for you ? Not in Fortune's power.

The joys of Heav'n, and love, must be bestowed ;

They are not to be sold, and cannot be deserved.

Isa. Some other time I'll hear you on this subject.

Vil. Nay, then there is no time so fit for me.

[Following her.]

Since you consent to hear me, hear me now ;

That you may grant : you are above

[Takes her hand.]

The little forms which circumscribe your sex ;

We differ but in time, let that be mine.

Isa. You think fit

To get the better of me, and you shall ;

Since you will have it so—I will be yours.

[CARLOS exults apart.]

Vil. I take you at your word.

Isa. I give you all,

My hand : and would I had a heart to give :

But if it ever can return again,

'Tis wholly yours.

Vil. Oh ecstasy of joy !

Leave that to me. If all my services,

If all that man can folly say or do,

Can beget love, love shall be born again,

Oh, Carlos ! now my friend and brother too :

And, Nurse, I have eternal thanks for thee.

[Exeunt Nurse and Child.]

This night you must be mine.
Let me command in this, and all my life
Shall be devoted to you.

Isa. On your word,
Never to press me to put off these weeds,
Which best become my melancholy thoughts,
You shall command me.

Vil. Witness, Heaven and earth,
Against my soul, when I do anything
To give you a disquiet.

Car. I long to wish you joy.

Vil. You'll be a witness of my happiness?

Car. For once I'll be my sister's father,
And give her to you.

Vil. Next my Isabella,
Be near my heart: I am for ever yours. *[Exeunt.]*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—Count Baldwin's House.

Enter Count Baldwin and Carlos.

C. Bald. Married to Villeroy, say'st thou?

Car. Yes, my lord.

Last night the priest perform'd his holy office,
And made them one.

C. Bald. Misfortune join them!
And may her violated vows pull down
A lasting curse, a constancy of sorrow
On both their heads.

Car. Soon he'll hate her;
Though warm and violent in his raptures now,
When full enjoyment palls his sicken'd sense,
And reason with satiety returns,
Her cold constrain'd acceptance of his hand
Will gall his pride, which (though of late o'er-
power'd

By stronger passions) will, as they grow weak,
Rise in full force, and pour its vengeance on her.

C. Bald. Now, Carlos, take example to thy aid,
Let Biron's disobedience, and the curse
He took into his bosom, prove a warning,
A monitor to thee, to keep thy duty
Firm and unshaken.

Car. *[Kneels.]* May those rankling wounds,
Which Biron's disobedience gave my father,
Be heal'd by me.

C. Bald. With tears I thank thee, Carlos—
[Raises him.]

And may'st thou ever feel those inward joys,
Thy duty gives thy father—but, my son,
We must not let resentment choke our justice;

'Tis fit that Villeroy know he has no claim
From me, in right of Isabella.—Biron
(Whose name brings tears), when wedded to this
woman,

By me abandon'd, sunk the little fortune
His uncle left, in vanity and fondness:
I am possess'd of those your brother's papers,
Which now are Villeroy's, and, should aught remain,

In justice it is his; from me to him
You shall convey them—follow me, and take them.

[Exit Count Baldwin.]

Car. Yes, I will take them; but ere I part with
them,

I will be sure my interest will not suffer
By these his high, refined, fantastic notions
Of equity and right.—What a paradox
Is man! My father here, who boasts his honour,
And even but now was warm in praise of justice,
Can steel his heart against the widow's tears,
And infant's wants: the widow and the infant
Of Biron; of his son, his fav'rite son.
'Tis ever thus weak minds, who court opinion,
And dead to virtuous feeling, hide their wants
In pompous affectation—Now to Villeroy—
Ere this his friends, for he is much beloved,
Crowd to his house, and with their nuptial songs
Awake the wedded pair: I'll join the throng,
And in my face, at least, bear joy and friendship.

[Exit.]

SCENE II.—A Ball-room in Villeroy's House, and
music across back ground, with MAURICE, and
other friends of VILLEROY.

Enter a Servant.

Maur. Where's your master, my good friend?

Serv. Within, sir,

Preparing for the welcome of his friends.

Maur. Acquaint him we are here; yet stay,

[Exit Servant.]

The voice of music gently shall surprise him,
And breathe our salutations to his ear.
Strike up the strain to Villeroy's happiness,
To Isabella's—But he's here already.

Enter VILLEROY.

Vil. My friends,
Welcome all—

What means this preparation? *[Seeing the music.]*

Maur. A slight token

Of our best wishes for your growing happiness.—

You must permit our friendship—

Vil. You oblige me—

Maur. But your lovely bride,
That wonder of her sex, she must appear,
And add new brightness to this happy morning.

Vil. She is not yet prepared; and let her will,
My worthiest friend, determine her behaviour;
To win, and not to force her disposition,
Has been my seven years' task. She will anon
Speak welcome to you all. The music stays.

[VILLEROY and his friends seat themselves.]

EPITHALAMIUM.

Woman. Let all, let all be gay,
Begin the rapturous lay,
Let mirth, let mirth and joy,
Each happy hour employ,
Of this fair bridal day.

Vil. *[Rises.]* I thank you for this proof of your
affection:

I am so much transported with the thoughts

Of what I am, I know not what I do.

My Isabella!—but, possessing her,

Who would not lose himself?—

Where's Carlos now?

Methinks I am but half myself without him.

Maur. This is wonderful! married, and yet in
raptures.

Vil. Oh! when you all get wives, and such as
mine

(If such another woman can be found),

You will rave too, dote on the dear content,

And prattle in their praise out of all bounds.
I cannot speak my bliss ! 'Tis in my head.
'Tis in my heart, and takes up all my soul—
The labour of my fancy.—

Enter ISABELLA and Child.

My Isabella ! Oh, the joy of my heart,
That I have leave at last to call you mine !
But let me look upon you, view you well.
This is a welcome gallantry indeed !
I durst not ask, but it was kind to grant,
Just at this time : dispensing with your dress
Upon this second day to greet our friends.

Isa. Black might be ominous :

I would not bring ill-luck along with me.

Vil. Oh ! if your melancholy thoughts could change

With shifting of your dress—Time has done cures
Incredible this way, and may again.

Isa. I could have wish'd, if you had thought it fit,

Our marriage had not been so public.

Vil. Do not you grudge me my excess of love ;
That was a cause it could not be conceal'd :
Besides, 'twould injure the opinion
I have of my good fortune, having you ;
And lessen it in other people's thoughts.

Enter CARLOS.

Vil. My Carlos too, who came in to the support
Of our bad fortune, has an honest right,
In better times to share the good with us.

Car. I come to claim that right, to share your joy ;

To wish you joy ; and find it in myself ;
For a friend's happiness reflects a warmth,
A kindly comfort into every heart
That is not envious.

[Leads the Child, and appears to fondle him.]

Vil. He must be a friend indeed,
Who is not envious of a happiness
So absolute as mine : there is the cause ;
Thank her for what I am, and what must be :

[Music flourish.]

I see you mean a second entertainment.

My dearest Isabella, you must hear
The raptures of my friends ; from thee they spring ;
Thy virtues have diffused themselves around,
And made them all as happy as myself.

Isa. I feel their favours with a grateful heart,
And willingly comply.

[VILLEROY, ISABELLA, CARLOS, and Child sit ; attendants stand at their backs.]

EPITHALAMIUM.

Man. Ye love-wing'd hours, your flight,
Your downy flight prepare,
Bring every soft delight
To soothe the brave and fair.
Hail, happy pair, thus in each other bless'd ;
Be ever free from care, of ev'ry joy possess'd !

DUET.

Take the gifts the gods intend ye ;
Grateful meet the proffer'd joy ;
Truth and honour shall attend ye ;
Charms that ne'er can change or cloy.

Oh, the raptures of possessing,
Taking beauty to thy arms !

Oh, the joy, the lasting blessing,
When with virtue beauty charms !
Purer flames shall gently warm ye ;
Love and honour both shall charm thee.

Car. You'll take my advice another time, sister.

[ISABELLA droops—all rise.]

Vil. When have you done ? A rising smile
Stole from her thoughts, just redd'ning on her cheek,

And you have dash'd it.

Car. I'm sorry for't.

Vil. My friends, you will forgive me, when I own,
I must prefer her peace to all the world !

Come, Isabella, let us lead the way :

Within we'll speak our welcome to our friends,
And crown the happy festival with joy.

[Exeunt.—Scene closes.]

SCENE III.—A Room.

Enter SAMPSON and Nurse, laughing.

Samp. Ay, marry, nurse, here's a master, indeed ! He'll double our wages for us ! If he comes on as fast with my lady as he does with his servants, we are all in the way to be well pleased.

Nurse. He's in a rare humour ; if she be in as good a one—

Samp. If she be, marry, we may e'en say, they have begot it upon one another.

Nurse. Well ; why don't you go back again to your old Count ? You thought your throat cut, I warrant you, to be turned out of a nobleman's service.

Samp. For the future, I will never serve in a house where the master or mistress of it lie single : they are out of humour with every body when they are not pleased themselves. Now, this matrimony makes every thing go well. There's mirth and money stirring about when those matters go on as they should do.

Nurse. Indeed, this matrimony, Sampson—

Samp. Ah, nurse ! this matrimony is a very good thing—but what, now my lady is married, I hope we shall have company come to the house : there's something always coming from one gentleman or other upon those occasions, if my lady loves company. This feasting looks well, nurse.

Nurse. Odso, my master ! we must not be seen.

[Exeunt.]

Enter VILLEROY, with a letter, and ISABELLA.

Vil. I must away this moment—see his letter, Sign'd by himself : alas ! he could no more ; My brother's desperate, and cannot die
In peace, but in my arms.

Isa. So suddenly !

Vil. Suddenly taken, on the road to Brussels,
To do us honour, love ; unfortunate !
Thus to be torn from thee, and all those charms,
Though cold to me and dead.

Isa. I'm sorry for the cause.

Vil. Oh ! could I think,
Could I persuade myself, that your concern
For me, or for my absence, were the spring,
The fountain of these melancholy thoughts,
My heart would dance, spite of the sad occasion,
And be a gay companion in my journey ;
But—

Enter CARLOS.

My good Carlos, why have you left my friends ?

Car. They are departed home.
They saw some sudden melancholy news
Had stolen the lively colour from your cheek—
You had withdrawn, the bride, alarm'd, had follow'd:

More ceremony had been constraint; and this
Good-natured rudeness—

Vil. Was the more obliging.

There, Carlos, is the cause.

[*Gives the letter.*]

Car. Unlucky accident!

Th' Archbishop of Malines, your worthy brother—
With him to-night? Sister, will you permit it?

Vil. It must be so.

Isa. You hear it must be so.

Vil. Oh, that it must!

Car. To leave your bride so soon!

Vil. But having the possession of my love,

I am the better able to support

My absence in the hopes of my return.

Car. Your stay will be but short?

Vil. It will seem long!

The longer that my Isabella sighs:

I shall be jealous of this rival grief,

It takes so full possession of thy heart,

There is not room enough for mighty love.

Enter Servant, bows, and exits.

My horses wait: farewell, my love! You, Carlos,
Will act a brother's part, till I return.

And be the guardian here. All, all I have

That's dear to me, I give up to your care.

Car. And I receive her as a friend and brother.

Vil. Nay, stir not, love! for the night air is cold,

And the dews fall—Here be our end of parting;

Carlos will see me to my horse.

[*Exit with CARLOS.*]

Isa. Oh, may thy brother better all thy hopes!
Adieu.

A sudden melancholy bakes my blood!

Forgive me, Villeroy—I do not find

That cheerful gratitude thy service asks:

Yet, if I know my heart, and sure I do,

'Tis not averse from honest obligation.

I'll to my chamber, and to bed: my mind,

My harass'd mind is weary.

[*Exit.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—The Street.

Enter BIRON and BELFORD.

Bir. The longest day will have an end; we are
got home at last.

Bel. We have got our legs at liberty; and liberty
is home, where'er we go; though mine lies most
in England.

Bir. Pray, let me call this yours: for what I
can command in Brussels, you shall find your own.
I have a father here, who perhaps, after seven
years' absence, and costing him nothing in my
travels, may be glad to see me. You know my
story—How does my disguise become me?

Bel. Just as you would have it; 'tis natural, and
will conceal you.

Bir. To-morrow you shall be sure to find me

ACT. DRAMA.—NO. XXVI.

here, as early as you please, this is the house, you
have observed the street.

Bel. I warrant you: your directions will carry
me to my lodgings.

[*Exit.*]

Bir. Good night, my friend.

The long-expected moment is arrived!

And if all here is well, my past sorrows

Will only heighten my excess of joy;

And nothing will remain to wish or hope for!

[*Knocks.*]

Enter SAMPSON.

Samp. Who's there? What would you have?

Bir. Is your lady at home, friend?

Samp. Why, truly, friend, it is my employment
to answer impertinent questions: but for my lady's
being at home, or no, that's just as my lady pleases.

Bir. But how shall I know whether it pleases
her or no?

Samp. Why, if you'll take my word for it, you
may carry your errand back again: she never
pleases to see any body at this time of night, that
she does not know; and by your dress and appearance
I am sure you must be a stranger to her.

Bir. But I have business; and you don't know
how that may please her.

Samp. Nay, if you have business, she is the
best judge whether your business will please her
or no: therefore I will proceed in my office, and
know of my lady whether or no she is pleased to
be at home or no—

[*Going.*]

Enter Nurse.

Nurse. Who's that you are so busy withal? Me-
thinks you might have found an answer in fewer
words: but, Sampson, you love to hear yourself
prate sometimes, as well as your betters, that I
must say for you. Let me come to him? Who
would you speak with, stranger?

Bir. With you, mistress, if you could help me
to speak to your lady.

Nurse. Yes, sir, I can help you in a civil way:
but can nobody do your business but my lady?

Bir. Not so well; but if you carry her this ring,
she'll know my business better.

Nurse. There's no love-letter in it, I hope; you
look like a civil gentleman. In an honest way, I
may bring you an answer.

[*Exit.*]

Bir. My old nurse, only a little older; they say
the tongue grows always: mercy on me! then her's
is seven years longer since I left her. Yet there
is something in these servants' folly pleases me;
the cautious conduct of the family appears, and
speaks in their impertinence. Well, mistress—

Nurse returns.

Nurse. I have delivered your ring, sir! pray
Heaven, you bring no bad news along with you!

Bir. Quite contrary, I hope.

Nurse. Nay, I hope so too; but my lady was
very much surprised when I gave it her. Sir, I
am but a servant, as a body may say; but if you'll
walk in that I may shut the doors, for we keep
very orderly hours, I can show you into the par-
lour, and help you to an answer, perhaps as soon
as those that are wiser.

[*Exit.*]

Bir. I'll follow you—

Now all my spirits hurry to my heart,
And every sense has taken the alarm
At this approaching interview!

Heavens! how I tremble!

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*A Chamber.**Enter ISABELLA.*

Isa. I've heard of witches, magic spells, and charms,
That have made nature start from her old course :
The sun has been eclipsed, the moon drawn down
From her career, still paler, and subdued
To the abuses of this under world !
Now I believe all possible. This ring,
This little ring, with necromantic force,
Has raised the ghost of pleasure to my fears ;
Conjured the sense of honour, and of love,
Into such shapes, they fright me from myself !
I dare not think of them——

*Enter Nurse.**Nurse.* Madam, the gentleman's below.*Isa.* I had forgot, pray let me speak with him ;
[*Exit Nurse.*]

This ring was the first present of my love
To Biron, my first husband : I must blush
To think I have a second. Biron died
(Still to my loss) at Candy ; there's my hope.
Oh, do I live to hope that he died there ?
It must be so ; he's dead, and this ring left,
By his last breath, to some known faithful friend,
To bring me back again ;
That's all I have to trust to——

Enter BIRON. ISABELLA looks at him.

My fears were woman's——I have view'd him all :
And let me, let me say it to myself,
I live again, and rise but from his tomb.

Bir. Have you forgot me quite ?*Isa.* Forgot you !*Bir.* Then farewell my disguise, and my mis-
fortunes.*My Isabella ! [He goes to her, she shrieks, and faints.]**Isa.* Ha !*Bir.* Oh ! come again ;

Thy Biron summons thee to life and love ;
Thy once-loved, ever-loving husband calls——

Thy Biron speaks to thee.

Excess of love and joy, for my return,
Has overpower'd her——I was to blame

To take thy sex's softness unprepar'd :

But sinking thus, thus dying in my arms,

This ecstasy has made my welcome more

Than words could say. Words may be counterfeit,

False coin'd, and current only from the tongue,

Without the mind ; but passion's in the soul,

And always speaks the heart.

Isa. Where have I been ? Why do you keep
him from me ?

I know his voice : my life, upon the wing,
Hears the soft lure that brings me back again ;
'Tis he himself, my Biron.

Do I hold you fast,

Never to part again ?

If I must fall, death's welcome in these arms.

Bir. Live ever in these arms.*Isa.* But pardon me,

Excuse the wild disorder of my soul ;

The joy, the strange surprising joy of seeing you,

Of seeing you again, distracted me——

Bir. Thou everlasting goodness !*Isa.* Answer me ;

What hand of Providence has brought you back
To your own home again ?

O, tell me all,

For every thought confounds me.

Bir. My best life ! at leisure, all.*Isa.* We thought you dead : kill'd at the siege
of Candy.*Bir.* There I fell among the dead ;

But hopes of life reviving from my wounds,

I was preserved but to be made a slave :

I often writ to my hard father, but never had

An answer ; I writ to thee too——

Isa. What a world of woe

Had been prevented but in hearing from you !

Bir. Alas ! thou could'st not help me.*Isa.* You do not know how much I could have
done :

At least, I'm sure I could have suffer'd all ;

I would have sold myself to slavery,

Without redemption ; given up my child,

The dearest part of me, to basest wants——

Bir. My little boy !*Isa.* My life but to have heard

You were alive.

Bir. No more, my love ; complaining of the past,

We lose the present joys. 'Tis over price,

Of all my pains, that thus we meet again——

I have a thousand things to say to thee——

Isa. 'Would I were past the hearing ! [*Aside.*]*Bir.* How does my child, my boy, my father, too ?
I hear he's living still.*Isa.* Well, both, both well ;

And may he prove a father to your hopes,

Though we have found him none.

Bir. Come, no more tears.*Isa.* Seven long years of sorrow for your loss,
Have mourn'd with me——*Bir.* And all my days to come

Shall be employ'd in a kind recompense

For thy afflictions——Can't I see my boy ?

Isa. He's gone to bed : I'll have him brought to
you.*Bir.* To-morrow I shall see him ; I want rest
Myself, after this weary pilgrimage.*Isa.* Alas ! what shall I get for you ?*Bir.* Nothing but rest, my love ! To-night I
would not

Be known, if possible, to your family :

I see my nurse is with you ; her welcome

Would be tedious at this time ;

To-morrow will do better.

Isa. I'll dispose of her, and order every thingAs you would have it. [*Exit.*]*Bir.* Grant me but life, good Heaven, and give
the means

To make this wond'rous goodness some amends ;

And let me then forget her, if I can !

O ! she deserves of me much more than I

Can lose for her, though I again could venture

A father, and his fortune, for her love !

You wretched fathers, blind as fortune all !

Not to perceive, that such a woman's worth

Weighs down the portion you provide your sons :

What is your trash, what all your heaps of gold,

Compared to this, my heart-felt happiness !

What has she, in my absence, undergone !

I must not think of that ; it drives me back

Upon myself, the fatal cause of all.

*Enter ISABELLA.**Isa.* I have obey'd your pleasure ;

Every thing is ready for you.

Bir. I can want nothing here ; possessing thee,
All my desires are carried to their aim

Of happiness: there's no room for a wish,
But to continue still this blessing to me:
I know the way, my love, I shall sleep sound.
Isa. Shall I attend you?

Bir. By no means:
I've been so long a slave to others' pride,
To learn, at least, to wait upon myself;
You'll make haste after—

Isa. I'll but say my prayers, and follow you—
[*Exit BIRON.*]

My prayers! no, I must never pray again,
Prayers have their blessings, to reward our hopes,
But I have nothing left to hope for more.
What Heav'n could give I have enjoy'd; but now
The baneful planet rises on my fate,
And what's to come is a long life of woe;
Yet I may shorten it—
I promised him to follow—him!
Is he without a name? *Biron*, my husband—
My husband! ha! What then is *Villeroi*?
Oh, *Biron*, hadst thou come but one day sooner!

[*Weeping.*]
—What's to be done?—for something must be done.

Two husbands! married to both,
And yet a wife to neither! Hold, my brain—
Ha! a lucky thought
Works the right way to rid me of them all;
All the reproaches, infamies and scorn,
That every tongue and finger will find for me.
Let the just horror of my apprehensions
But keep me warm—no matter what can come.
'Tis but a blow—yet I will see him first—
Have a last look, to heighten my despair,
And then to rest for ever.—

[*Going.*]

BIRON meets her.

Bir. Despair and rest for ever! *Isabella*!
These words are far from thy condition;
And be they ever so. I heard thy voice,
And could not bear thy absence; come, my love!
You have stay'd long, there's nothing, nothing sure
Now to despair of in succeeding fate.

Isa. I am contented to be miserable,
But not this way; I've been too long abused,
Let me sleep on, to be deceived no more.

Bir. Look up, my love, I never did deceive thee,
Nor ever can; believe thyself, thy eyes
That first inflamed, and lit me to my love,
Those stars, that still must guide me to my joys.

Isa. And me to my undoing: I look round,
And find no path, but leading to the grave.

Bir. I cannot understand thee.

Isa. If marriages
Are made in heaven, they should be happier:
Why was I made this wretch?

Bir. Has marriage made thee wretched?

Isa. Miserable, beyond the reach of comfort.

Bir. Do I live to hear thee say so?

Isa. Why, what did I say?

Bir. That I have made thee miserable.

Isa. No: you are my only earthly happiness:
And my false tongue belied my honest heart,
If it said otherwise.

Bir. And yet you said,
Your marriage made you miserable.

Isa. I know not what I said,
I've said too much, unless I could speak all.

Bir. Thy words are wild; my eyes, my ears, my
heart,
Were all so full of thee, so much employed

In wonder of thy charms, I could not find it;

Now I perceive it plain—

Isa. You'll tell nobody—

Bir. Thou art not well.

Isa. Indeed I am not; I knew that before;

But where's the remedy?

Bir. Rest will relieve thy cares; come, come,
no more;

I'll banish sorrow from thee.

Isa. Banish first the cause.

Bir. Heaven knows how willingly!

Isa. You are the only cause.

Bir. Am I the cause? the cause of thy misfor-
tunes?

Isa. The fatal innocent cause of all my woes.

Bir. Is this my welcome home? This the reward

Of all my miseries, long labours, pains,

And pining wants of wretched slavery,

Which I've outlived, only in hopes of thee;

Am I thus paid at last for deathless love;

And call'd the cause of thy misfortunes now?

Isa. Inquire no more; 'twill be explain'd too
soon. [*Going.*]

Bir. What! canst thou leave me too?

Isa. Pray, let me go;

For both our sakes, permit me—

Bir. Rack me not with imaginations

Of things impossible—Thou canst not mean

What thou hast said—Yet something she must
mean.

—'Twas madness all—Compose thyself, my love!
The fit is past; all may be well again:

Let us to bed.

Isa. To bed! You've raised the storm

Will sever us for ever.

Bir. Nothing shall ever part us.

Isa. Oh! there's a fatal story to be told;

Be deaf to that, as Heaven has been to me!

When thou shalt hear how much thou hast been
wrong'd,

How wilt thou curse thy fond believing heart,

Tear me from the warm bosom of thy love,

And throw me like a poisonous weed away!

All things have their end.

When I am dead, forgive and pity me. [*Exit.*]

Bir. Stay, my *Isabella*!

What can she mean? These doubtings will dis-
tract me:

Some hidden mischief soon will burst to light;

I cannot bear it—I must be satisfied—

'Tis she, my wife, must clear this darkness to me.

She shall—if the sad tale at last must come,

She is my fate, and best can speak my doom. [*Exit.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Chamber.

Enter *BIRON* and *Nurse*.

Bir. I know enough: th' important question
Of life or death, fearful to be resolved,
Is clear'd to me: I see where it must end:
And need inquire no more—Pray, let me have
Pen, ink, and paper: I must write a while.

And then I'll try to rest—to rest for ever!

[Exit Nurse.]

Poor Isabella! now I know the cause,
The cause of thy distress, and cannot wonder
That it has turn'd thy brain. If I look back
Upon thy loss, it will distract me too.
Oh, any curse but this might be removed!
But 'twas the rancorous malignity
Of all ill stars combined, of Heaven and fate—
Hold, hold my impious tongue—Alas! I rave:
Why do I tax the stars, or Heav'n, or fate?
My father and my brother are my fates,
That drive me to my ruin. They knew well
I was alive. Too well they knew how dear
My Isabella—Oh! my wife no more!
How dear her love was to me—Yet they stood,
With a malicious silent joy, stood by,
And saw her give up all my happiness,
The treasure of her beauty to another;
Stood by, and saw her married to another;
Oh, cruel father, and unnatural brother!
I have but to accuse you of my wrongs,
And then to fall forgotten—Sleep or death
Sits heavy on me, and benumbs my pains:
Either is welcome; but the hand of death
Works always sure, and best can close my eyes.

[Exit BIRON.]

Enter Nurse and SAMPSON.

Nurse. Here's strange things towards, Sampson;
what will be the end of 'em, do you think?

Samp. Nay, marry, Nurse, I can't see so far:
but the law, I believe, is on Biron, the first hus-
band's side.

Nurse. Yes; no question, he has the law on his
side.

Samp. For I have heard, the law says, a woman
must be a widow, all out seven years, before she
can marry again, according to law.

Nurse. Ay, so it does; and our lady has not
been a widow altogether seven years.

Samp. Why then, Nurse, mark my words, and
say I told you so,—the man must have his wife
again, and all will do well.

Nurse. But if our master, Villeroy, comes back
again—

Samp. Why, if he does, he is not the first man
that has had his wife taken from him.

Nurse. For fear of the worst, will you go to the
old Count, and desire him to come as soon as he
can; there may be mischief, and he is able to pre-
vent it.

Samp. Now you say something: now I take you,
Nurse; that will do well, indeed; mischief should
be prevented, a little thing will make a quarrel,
when there's a woman in the way. I'll about it
instantly.

SCENE II.—A Chamber.—BIRON asleep on a
couch.

Enter ISABELLA.

Isa. Asleep so soon! Oh, happy, happy thou.
Who thus can sleep! I never shall sleep more—
If then to sleep be to be happy, he,
Who sleeps the longest, is the happiest;
Death is the longest sleep—Oh, have a care?
Mischief will thrive apace. Never wake more.

[To BIRON.]

If thou didst ever love thy Isabella,
To-morrow must be doomsday to thy peace.

—The sight of him disarms ev'n death itself,
And pleasure grows again

With looking on him—Let me look my last—
But is a look enough for parting love?

Sure I may take a kiss—Where am I going?
Help, help me, Villeroy! Mountains and seas
Divide your love, never to meet my shame.
Hark!

What noise was that? A knocking at the gate!
It may be Villeroy—No matter who.

Bir. Come, Isabella, come.

Isa. Hark! I'm call'd!

Bir. You stay too long from me.

Isa. A man's voice! in my bed! How came he
there?

Nothing but villainy in this bad world.
Here's physic for your fever.

[Draws a dagger, and goes backward to the couch.
If husbands go to heaven,

Where do they go that send them!—This to try—

[Going to stab him, he rises, she shrieks. Both
come forward,]

What do I see?

Bir. Isabella, arm'd!

Isa. Against my husband's life!

Bir. Thou didst not think it?

Isa. Madness has brought me to the gates of
hell,

And there has left me.

Bir. Why dost thou fly me so?

Isa. I cannot bear his sight; distraction, come,
Possess me all.

Shake off my chains, and hasten to my aid;—

Thou art my only cure— [Running out.]

Bir. Poor Isabella, she's not in a condition

To give me any comfort, if she could;

Lost to herself—as quickly I shall be

To all the world—Horrors come fast around me;

My mind is overcast—the gathering clouds

Darken the prospect—I approach the brink,

And soon must leap the precipice! Oh! Heav'n!

[Kneels.]

While yet my senses are my own, thus kneeling,

Let me implore thy mercies on my wife;

Release her from her pangs; and if my reason,

O'erwhelm'd with miseries, sink before the tem-
pest,

Pardon those crimes despair may bring upon me.

[Rises.]

Enter Nurse.

Nurse. Sir, there's somebody at the door must
needs speak with you; he won't tell his name.

Bir. I come to him [Exit Nurse.]

'Tis Belford, I suppose; he little knows

Of what has happen'd here; I wanted him,

Must employ his friendship, and then— [Exit.]

SCENE III.—The Scene.

Enter CARLOS, PEDRO, and three RUFFIANS.
Ruffians conceal themselves.

Car. A younger brother! I was one too long
Not to prevent my being so again.

We must be sudden. Younger brothers are
But lawful bastards of another name,
Thrust out of their nobility of birth

And family, and tainted into trades.

Shall I be one of them—Bow, and retire,

To make more room for the unwieldy heir

To play the fool in? No—

But how shall I prevent it?—Biron comes
To take possession of my father's love—
Would that were all! there's a birthright too
That he will seize. Besides, if Biron lives,
He will unfold some practices, which I
Cannot well answer—therefore he shall die;
This night must be disposed of: I have means
That will not fail my purpose. Here he comes.

Bir. Ha! am I beset? I live but to revenge me.

[*They rush forward and stab him. VILLEROY enters, with two Servants; they rescue him; CARLOS and his party fly.*]

Vil. How are you, sir? Mortally hurt, I fear.
Take care and lead him in.

Bir. I thank you for this goodness, sir: though 'tis

Bestow'd upon a very wretch; and death,
Though from a villain's hand, had been to me
An act of kindness, and the height of mercy—
But I thank you, sir.

Vil. Take care and lead him in. [*He is led off.*]

SCENE IV.—A Chamber.

Enter ISABELLA.

Isa. Murder my husband! Oh! I must not dare
To think of living on; my desperate hand,
In a mad rage, may offer it again;
Stab me any where but there. Here's room enough
In my own breast to act the fury in,
The proper scene of mischief.

[*Going to stab herself, VILLEROY runs in and prevents her by taking the dagger from her.*]

Vil. Angels defend and save thee!

Attempt thy precious life!

Lay violent hands upon thy innocent self!

Isa. Swear I am innocent, and I'll believe you.

What would you have with me? Pray let me go.

—Are you there, sir? You are the very man

Have done all this. You would have made

Me believe you married me; but the fool

Was wiser.

Vil. Dost thou not know me, love?

'Tis Villeroy, thy husband.

Isa. I have none; no husband—

Never had but one, and he died at Candy.

Speak, did he not die there?

Vil. He did, my life.

Isa. But swear it, quickly swear.

Enter BIRON, bloody, leaning upon his sword.

Before that streaming evidence appears,

In bloody proof against me—

[*She seeing BIRON, swoons; VILLEROY helps her to a couch.*]

Vil. Help there!

[*Sees BIRON.*]

Biron alive!

Bir. The only wretch on earth, that must not live.

Vil. Biron or Villeroy must not, that's decreed.

Bir. You've saved me from the hands of murderers:

Would you had not, for life's my greatest plague—

And then, of all the world, you are the man

I would not be obliged to—Isabella!

I came to fall before thee: I had died

Happy, not to have found your Villeroy here:

A long farewell, and a last parting kiss.

[*Kisses her.*]

Vil. A kiss! confusion! it must be your last.

Bir. I know it must—Here I give up that death

You but delay'd: since what is past has been

The work of fate, thus we must finish it.

Thrust home, be sure.

[*Falls.*]

Vil. Alas! he faints! some help there.

Bir. 'Tis all in vain, my sorrows soon will end—

Oh, Villeroy! let a dying wretch entreat you

To take this letter to my father. My Isabella!

Couldst thou but hear me, my last words should

bless thee,

I cannot, though in death, bequeath her to thee.

[*To VILLEROY.*]

But could I hope my boy, my little one,

Might find a father in thee—Oh, I faint—

I can no more—Hear me, Hear'n! Oh! support

My wife, my Isabella?—Bless my child!

And take a poor unhappy—

Vil. He's gone—

[*Dies.*]

My care of her is lost in wild amaze.

Who waits there?

[*Exit.*]

Isa. [*Recovering.*] Where have I been?—Me-

thinks, I stand upon

The brink of life, ready to shoot the gulf

That lies between me and the realms of rest,

But still detain'd, I cannot pass the strait;

Deny'd to live, and yet I must not die; [*Rises.*]

Doom'd to come back, like a complaining ghost,

To my unbury'd body—Here it lies—

[*Comes forward and throws herself by BIRON's body.*]

My body, soul, and life. A little dust

To cover our cold limbs in the dark grave—

There, there we shall sleep safe and sound together.

Enter VILLEROY, with Servants.

Vil. Poor wretch; upon the ground! She's not herself:

Remove her from the body.

[*Servants going to raise her.*]

Isa. Never, never—

[*Clings to the body.*]

You have divorced us once, but shall no more—

Help, help me, Biron—Ha!—bloody and dead:

Oh, murder! murder! you have done this deed

Vengeance and murder!—bury us together—

Do any thing but part us.

Vil. Gently, gently raise her.

She must be forced away.

[*They carry her off.*]

Isa. Oh! they tear me! Cut off my hands—

Let me leave something with him—

They'll clasp him fast—

Oh, cruel, cruel men!

This you must answer one day.

[*Nurse follows her.*]

Vil. Send for all helps: all, all that I am worth,
Shall cheaply buy her peace of mind again.

[*To a Servant.*]

Enter Count BALDWIN, CARLOS, BELFORD, MAURICE, EGMONT, with Servants.

C. Bald. O, do I live to this unhappy day!

Where is my wretched son?

Car. Where is my brother?

[*They see him, and gather about the body.*]

Vil. I hope, in heav'n.

Car. Canst thou pity him?

Wish him in heav'n, when thou hast done a deed,

That must for ever cut thee from the hopes

Of ever coming there?

Vil. I do not blame you—

You have a brother's right to be concern'd

For his untimely death.

Car. Untimely death, indeed!

Vil. But yet you must not say I was the cause.

Car. Not you the cause! Why, who should murder him?

We do not ask you to accuse yourself;
But I must say, that you have murder'd him;
And will say nothing else, till justice draws
Upon our side, at the loud call of blood,
To execute so foul a murderer.

Bel. Poor Biron! is this thy welcome home!

Maur. Rise, sir; there is a comfort in revenge,
Which is left you. [To Count BALDWIN.]

Car. Take the body hence.

C. Bald. What could provoke you?

Vil. Nothing could provoke me

To a base murder, which, I find, you think
Me guilty of—I know my innocence;
My servants too can witness that I drew
My sword in his defence, to rescue him.

Bel. Let the servants be call'd.

Egm. Let's hear what they can say.

Car. What they can say! Why, what should servants say?

They are his accomplices, his instruments,
And will not charge themselves. If they could do
A murder for his service, they can lie.

Lie nimbly, and swear hard to bring him off.

You say you drew your sword in his defence:

Who were his enemies? Did he need defence?

Had he wrong'd any one? Could he have cause

To apprehend a danger, but from you?

And yet you rescued him!—

No, no, he came

Unseasonably (that was all his crime),

Unluckily, to interrupt your sport:

You were new marry'd—marry'd to his wife;

And therefore you, and she, and all of you

(For all of you I must believe concern'd),

Combined to murder him out of the way.

Bel. If it be so—

Car. It can be only so.

C. Bald. The law will do me justice; send for
the magistrate.

Car. I'll go myself for him. [Exit.]

Vil. These strong presumptions, I must own in-
deed,

Are violent against me; but I have

A witness, and on this side heav'n too.

—Open that door.

[Door opened, and PEDRO is brought forward
by VILLEROY'S Servants.]

Here's one can tell you all.

Ped. All, all; save me but from the rack, I'll
confess all.

Vil. You and your accomplices designed
To murder Biron?—Speak.

Ped. We did.

Vil. Did you engage upon your private wrongs,
Or were employ'd?

Ped. He never did us wrong.

Vil. You were set on then?

Ped. We were set on.

Vil. What do you know of me?

Ped. Nothing, nothing;

You saved his life, and have discover'd me.

Vil. He has acquitted me.

If you would be resolved of anything,
He stands upon his answer.

Bel. Who set you on to act this horrid deed?

C. Bald. I'll know the villain; give me quick
his name,

Or I will tear it from thy bleeding heart.

Ped. I will confess.

C. Bald. Do then.

Ped. It was my master, Carlos, your own son.

C. Bald. Oh, monstrous! monstrous! most un-
natural!

Bel. Did he employ you to murder his own
brother?

Ped. He did; and he was with us when 'twas
done.

C. Bald. If this be true, this horrid, horrid tale,
It is but just upon me; Biron's wrongs
Must be revenged! and I the cause of all!

Maur. What will you do with him?

C. Bald. Take him apart—

I know too much. [Exit PEDRO, guarded.]

Vil. I had forgot—Your wretched, dying son,
Gave me this letter for you.

[Gives it to Count BALDWIN.]

I dare deliver it. It speaks of me.

I pray to have it read.

C. Bald. You know the hand?

Bel. I know 'tis Biron's hand.

C. Bald. Pray read it. [BELFORD reads the letter.]

“Sir,—I find I am come only to lay my death
at your door. I am now going out of the world,
but cannot forgive you, nor my brother Carlos, for
not hindering my poor wife, Isabella, from marry-
ing with Villeroy; when you both knew, from so
many letters, that I was alive. BIRON.”

Vil. How! Did you know it then?

C. Bald. Amazement all!

Enter CARLOS, with Officers.

Oh, Carlos! are you come? Your brother here,

Here in a wretched letter, lays his death

To you and me—Have you done anything

To hasten his sad end?

Car. Bless me, sir, I do anything! who, I?

C. Bald. He talks of letters that were sent to us.

I never heard of any—Did you know

He was alive?

Car. Alive! Heaven knows, not I.

C. Bald. Had you no news of him, from a report,
Or letter, never?

Car. Never, never, I.

Bel. That's strange, indeed: I know he often
writ

To lay before you the condition [To C. BALDWIN.]

Of his hard slavery; and more I know,

That he had several answers to his letters.

He said they came from you; you are his brother?

Car. Never from me.

Bel. That will appear.

The letters, I believe, are still about him;

For some of them I saw but yesterday.

C. Bald. What did those answers say?

Bel. I cannot speak to the particulars;

But I remember well, the sum of them

Was much the same, and all agreed,

That there was nothing to be hoped from you;

That 'twas your barbarous resolution

To let him perish there.—

C. Bald. Oh, Carlos! Carlos! hadst thou been
a brother—

Car. This is a plot upon me. I never knew

He was in slavery, or was alive,

Or heard of him, before this fatal hour.

Bel. There, sir, I must confront you:

He sent you a letter, to my knowledge, last night,

And you sent him word you would come to him—

I fear you came too soon.

C. Bald. 'Tis all too plain.—

Bring out that wretch before him.

[PEDRO produc d.]

Car. Ha! Pedro there!—Then I am caught, indeed.

Bel. You start at sight of him;
He has confess'd the bloody deed.

Car. Well then, he has confessed,
And I must answer it.

Bel. Is there no more?

Car. Why!—what would you have more? I know the worst,
And I expect it.

C. Bald. Why hast thou done all this?

Car. Why, that which damns most men has ruined me;

The making of my fortune. Biron stood
Between me and your favour; while he lived,
I had not that; hardly was thought a son,
And not at all akin to your estate.

I could not bear a younger brother's lot,
To live depending upon courtesy—
Had you provided for me like a father,
I had been still a brother.

C. Bald. 'Tis too true;
I never loved thee as I should have done:

It was my sin, and I am punish'd for't.

Oh! never may distinction rise again
In families: let parents be the same.

To all their children; common in their care,
And in their love of them.—I am unhappy,

For loving one too well.

Vil. You knew your brother lived; why did you take

Such pains to marry me to Isabella?

Car. I had my reasons for't.—

Vil. More than I thought you had.

Car. But one was this—

I knew my brother loved his wife so well,
That if he ever should come home again,
He could not long outlive the loss of her.

Bel. If you rely'd on that, why did you kill him?

Car. To make all sure. Now you are answer'd all.

Where must I go? I am tired of your questions.

C. Bald. I leave the judge to tell thee what thou art;

A father cannot find a name for thee.

Take him away.— [CARLOS led off.

Grant me, sweet Heav'n! the patience to go through

The torment of my cure—Here, here begins
The operation. Alas! she's mad.

Enter ISABELLA, distracted, and her Child running from her.

Vil. My Isabella, poor unhappy wretch!
What can I say to her?

Isa. Nothing, nothing; 'tis a babbling world—
I'll hear no more on't. When does the court sit?
I have a cause to try.

Will you not hear it? Then I must appeal
To the bright throne—Call down the heav'nly
powers

To witness how you use me.

C. Bald. Pray, give her way. She'll hurt no body.

Isa. What have you done with him? He was here but now;

I saw him here. Oh, Biron, Biron! where,
Where have they hid thee from me? He is gone—

But here's a little flaming cherubim—

Will nothing do? I did not hope to find

Justice on earth; 'tis not in heav'n neither.

Biron has watch'd his opportunity—

Softly; he steals it from the sleeping gods,

And sends it thus—Ha! ha! ha!— [Stabs herself.

Now, now I laugh at you, I defy you all,
You tyrant murderers.

C. Bald. Oh, thou most injured innocence! Yet live,

Live but to witness for me to the world,

How much I do repent me of the wrongs,

The unnatural wrongs, which I have heap'd on thee

And have pull'd down this judgment on us all.

Vil. Oh, speak, speak but a word of comfort to me!

C. Bald. If the most tender father's care and love
Of thee, and thy poor child, can make amends—

Oh, yet look up and live!—

Isa. Where is that little wretch? [They raise her.

I die in peace, to leave him to your care.

I have a wretched mother's legacy,

A dying kiss—pray let me give it him,

My blessing; that, that's all I have to leave thee.

Oh, may thy father's virtues live in thee,

And all his wrongs be buried in my grave! [Dies.

END OF ISABELLA.

OROONOKO,

A TRAGEDY.

BY THOMAS SOUTHERN.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

OROONOKO.
ABOAN.
Governor.
BLANDFORD.
STANMORE.
Captain DRIVER.
HOTMAN.

IMOINDA.
Widow.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*View of the Sea.*

Enter several Planters.

First P. Well, neighbours, Captain Driver has brought us a fresh supply—more slaves.

Second P. Ay, and I'm sure we had never more need of 'em.

"Third P. That's true, indeed, and I'm afraid we shall never have less.

"Fourth P. Yes, yes; we shall have enough of 'em, I warrant you, when they come to breed."

Third P. Plague on 'em, a parcel of lazy, obstinate, untractable pagans;—half of 'em are so sulky, when they first come, that they won't eat their victuals when it's set before 'em, and a Christian may beat 'em till he drops down, before he can make 'em eat, if they ha'n't a mind to it.

Second P. Beat! ay, faith, he may beat those that will eat, long enough before they will work; and, what with their starving themselves, and what with the discipline they require before they will put out their strength, they die as fast as rotten sheep, plague on 'em! The poor industrious planter loses the money they cost him, and his ground runs to ruin for want of their labour.

First P. Ay, in truth, a Christian colony has a

hard time of it, that is forced to deal in this cursed heathen commodity: here, every time a ship comes in, my money goes for a great raw-boned negro fellow, that has the impudence to think he is my fellow-creature, with as much right to liberty as I have, and so grows sullen, and refuses to work; or for a young wench, who will howl night and day after a brat or a lover, forsooth.

Fourth P. Nay, as far as I see yet, the women are worse than the men; but Squire Blandford has got one that, they say, is not of their complexion.

Third P. So they say; but she's of the breed, I'll warrant her—she's one of the sulky ones.—The lieutenant-governor has taken a fancy to her; and yet, would you believe it, she gives herself airs, and will scarce speak to him.

Second P. I've heard of her, they call her Cle-mene.

Fourth P. 'Tis a wonder, however, that his honour don't buy her.

Third P. She was in a lot that Mr. Blandford drew for the lord governor himself, who, you know, is expected by the next ship from England, and she cannot be sold without his consent.

Fourth P. In a lot drawn for the lord governor?—I don't yet perfectly understand this method of drawing lots.

First P. No! why nothing is so easy: the colony agrees with the buccaneer to bring a certain number of slaves, at so much a-head; and when they come in, we draw for them, to prevent disputes; for, as they're all of a price, every one, you know, would be for picking out the best.—Come along with us to the market, and you'll see how it is, presently; the slaves are now coming on shore.

SCENE II.—*An Open Place.*

Enter Lieutenant-Governor, BLANDFORD, and STANMORE.

Gov. There's no resisting your fortune, Blandford; you draw all the prizes.

Blad. I draw for our lord governor, you know; his fortune favours me.

Gov. I grudge him nothing this time; but if

fortune had favoured me in the last sale, the fair slave had been mine; Clemene had been mine.

Bla. Are you still in love with her?

Gov. Every day more in love with her.

Enter Captain DRIVER, teased and pulled about by several Planters, Men and Women.

"*Wom.* Here have I six slaves in my lot, and not a man among them; all women and children; what can I do with 'em, captain? Pray consider I am a woman myself.

"*First P.* I have all men in mine: pray, captain, let the men and women be mingled together, for the good of the plantation.

"*Second P.* Ay, ay, a man and a woman, captain, for the good of the plantation.

"*Capt. D.* Let them mingle together, and be damn'd, what care I? Would you have me pimp for the good of the plantation?

"*First P.* I am a constant customer, captain.

"*Wom.* I am always ready money to you, captain.

"*First P.* For that matter, mistress, my money is as ready as yours.

"*Wom.* Pray hear me, captain.

"*Capt. D.* Look you,—I have done my part by you; I have brought the number of slaves you bargained for; if your lots have not pleased you, you must draw again among yourselves.

"*Third P.* I am contented with my lot.

"*Fourth P.* I am very well satisfied.

"*Third P.* We'll have no drawing again.

"*Capt. D.* Do you hear, mistress? You may hold your tongue: for my part, I expect my money.

"*Wom.* Captain, nobody questions or scruples the payment: but I won't hold my tongue; 'tis too much to pray and pay, too: one may speak for one's own, I hope.

"*Capt. D.* Well, what would you say?

"*Wom.* I say no more than I can make out.

"*Capt. D.* Out with it, then.

"*Wom.* I say, things have not so fair carried as they might have been. How do I know but you have juggled together in my absence? You drew the lots before I came, I'm sure.

"*Capt. D.* That's your own fault, mistress; you might have come sooner.

"*Wom.* Then here's a prince, as they say, among the slaves, and you set him down to go as a common man.

"*Capt. D.* Why, what should make him worth more than a common man? He'll not do the more work for being a prince, will he?"

Gov. Where are the slaves, captain? They are long coming.

"*Bla.* And who is this prince that's fallen to my lot for the Lord Governor?—Let me know something of him, that I may treat him accordingly; who is he?

"*Capt. D.* He's a devil of a fellow, I can tell you; a prince, every inch of him: you have paid dear enough for him, for all the good he'll do you: I was forced to clap him in irons, and did not think the ship safe, neither. You are in hostility with the Indians; they say they threaten you daily: you had best have an eye upon him.

"*Bla.* But who is he?

Gov. And how do you know him to be a prince?

"*Capt. D.* He is son and heir to the great king of Angola, a mischievous monarch in those parts, who, by his good will, would never let any of his neighbours be in quiet. This son was his general;

a plaguy fighting fellow. I have formerly had dealing with him for slaves, which he took prisoners, and have got pretty roundly by him. But the wars being at an end, and nothing more to be got by the trade of that country, I made bold to bring the prince along with me.

Gov. How could you do that?

"*Bla.* What! steal a prince out of his own country?—Impossible.

"*Capt. D.* 'Twas hard, indeed; but I did it. You must know, this Oroonoko—

"*Bla.* Is that his name?

"*Capt. D.* Ay, Oroonoko.

Gov. Oroonoko!

"*Capt. D.* Is naturally inquisitive about the men and manners of the white nations. Because I could give him some account of the other parts of the world, I grew very much into his favour: in return of so great an honour, you know I could do no less, upon my coming away, than invite him on board me; never having been in a ship, he appointed his time, and I prepared my entertainment; he came the next evening as private as he could, with about some twenty along with him. The punch went round; and, as many of his attendants as would be dangerous, I sent dead drunk on shore; the rest we secured; and so you have the Prince Oroonoko.

"*First P.* Gad-a-mercy, Captain! there you were with him, i'faith!

"*Second P.* Such men as you are fit to be employed in public affairs: the plantation will thrive by you.

"*Third P.* Industry ought to be encouraged.

"*Capt. D.* There's nothing done without it, boys. I have made my fortune this way:

"*Bla.* Unheard-of villany!

"*Sta.* Barbarous treachery!

"*Bla.* They applaud him for't.

Gov. But, Captain, methinks you have taken a great deal of pains for this Prince Oroonoko; why did you part with him at the common rate of slaves?

"*Capt. D.* Why, Lieutenant-Governor, I'll tell you: I did design to carry him to England, to have showed him there; but I found him troublesome upon my hands, and I'm glad I'm rid of him. [*Drum without.*] Oh, oh, hark, they come!

Enter black Slaves in chains, Men, Women, and Children, Aboas, and others of Oroonoko's Attendants—Oroonoko last of all, in chains.

"*Capt. D.* Now, Governor, pray observe him.

Oro. So, sir, you have kept your word with me.

"*Capt. D.* I am a better Christian, I thank you, than to keep it with a heathen.

Oro. You are a Christian, be a Christian still:

If you have any god that teaches you
To break your word, I need not curse you more:
Let him cheat you, as you are false to me.
You faithful followers of my better fortune,
We have been fellow soldiers in the field:

[*Goes up, and embraces his friends.*

Now we are fellow slaves. This last farewell.

Be sure of one thing that will comfort us,—

Whatever world we are next thrown upon

Cannot be worse than this.

[*Exeunt all the Slaves but Oroonoko.*

"*Capt. D.* You see what a bloody Pagan he is, Governor; but I took care that none of his followers should be in the same lot with him, for fear they

should undertake some desperate action, to the danger of the colony.

Oro. Live still in fear; it is the villain's curse, And will revenge my chains: fear even me, Who have no power to hurt thee. Nature abhors And drives thee out from the society And commerce of mankind, for breach of faith. Men live and prosper but in mutual trust, A confidence of one another's truth. That thou hast violated. I have done; I know my fortune, and submit to it.

Gov. Sir, I am sorry for your fortune, and would help it if I could.

Bla. [*Crossing to him.*] Take off his chains. [*Two Planters advance, and take off his chains.*] You know your condition; but you are fallen into honourable hands. You are the Lord Governor's slave, who will use you nobly. In his absence it shall be my care to serve you.

[*BLANDFORD applying to him.*]

Oro. I hear you, but can believe no more.

Gov. Captain, I'm afraid the world won't speak so honourably of this action of yours as you would have 'em.

Capt. D. I have the money,—let the world speak, and be damn'd: I care not.

Oro. I would forget myself. Be satisfied.

[*To BLANDFORD.*]

I am above the rank of common slaves.

Let that content you. The Christian there, that knows me,

For his own sake, will not discover more.

Capt. D. I have other matters to mind. You have him, and much good may you do with your prize. [*Exit.*]

[*The Planters pulling and staring at OROONOKO.*]

Bla. What would you have here?—You stare as if you never saw a man before. Stand farther off.

[*Crosses, and turns them away.*]

Oro. Let them stare on; [*Planters retire.*]

I am unfortunate, but not ashamed

Of being so: no, let the guilty blush;

The white man that betray'd me; honest black

Disdains to change its colour. I am ready;

Where must I go?—Dispose me as you please,—

I am not well acquainted with my fortune,

But must learn to know it better: so, I know, you say;

Degrees make all things easy.

Bla. All things shall be easy.

Oro. Tear off this pomp, and let me know myself: The slavish habit best becomes me now.

Hard fare and whips and chains may overpower

The frailer flesh, and bow my body down;

But there's another, nobler part of me,

Out of your reach, which you can never tame.

Bla. You shall find nothing of this wretchedness

You apprehend. We are not monsters all.

You seem unwilling to disclose yourself;

Therefore, for fear the mentioning your name

Should give you new disquiets, I presume

To call you Cæsar.

Oro. I am myself; but call me what you please.

Gov. A very good name, Cæsar,

And very fit for his character.

Oro. Was Cæsar, then, a slave?

Gov. I think he was; to pirates, too; he was a great conqueror, but unfortunate in his friends.

Oro. His friends were Christians?

Bla. No.

Oro. No! that's strange.

Gov. And murder'd by them.

Oro. I would be Cæsar, then. Yet I will live.

Bla. Live to be happier.

Oro. Do what you will with me.

Bla. I will wait upon you, attend, and serve you.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*A Grove—a Plantation seen at a little distance.*

Enter ABOAN.

Abo. At length I am alone—but why alone?

My thoughts are worse society to me

Than the poor slaves, with whom I'm doom'd to labour.

I cannot bear it—if I turn my view

Backward or forward, round me or within,

'Tis all regret, oppression, and despair.

Yet why despair?—Something may yet be done;

May yet be done—hold—let me most distrust

The flatterer, Hope—if she one moment lures me

To patient suffrance, from that fatal moment

Insidious slumbers steal upon my virtue—

I shall—distraction! must grow tame by habit—

I must—what else has quench'd in those around me

That indignation which now chokes my utterance?

All hell is in the thought—my struggle must be now.

The instant, now—precipitation's wisdom—

Slaves. [*Without.*] Ho! ho! Aboan, Aboan!

Abo. Hark! here they come!—It must, it shall be so:

Hackney'd they are in mis'ries new to me,—

Like secret fire that smokeless embers hide.

Yet still the love of liberty must live.

Enter three Slaves.

First S. Here, where are you?—Come, to work, to work.

Second S. You are a stranger, ignorant of your duty,

Or else this idleness had been chastised With many a smarting blow.

Third S. Ay, good Aboan,

Come, come with us, for if the overseer

E'en now surprise us—

Second S. Hush! I hear his voice—

First S. No, no, 'tis not he—

Abo. Would he scourge us, then?

Third S. Would he! Experience soon will tell you that.

Abo. Has, then, experience ever told it you?

Third S. Has it?—Don't ask me—would I could say no!

Abo. You have been beaten, then, to patient drudgery.

Second S. 'Tis shameful to confess it, yet 'tis true.

Abo. What to confess is shameful, is it not More shameful still to suffer?

Third S. What if it be?

Abo. Then suffer it no longer.

First S. No longer—no, if we knew how to help it.

Abo. Know how?—Suppose a friend should tell you how. [*They gather eagerly about him.*]

Second S. What say you?

First S. Are there ways?

Third S. Can you tell us?

Abo. I see by this impatience you're not quell'd Into a torpid tame insensibility;

I'll tell you, then, such news, as shall revive
Each drooping virtue, string each nerve anew.

All. What is it?—What is it?

Abo. There is among you, now, a mighty prince,
Before the lightning of whose dreaded sword
These pale, cold, half-form'd tyrants that insult ye
Would vanish, like thin mists before the sun.

First S. What, did he come with you.

Abo. He came with me.

I am distinguish'd by his friendship,
And oft with him have led the front of battle.

Second S. But how, where—

Third S. Is there only you and he?

Abo. There are six more of high command about
him,

All tried, all firm, all fit for great achievements.

First S. Where are they?

Abo. The prince, my lord, not long since parted
from me;

The rest, not now far off, will soon be found.

When we were parted, he embraced us all:

"My friends," says he, "one thing will comfort
us,—

Whatever world we are thrown next upon
Cannot be worse than this."

These were my royal master's words at parting,
And sure you cannot doubt but they are true.
Shall we, then, having nothing worse to fear,
Bear with dull sluggish patience what we suffer?
If nothing's worse, the chance is all for gain:

There can be danger, then, in no attempt;
And if there was, 'twere better still, for danger
Has always its equivalent in glory.

[*The Slaves look eagerly on each other, as if silently asking each other what they think.*]

Second S. [*After a pause.*] And will this prince,
and you, and these your friends,

Assist us to be free?

Abo. Will you with them

Join hands in the attempt?

[*A cry heard without, at some distance:—the Slaves start, and seem terrified.*]

What cry was that?

Second S. 'Tis the complaint of wretched slaves,
extorted

By bloody whips laid on without remorse,
And without cause—ere night, perhaps from us
And you, such cry may by such stripes be forced—

Abo. Ye gods! and shall we not resist it then?

All. We will.

Abo. Your hands—at night we meet again.

Come on—now lead to my task. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Enter OROONOKO and BLANDFORD.

Oro. And you say you are
A friend to my misfortunes: that's a name
Will teach you what you owe yourself and me.

Bla. I'll study to deserve to be your friend.

When once our noble governor arrives,
With him you will not need my interest:
He is too generous not to feel your wrongs.

But be assured I will employ my pow'r,
And find the means to send you home again.

Oro. I thank you, sir. My honest wretched
friends! [*Sighing.*]

Their chains are heavy: they have hardly found
So kind a master. May I ask you, sir,
What is become of them?—Perhaps I should not.
You will forgive a stranger.

Bla. I'll inquire,
And use my best endeavours, where they are,
To have them gently used.

Oro. Once more I thank you.
You offer every cordial that can keep
My hopes alive, to wait a better day.
What friendly care can do, you have applied.
But oh, I have a grief admits no cure!

Bla. You do not know, sir—

Oro. Can you raise the dead?
Pursue and overtake the wings of time?
And bring about again the hours, the days,
The years, that made me happy?

Bla. That is not to be done.

Oro. No, there is nothing to be done for me.

[*Kneeling, and kissing the earth.*]

Thou god adored! thou ever glorious sun!

If she be yet on earth, send me a beam

Of thy all-seeing pow'r to light me to her!

Or if thy sister goddess has preferr'd

Her beauty to the skies, to be a star,

O tell me where she shines, that I may stand

Whole nights, and gaze upon her.

Bla. I am rude, and interrupt you.

Oro. I am troublesome:

But pray give me your pardon. My swoll'n heart

Bursts out its passage, and I must complain.

O! can you think of nothing dearer to me?

Dearer than liberty, my country, friends,

Much dearer than my life?—That I have lost—

The tend'rest, best beloved, and loving wife.

Bla. Alas! I pity you.

Oro. Do pity me:

Pity's akin to love; and every thought

Of that soft kind is welcome to my soul.

I would be pitied here.

Bla. I dare not ask

More than you please to tell me: but, if you

Think it convenient to let me know

Your story, I dare promise you to bear

A part in your distress, if not assist you.

Oro. Thou honest-hearted man! I wanted such,

Just such a friend as thou art, that would sit

Still as the night, and let me talk whole days

Of my Imoinda. O! I'll tell thee all

From first to last; and pray observe me well.

Bla. I will most heedfully.

Oro. There was a stranger in my father's court,

Valued and honour'd much: he was a white,

The first I ever saw of your complexion:

Of many virtues, and so famed in arms,

He still commanded all my father's wars.

I was bred under him. One fatal day,

The armies joining, he before me stepp'd,

Receiving in his breast a poison'd dart

Levell'd at me;—he died within my arms.

I've tired you already.

Bla. Pray go on.

Oro. He left an only daughter, whom he brought

An infant to Angola. When I came

Back to the court, a happy conqueror,

Humanity oblig'd me to condole

With this sad virgin for a father's loss,

Lost for my safety. I presented her

With all the slaves of battle, to atone
 Her father's ghost. But when I saw her face
 And heard her speak, I offer'd up myself
 To be the sacrifice. She bow'd and blush'd;
 I wonder'd and ador'd. The sacred pow'r,
 That had subdued me, then inspir'd my tongue,
 Inclind her heart, and all our talk was love.

Bla. Then you were happy.

Oro. O! I was too happy.

I married her: and, though my country's custom
 Indulged the privilege of many wives,
 I swore myself never to know but her.
 She grew with child, and I grew happier still.
 O, my Imoinda! but it could not last.
 Her fatal beauty reach'd my father's ears:
 He sent for her to court, where, cursed court!
 No woman comes but for his am'rous use.
 He raging to possess her, she was forced
 To own herself my wife. The furious king
 Started at incest; but, grown desperate,
 Not daring to enjoy what he desired,
 In mad revenge, which I could never learn,
 He poison'd her, or sent her far, far off,
 Far from my hopes ever to see her more.

Bla. Most barbarous of fathers! the sad tale
 Has struck me dumb with wonder.

Oro. I have done.

I'll trouble you no farther: now and then
 A sigh will have its way: that shall be all.

Enter STANMORE.

Sta. Blandford, the Lieutenant-Governor is gone
 to your plantation. He desires you will bring the
 royal slave with you. The sight of his fair mis-
 tress, he says, is an entertainment for a prince; he
 would have his opinion of her.

Oro. Is he a lover?

Bla. So he says himself: he flatters a beautiful
 slave that I have, and calls her mistress.

Oro. Must he, then, flatter her, to call her mis-
 tress?

I pity the proud man who thinks himself
 Above being in love: what though she be a slave,
 She may deserve him.

Bla. You shall judge of that, when you see her,
 sir.

Oro. I go with you.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—A Plantation.

Enter IMOINDA, followed by Lieutenant-Governor.

Gov. I have disturb'd you. I confess my fault,
 My fair Clemene; but begin again,
 And I will listen to your mournful song.
 Sweet as the soft complaining nightingale's,
 While every note calls out my trembling soul,
 And leaves me silent, as the midnight groves,
 Only to shelter you:—sing, sing again,
 And let me wonder at the many ways
 You have to ravish me.

Imo. O, I can weep
 Enough for you and me, if that will please you.

Gov. You must not weep; I come to dry your
 tears,

And raise you from your sorrow.

Imo. Can that be,
 When all your actions and your looks convince me
 That you would keep me here, still far from those,
 For whom the tears I shed must flow for ever?

Gov. They must not, sure; be all the past for-
 gotten:

Look forwards, now, where better prospects rise,
 New pleasures court you, and new friends invite.

Imo. Alas! can I!—I know not what to say—
 Nature has formed you of a diff'rent kind,
 Or thus you could not talk; and, should I reason
 From what I feel, you would not understand me.

Gov. Oh, yes: my heart has all the soft sen-
 sations,—

Has all that friendship and that love inspires.

Imo. Let your heart answer for me, then:—

Could you,
 Forced to some distant land, unknown, forlorn,
 A slave, dependant on another's will,
 Cut off from all that habit has endear'd,
 Cut off from friendship, from domestic joy—
 Could you forget all these?—Alas, they're past!

[*Bursts into tears.*]

Gov. Oh, fair Clemene! there is yet a passion
 Which can obliterate all the joys and pains
 That others have impress'd; make room for that
 And all I wish is done. Look upon me,—
 Look with the eyes of kind, indulging love,
 That I may have full cause for what I say:—
 I come to offer you your liberty,
 And be myself the slave. You turn away.

[*Following her.*]

But everything becomes you. I may take
 This pretty hand: I know your modesty
 Would draw it back; but you will take it ill,
 If I should let it go,—I know you would.
 You shall be gently forced to please yourself;
 That you will thank me for.

[*She struggles and gets her hand from him—
 then he offers to kiss her.*]

Nay, if you struggle with me, I must take—

Imo. You may my life,—that I can part with
 freely.

[*Exit.*]

Enter BLANDFORD, STANMORE, and OROONOKO.

Bla. So, Governor, we don't disturb you, I
 hope?

Your mistress has left you. You were making love;
 She is thankful for the honour, I suppose?

Gov. Quite insensible to all I say and do:

When I speak to her, she sighs or weeps,
 But never answers me as I would have her.

Sta. There's something nearer than her slavery,
 that touches her.

Bla. What do her fellow slaves say of her: can't
 they find the cause?

Gov. Some of them, who pretend to be wiser
 than the rest, and hate her, I suppose, for being
 used better than they are, will needs have it that
 she is with child.

Bla. Poor wretch! if it be so, I pity her:
 She has lost a husband, who, perhaps, was dear
 To her, and then you cannot blame her.

Oro. If it be so, indeed, you cannot blame her.

[*Sighing.*]

Gov. No, no, it is not so. If it be so,
 I must still love her; and, desiring still,
 I must enjoy her.

Bla. Try what you can do with fair means, and
 welcome.

Gov. I'll give you ten slaves for her.

Bla. You know she is our Lord Governor's:
 but, if I could dispose of her, I would not now,
 especially to you.

Gov. Why not to me?

Bla. I mean, against her will. You are in love
 with her;
 And we all know what your desires would have:

Love stops at nothing but possession.
Were she within your power, you do not know.
How soon you would be tempted to forget
The nature of the deed, and, may be, act
A violence you after would repent.

Oro. 'Tis godlike in you to protect the weak.

Gov. Fy, fy! I would not force her. Though she be a slave, her mind is free, and should consent.

Oro. Such honour will engage her to consent. Shall we not see the wonder!

Gov. Have a care;

You have a heart, and she has conquering eyes.

Oro. I have a heart; but, if it could be false To my first vows, ever to love again, These honest hands should tear it from my breast, And throw the traitor from me. Oh, Imoinda! Living or dead, I can be only thine.

Bla. Imoinda was his wife: she is, either dead, Or living, dead to him; forced from his arms By an inhuman father—Another time I'll tell you all. [*To the Governor.*—*Music without.*

Sta. The slaves have done their work; And now begins their evening merriment.

Bla. The men are all in love with fair Clemene As much as you, and try their little tricks To entertain her, and divert her sadness. Maybe, she is among them: shall we see. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—Slaves, Men, Women, and Children, discovered upon the ground.—Some rise and dance.

Enter the Lieutenant-Governor, BLANDFORD, STANMORE, and OROONOKO, as spectators; Captain DRIVER and several Planters, with their swords drawn.—A bell rings.

Capt. D. Where are you, Governor? Make what haste you can

To save yourself and the whole colony.

I bade 'em ring the bell.

Gov. What's the matter?

First P. The Indians are come down upon us. They have plundered some of the plantations already, and are marching this way as fast as they can.

Gov. What can we do against them?

Bla. We shall be able to make a stand, till more planters come in to us.

Second P. There are a great many more without, if you would show yourself, and put us in order.

Gov. There's no danger of the white slaves; they'll not stir. Blandford, come you along with me; some of you stay here to look after the black slaves.

[*Exeunt all but the Captain and six Planters, who, all at once, seize OROONOKO.*

First P. Ay, ay, let us alone.

Capt. D. In the first place, we secure you, sir, As an enemy to the government.

Oro. Are you there, sir? You are my constant friend.

First P. You will be able to do a great deal of mischief.

Capt. D. But we shall prevent you; bring the irons hither.

Enter four Sailors, bringing chains, and putting them on OROONOKO.

Capt. D. He has the malice of a slave in him, and would be glad to be cutting his masters' throats. I know him. Chain his hands and feet, that he

may not run over to them. If they have him, they shall carry him on their backs, that I can tell them.

Enter BLANDFORD, and runs to them.

Bla. What are you doing, there?

Capt. D. Securing the main chance. This is a bosom enemy.

Bla. Away, you brutes! I'll answer with my life for his behaviour; so tell the Governor.

Capt. D.

& } Well, sir, so we will.

Planters.

[*Exeunt Captain, Planters, and Sailors, with chains.*

Oro. Give me a sword, and I'll deserve your trust.

Enter the Lieutenant-Governor and Planters.

Bla. They drive away our slaves before our faces. Governor, can you stand tamely by, and suffer this? Clemene, sir, your mistress, is among them.

Gov. We throw ourselves away in the attempt to rescue them.

Oro. A lover cannot fall more glorious Than in the cause of love. He that deserves His mistress' favour, will not stay behind. I'll lead you on,—be bold, and follow me. [*Exeunt.*

Enter IMOINDA.

Imo. I'm toss'd about by my tempestuous fate, And nowhere must have rest; Indians or English, Whoever has me, I am still a slave. No matter whose I am, since I'm no more My royal master's; since I'm his no more. Oh, I was happy!—Nay, I will be happy, In the dear thought that I am still his wife. Though far divided from him. [*Retires.*

After a shout, enter the Lieutenant-Governor, OROONOKO, BLANDFORD, STANMORE, and the Planters.

Gov. Thou glorious man! thou something greater, sure,

Than Cæsar ever was! that single arm Has saved us all: accept our general thanks.

[*All bow to OROONOKO.*

And what we can do more to recompense Such noble services, you shall command. Clemene, too, shall thank you—she is safe!

Look up, and bless your brave deliverer.

[*Brings CLEMENE forward, looking down on the ground.*

Oro. Bless me, indeed!

Bla. You start!

Oro. Oh, all you gods

Who govern this great world, and bring about Things strange and unexpected, can it be?

Gov. What is't you stare at so?

Oro. Answer me, some of you! you, who have power,

And have your senses free. Or are you all Struck through with wonder, too?

[*Looking still fixedly on her*

Bla. What would you know?

Oro. My soul steals from my body through my eyes!

All that is left of life I'll gaze away, And die upon the pleasure.

Gov. This is strange!

Oro. If you but mock me with her image, here,— If she be not Imoinda—

[*She looks upon him, and faints—he runs to her.*

Ha, she faints!—
 Nay, then, it must be she,—it is Imoinda;
 My heart confesses her, and leaps for joy,
 To welcome her to her own empire here.
 “I feel her all, in every part of me.”
 Oh, let me press her in my eager arms,
 Wake her to life, and, with this kindling kiss,
 Give back that soul she only lent to me.

[Kisses her.]

Imoinda! Oh, thy Oroonoko calls.

[IMOINDA recovering.]

Imo. My Oroonoko! Oh, I can't believe
 What any man can say!—But, if I am
 To be deceived, there's something in that name,
 That voice, that face—
 Oh, if I know myself, I cannot be mistaken.

[Embraces OROONOKO.]

Oro. Never here;
 You cannot be mistaken; I am yours,
 Your Oroonoko, all that you would have
 Your tender loving husband.

Imo. All indeed
 That I would have! my husband! then I am
 Alive, and waking to the joys I feel:
 They were so great, I could not think them true;
 But I believe all that you say to me,
 For truth itself and everlasting love
 Grow in this breast, and pleasure in these arms.

Oro. Take, take me all; inquire into my heart
 (You know the way to every secret there),
 My heart, the sacred treasury of love;
 And if, in absence, I have misemployed
 A mite from the rich store—if I have spent
 A wish, a sigh, but what I sent to you,
 May I be cursed to wish and sigh in vain,
 And you not pity me.

Imo. O! I believe,
 And know you by myself. If these sad eyes,
 Since last we parted, have beheld the face
 Of any comfort, or once wish'd to see
 The light of any other heaven but you,
 May I be struck this moment blind, and lose
 Your blessed sight, never to find you more.

Oro. Imoinda! O, this separation
 Has made you dearer, if it can be so,
 Than you were ever to me. You appear
 Like a kind star to my benighted steps,
 To guide me on my way to happiness;
 I cannot miss it now.—Governor,—friend,
 You think me mad; but let me bless you all,
 Who any way have been the instruments
 Of finding her again. Imoinda's found!
 And every thing that I would have in her.

[Embracing her.]

Sta. Where's your mistress now, Governor?

Gov. Why, where most men's mistresses are
 forced to be sometimes,—

With her husband, it seems! [Aside.] But I won't
 lose her so!

Sta. He has fought lustily for her, and deserves
 her,—

I'll say that for him.

Bla. [To OROONOKO,] Sir, we congratulate your
 happiness; I do most heartily.

Gov. And all of us; but how comes it to pass—

Oro. That will require

More precious time than I can spare you now.
 I have a thousand things to ask of her,
 And she has as many more to know of me.
 But you have made me happier, I confess,
 Acknowledge it, much happier than I
 Have words or power to tell you. “Captain, you,

Even you, who most have wrong'd me, I forgive.
 I will not say you have betray'd me now;
 I'll think you but the minister of fate,
 To bring me to my loved Imoinda, here.”

Imo. How, how shall I receive you? how be
 worthy

Of such endearments; all this tenderness?

These are the transports of prosperity.

When fortune smiles upon us.

Oro. Let the fools,

Who follow Fortune, live upon her smiles.

All our prosperity is placed in love—

We have enough of that to make us happy.

This little spot of earth, you stand upon,

Is more to me than the extended plains

Of my great father's kingdom. Here I reign

In full delights, in joys to pow'r unknown;

Your love my empire, and your heart my throne.

[Exit.]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Plantation.

Enter ABOAN, the three Slaves, and HOTMAN.

Hot. What! to be slaves to cowards! slaves to
 rogues, who can't defend themselves!

Abo. Who is this man? He talks as if he were
 acquainted with our design: is he one of us?

[Aside to his own gang.]

First S. Not yet; but he will be glad to make
 one, I believe.

Abo. I think so, too, and may be worth the
 having.

Hot. Go, sneak in corners; whisper out your
 griefs,

For fear your masters hear you; cringe and crouch
 Under the bloody whip, like beaten curs,
 That lick their wounds, and know no other cure.
 All, wretches all! you feel their cruelty,
 As much as I can feel, but dare not groan.
 For my part, while I have a life and tongue,
 I'll curse the authors of my slavery.

Abo. Have you been long a slave?

Hot. Yes, many years.

Abo. And do you only curse?

Hot. Curse! only curse! I cannot conjure,
 To raise the spirits up of other men.

I am but one. O! for a soul of fire

To warm and animate our common cause,

And make a body of us, then I would

Do something more than curse.

Abo. That body set on foot, would you be one,
 A limb, to lend it motion?

Hot. I would be

The heart of it; the head, the hand, and heart:
 Would I could see the day!

Abo. [Aside.] This spirit pleases me, and I will
 trust him.

The time may come to you; be ready for it—

Enter BLANDFORD.

Abo. We're interrupted now—we'll meet anon.

Bla. If there be any one among you here
 That did belong to Oroonoko, speak:
 I come to him.

Abo. I did belong to him. Aboan my name.

Bla. You are the man I want; pray come with me. [*Exeunt all but HOTMAN.*]

Hot. Yes, 'tis as I suspected—this Aboan Has form'd some secret project to revolt; My well-feign'd zeal has snared him, and he'll trust me:

Then welcome liberty!—not that I mean To trust his cunning, or the chance of arms; I have a nearer, surer way to freedom: I'll learn the plot, and watch it step by step, Till on the verge of execution—then, Just then, betray it; 'twill enhance the merit, And make reward more ample and more sure.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—A Room.

Enter OROONOKO and IMOINDA.

Oro. I do not blame my father for his love; 'Twas Nature's fault that made you like the sun, The reasonable worship of mankind: He could not help his adoration. But when I think on his barbarity, That could expose you to so many wrongs, Driving you out to wretched slavery, Only for being mine; then I confess I wish I could forget the name of son, That I might curse the tyrant.

Imo. I will bless him, For I have found you here: Heav'n only knows What is reserved for us; but, if we guess The future by the past, our fortune must Be wonderful, above the common size Of good or ill; it must be in extremes—Extremely happy, or extremely wretched.

Oro. 'Tis in our power to make it happy now.

Imo. But not to keep it so.

Enter BLANDFORD and ABOAN.

Bla. My royal lord!

I have a present for you.

Oro. Aboan!

Abo. Your lowest slave.

Oro. My tried and valued friend.

This worthy man always prevents my wants: I only wish'd, and he has brought thee to me. Thou art surprised; carry thy duty there:

[*ABOAN goes to IMOINDA, and falls at her feet.*]

While I acknowledge mine, how shall I thank you!

Bla. Believe me honest to your interest, And I am more than paid. I have secured That all your followers shall be gently used. This gentleman, your chief favourite, sir, Shall wait upon your person, while you stay Among us.

Oro. I owe everything to you.

Bla. You must not think you are in slavery.

Oro. I do not find I am.

Bla. Kind Heav'n has miraculously sent Those comforts, that may teach you to expect Its farther care, in your deliverance.

Oro. I sometimes think myself, Heaven is concerned

For my deliverance.

Bla. It will be soon;

You may expect it. Pray, in the mean time, Appear as cheerful as you can among us. You have some enemies, that represent You dangerous, and would be glad to find A reason, in your discontent, to fear;

They watch your looks. But there are honest men,

Who are your friends; you are secured in them.

Oro. I thank you for your caution.

Bla. I will leave you:

And be assured, I wish your liberty.

[*Exit BLANDFORD.*]

Abo. He speaks you very fair.

Oro. He means me fair.

Oro. If he should not, my lord?

Oro. If he should not?

I'll not suspect his truth; but if I did,

What shall I get by doubting?

Abo. You secure

Yourself from disappointment; but, besides, There's this advantage in suspecting him, When you put off the hopes of other men, You will rely upon your godlike self, And then you may be sure of liberty.

Oro. Be sure of liberty! what dost thou mean Advising to rely upon myself?

I think we may be sure on't; we must wait; 'Tis worth a little patience.

Abo. O, my lord!

Oro. What dost thou drive at?

Abo. Sir, another time

You would have found it sooner: but I see Love has your heart, and takes up all your thoughts.

Oro. And canst thou blame me?

Abo. Sir, I must not blame you.

But, as our fortune stands, there is a passion (Your pardon, royal mistress, I must speak) That would become you better than your love;—A brave resentment; which, inspired by you, Might kindle and diffuse a gen'rous rage Among the slaves, to rouse and shake our chains, And struggle to be free.

Oro. How can we help ourselves?

Abo. I knew you, when you would have found a way.

How help ourselves! the very Indians teach us: We need but to attempt our liberty, And we carry it. We have hands sufficient, Double the number of our masters' force, Ready to be employ'd. What hinders us To set them, then, at work? We want but you, To head our enterprise, and bid us strike.

Oro. What would you do?

Abo. Cut our oppressors' throats.

Oro. And you would have me join in your design of murder?

Abo. It deserves a better name: But, be it what it will, 'tis justified By self-defence and natural liberty.

Oro. I'll hear no more on't.

Abo. I'm sorry for't.

Oro. Nor shall you think of it.

Abo. Not think of it!

Oro. No: I command you not.

Abo. Remember, sir,

You are a slave yourself, and to command Is now another's right. Not think of it! Since the first moment they put on my chains, I've thought of nothing but the weight of them, And how to throw them off. Can your's sit easy?

Oro. I have a sense of my condition, As painful, and as quick, as yours can be. I feel for my Imoinda and myself; Imoinda, much the tenderest part of me. But, though I languish for my liberty, I would not buy it at the Christian price Of black ingratitude; they shall not say,

That we deserved our fortune by our crimes.

Murder the innocent!

Abo. The innocent!

Oro. These men are so, whom you would rise against.

If we are slaves, they did not make us slaves,
But bought us in the common way of trade.
They paid our price for us, and we are now
Their property, a part of their estate,
To manage as they please. Mistake me not—
I do not tamely say, that we should bear
All they could lay upon us: but we find
The load so light, so little to be felt
(Considering they have us in their power,
And may inflict what grievances they please),
We ought not to complain.

Abo. My royal lord,

You do not know the heavy grievances,
The toils, the labours, weary drudgeries,
Which they impose; burdens more fit for beasts,
For senseless beasts to bear, than thinking men.
Then if you saw the bloody cruelties
They execute on every slight offence;
Nay, sometimes in their proud, insulting sport,
How worse than dogs they lash their fellow-creatures,

Your heart would bleed for them. Oh! could you know

How many wretches lift their hands and eyes
To you for their relief!

Oro. I pity them,

And wish I could with honesty do more.

Abo. You must do more, and may, with honesty.

O, royal sir, remember who you are—
A prince, born for the good of other men;
Whose godlike office is to draw the sword
Against oppression, and set free mankind:
And this, I'm sure, you think oppression now.
What though you have not felt those miseries,
Never believe you are obliged to them:
They have their selfish reasons, maybe, now,
For using you so well. But there will come
A time, when you must have your share of them.
Oro. You see how little cause I have to think so.
"Favour'd in my own person, in my friends;
Indulged in all that can concern my care,
In my Imoinda's soft society." [Embracing her.

Abo. And therefore would you lie contented down

In the forgetfulness and arms of love,
To get young princes for them?

Oro. Say'st thou? ha!

Abo. Princes, the heirs of empire, and the last
Of your illustrious lineage, to be born
To pamper up their pride, and be their slaves!

Oro. Imoinda, save me; save me from that thought!

"*Imo.* There is no safety from it: I have long
Suffer'd it with a mother's labouring pains,
And can no longer. Kill me, kill me now,
While I am bless'd, and happy in your love;
Rather than let me live to see you hate me:
As you must hate me—me, the only cause,
The fountain of these flowing miseries."

Oro. Shall the dear babe, the eldest of my hopes,
Whom I begot a prince, be born a slave?
The treasure of this temple was design'd
To enrich a kingdom's fortune: shall it here
Be seized upon by vile unhallow'd hands,
To be employ'd in uses most profane?

Abo. In most unworthy uses—think of that;
And, while you may, prevent it. O, my lord,

Rely on nothing that they say to you.

They speak you fair, I know, and bid you wait.

But think what 'tis to wait on promises,

And promises of men who know no tie

Upon their words, against their interest:

And where's their interest in freeing you?

Imo. O! where, indeed, to lose so many slaves?

"*Abo.* Nay, grant this man; you think so much
your friend,

Be honest, and intends all that he says,

He is but one; and in a government,

Where, he confesses, you have enemies,

That watch your looks. What looks can you put on,

To please these men, who are before resolved
To read them their own way? Alas, my lord!

If they incline to think you dangerous,

They have their knavish arts to make you so:

And then who knows how far their cruelty
May carry their revenge?

"*Imo.* To everything

That does belong to you, your friends, and me.

I shall be torn from you, forced away,

Helpless and miserable. Shall I live

To see that day again?

"*Oro.* That day shall never come."

Abo. I know you are persuaded to believe
The Governor's arrival will prevent

These mischiefs, and bestow you liberty:

But who is sure of that? I rather fear
More mischiefs from his coming. He is young,
Luxurious, passionate, and amorous:

Such a complexion, and made bold by power,

To countenance all he is prone to do,

Will know no bounds, no law against his lusts.

If, in a fit of his intemperance,

With a strong hand he shall resolve to seize,

And force my royal mistress from your arms,

How can you help yourself?

Oro. Ha! thou hast roused

The lion in his den—he stalks abroad,

And the wide forest trembles at his roar.

I find the danger now: my spirits start

At the alarm, and from all quarters come,

To man my heart, the citadel of love.

Is there a power on earth to force you from me?

And shall I not resist it?

Now I am fashion'd to thy purpose: speak;

What combination, what conspiracy,

Would'st thou engage me in? I'll undertake

All thou wouldst have me; now, for liberty,—

For the great cause of love and liberty.

Abo. Now, my great master, you appear yourself.

And, since we have you join'd in our design,

It cannot fail us. I have muster'd up

The choicest slaves, men who are sensible

Of their condition, and seem most resolved:

They have their several parties.

"*Oro.* Summon them,"

Assemble them. I will come forth and show

Myself among them; if they are resolved,

I'll lead their foremost resolutions.

"*Abo.* I have provided those will follow you:

"*Oro.* With this reserve in our proceedings
still,

The means that lead us to our liberty

Must not be bloody.

"*Abo.* In self-defence, my lord—"

"*Oro.* I know, I feel,

All thou canst say, and more. Is there no way—

[Pauses.]

Ye gods! 'tis inspiration! What a thought!
The very ship that brought, that made us slaves,
Swims in the river still—we'll seize on that,
And not a life shall fall.

"Abo. And shall we, then,
Desert our honest, brave, unhappy friends?
Blast all their hopes?

"Oro. O, no! we'll go together;
Not one associate shall be left behind.

"Abo. Why, farewell, then; revenge. It shall
be so."

We shall expect you, sir.

Oro. You shall not long.

[Exit.

SCENE III.—A Plantation.

Enter several Slaves, conspirators.

First S. 'Tis about the time now; he'll be here soon.

Second S. Well; but what are we to do?

First S. To do! why, we are to be free.

Second S. Ay! 'Twas lucky this Aboan came among us. When I look at him, and hear him talk, I think I'm free already.

Third S. Why, ay, to be sure; such men as he may do much.

Second S. Why, we were all such men, till slavery broke us. But what is the project?

Third S. Why, we shall hear, we shall hear.

First S. Ay, let Aboan alone; I'll warrant he'll put us in a way.

Second S. There's Hotman, too. Did you hear how he fired, when our tyrants ran away, and left us to the Indians?

First S. Did I? Ay. Hotman, in my opinion, has as much spirit as Aboan. Here they are, coming together. Let us draw back a little. See how earnestly they talk—don't let us interrupt them.

[They retire to the back of the stage.

Enter HOTMAN and ABOAN.

Abo. This is his scheme; I left him but this moment.

Hot. I like it not. A glorious feat, indeed, For souls of fire, provoked by burning wrongs, To seize a ship by night, and steal away. Our useless weapons slumbering in the sheath. Confusion! and our suff'rings unrevenged!

Abo. Indeed, I thought of more. But is not freedom,

Without the chance of contest, worth acceptance?

Hot. I know not—to those frigid clods, perhaps; To our pale lords, who only dare to strike Whom others bind, it might—but not to me.

By all my wrongs, I thirst for more than freedom.

Abo. Thy noble ardour might e'en warm the dead!

We'll try once more its power on Oroonoko.

But soft—here are our friends, and, as I think, At distance comes the prince—it must be he.

Welcome, my friends, the prince is of your party,

[Turning to the Slaves.

And has engaged to make your cause his own. See where he comes.

Enter OROONOKO.

Here are our friends, my lord, Who ask but your concurrence to be free.

Oro. If to all these I am the means of freedom, 'Tis well I was a slave—'tis well that here I've learn'd the wrongs you suffer.

ACT, DRAMA.—NO. XXVIII.

Hot. 'Tis better not to be, than thus to suffer.

Abo. To die at once, than leave our wretched offspring

Heirs of the chains and scourges that—

Oro. No more.

My friend here tells me, you have well resolved

[To the Slaves.

To make one glorious effort to be free—

To risk your lives, and all the threefold woes

That would attend our unsuccessful contest.

[The Slaves look on each other, and answer nothing.

Hot. [Clamorously.] All, all we risk for freedom—and revenge!

[OROONOKO turns quick, and looks earnestly at HOTMAN.

Oro. [After a pause.] 'Tis well—'tis great!

[Turning to the rest.] But I have found the means

To gain our purpose by a safer way.

Hot. [Interrupting.] A safer! Let him talk of safer ways,

Who holds his life more dear than great revenge.

[OROONOKO turns hastily again, and looks at HOTMAN, fixing his eyes some time upon him, without speaking; HOTMAN at length shows some signs of confusion—OROONOKO then turns and speaks to ABOAN.

Oro. Is this the man whose zeal you praised so much?

Abo. It is.

Hot. [More confused.] They whisper—yes, I am suspected—

I must talk louder still. [Aside.

Oro. [Still eyeing HOTMAN.] And is he trusted with the whole design?

Abo. He is, my lord.

Oro. The marks of guilt are on him.

Abo. Not so, my lord.

Oro. Whence his confusion, then, to meet my eye?

Abo. Whence his confusion, now, suppose him false?

Oro. Whence! From the consciousness of falsehood here,

That which makes villains start at their own shadow, That made him fear my eye, though it could reach No farther than the covering of his heart.

E'en now he trembles, and a sickly hue Steals on his cheeks.

Abo. It does—yet try him farther.

Oro. To try him, now he's trusted, boots us nothing.

Abo. Do it, if only to restore our hope, Or end the torments of suspense.

Oro. I will.

Your zeal, my friend, I honour; but you know— [To HOTMAN.

Hot. That nobler hopes have set my soul on fire, Than just to steal a ship, and run away— If I consent to this, ye gods!

[He affects to speak this loudly, but his voice falters through his fear.

Oro. If you do not consent, you will not sure—

Hot. I will not what?—Who is there that suspects me?

[In a great confusion.—OROONOKO looks at ABOAN, then turns again to HOTMAN.

Oro. Suspects, my friend!—Of what should we suspect you?

Abo. [Hastily.] By heav'n? if I suspected any present

Of a perfidious view to blast our hopes,
This dagger here at once should make him faithful.

[HOTMAN, staring, attempts to speak, but is overcome by his confusion and terror.]

Oro. [To ABOAN.] What think you now?

Abo. By all my fears, a coward and a traitor.

Oro. He'll certainly betray us.

Abo. That he shall not;

For what I swore, I'll do.

Oro. What wilt thou do?

Abo. I'll stab his mouth before you; stab him here,

And then let him inform.

[Going to stab HOTMAN, OROONOKO holds him—HOTMAN, who keeps his eye upon them, perceives it with extreme confusion, and, after some irresolute gestures, steals off unperceived.]

Oro. Thou art not mad—

Abo. I would secure ourselves.

Oro. It shall not be this way,—it cannot be;
To murder him, is to alarm the rest.

[Turns about, and misses HOTMAN.]

What, is he gone?

Abo. [To the Slaves.] Is Hotman gone?

First S. Hotman, my lord, is gone: but doubt him not.

[To OROONOKO.]

The stern inquiring look of majesty
(We feel its pow'r) will strike the mind with awe;
He dared to differ, sir; but, when opposed,
He felt confused; the difference of his state—

Oro. Why, be it so.

My fellow-sufferers and worthy friends,

To-morrow, early as the breaking day,

We rendezvous behind the citron-grove;

Till then, farewell. [Exeunt Slaves.]

Aboan!

Abo. My lord.

Oro. 'Twas better not to trust them with our fears,

Yet let them meet at a more early time;

Within this hour—and then, though Hotman's false,

We may succeed before we are betray'd.

Abo. We may—I'll after them and do it.

[Exeunt.]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—The Governor's House.

Enter HOTMAN and the Lieutenant-Governor.

Gov. To seize the ship, say you?

Hot. E'en so, my lord.

Gov. At what hour?

Hot. The hour I cannot tell.

Gov. Were you not trusted, then?

Hot. I was, my lord; but he they call the prince—

Gov. What, Oronoko?

Hot. The same, my lord; a bloody-minded fellow;—

He and another took it in their heads
To think I was not quite the rogue I seem'd,
And, if I had not left them, would have stabb'd me.

Gov. Indeed!—Well, we must be beforehand with them.

Your honest service to the government
Shall be rewarded with your liberty. [Pauses.]
Let's see—

Hot. [Aside.] Could I have work'd them up to farther mischief,

My wages had been more.

[Retiring.]

Gov. Here, Hotman—hark ye,

Let Captain Driver come to me this moment.

[Exit HOTMAN.]

Why, this is just the thing I would have wish'd.

The laws now take this Oronoko off,

And leave Imoinda mine—the ship secur'd,

His party will desert him, and with ease

I then may seize my prey.

Enter Captain DRIVER.

Captain, what hands have you on board to-night?

Capt. D. Not many, but enough to do the business. I learn'd it from the slave I met below.

Gov. I sent him, sir.

Capt. D. I know it, Governor, and have sent him with orders that the ship should weigh, and stand from shore: 'tis doing, sir, ere now.

Gov. Your crew, then, captain, are not all on board?

Capt. D. No, no; I'll send them orders to be ready; They'll do for your Prince Oronoko, yet.

Gov. Well, Captain, I'll expect you; I shall order

All the militia under arms directly,

Here on the platform.

Capt. D. You need not fear me. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—The Citron Grove—Moonlight.

Enter OROONOKO, ABOAN, IMOINDA, Slaves, Women, and Children, following.

Oro. Come on, my friends! see, where the rising moon

Now shines upon our purpose! Let our march
At once be swift and silent, like her course;
The ship surprised, we triumph without conflict,
Nor mark our way to liberty with blood.

Enter First Slave, as OROONOKO is leading the others out.

First S. [Prostrating himself before OROONOKO.]

My lord, my prince—

Oro. What wouldst thou say?—Be brief.

First S. The villain Hotman—

Abo. Ah!

Oro. Well, what of him?—Take courage—what of him?

First S. My lord, I fear he has betray'd us.

Oro. Why?

First S. From our last rendezvous, my lord, o'en now

I watch'd him to the Governor's; but there
He stay'd not long; I saw, as he came out,
He spoke to Captain Driver, and from him
I watch'd him still; he hastened to the ship,
Which, now unmoor'd, lies farther from the shore;
The Captain and his crew are up in arms,
All the militia out, the place alarm'd:
They'll soon be here.

Oro. Why, we must meet them, then; the iron hand

Of stern necessity is now upon us;

And from the rack she drives us to our swords.

[Draws.]

The women and the children fall behind,

Unfit for dangers, such as now approach us.
What will become of them!

[“*ABOAN*, who, during this scene, expresses the utmost anguish of mind, by his gestures and deportment, at length comes forward, and, prostrating himself before *OROONOKO*, takes his foot, and sets it upon his head.”

“*Oro*. Forbear—we’re born to error; let me raise thee,—

I know thee faithful, therefore blame thee not.”

Abo. O, my dear lord! my heart drops blood to think

My hasty, eager, fond credulity
Should let that slave’s false seeming thus undo us.

Oro. Name it no more.

Abo. ‘Tis lost—‘tis ruin’d—and by me! but this—

[*He suddenly draws a dagger, and offers to stab himself—OROONOKO lays hold of his hand.*

Oro. Hold! now you wrong my design: thus far
Thou’st only err’d; but to desert me now

[*Wresting the dagger from him.*

Would be a crime indeed—I need thy help.

[*Turning to IMOINDA.*

Imoinda, you must not expose yourself:

Retire, my love; I almost fear for you.

Imo. I fear no danger: life, or death, I will
Enjoy with you.

First S. [*Alarmed.*] They come! they come! I
see them; they’re upon us.

Oro. [*Putting himself before IMOINDA.*] My person
is your guard.

Enter the Lieutenant-Governor, with HOTMAN and his Rabble.—Captain STANMORE and his Men.

Abo. There is the villain that betray’d our cause,
His life is due to me. [*Advancing.*

Oro. Hold you; and you who come against us,
hold!

I charge you in the general good to all,
“And wish I could command you, to prevent
The bloody havoc of the murd’ring sword!”
I would not urge destruction uncompell’d;
But, if you follow fate, you find it here.
Who first advances—

Enter Captain DRIVER, with his Crew.

Capt. D. Here, here, here they are, Governor:—
What, seize upon my ship!

Come, boys, fall on. [*Advancing first.*

Oro. [*Stabbing him.*] Thou art fall’n, indeed.

[*Captain DRIVER falls in the arms of two Sailors.*
Thy own blood be upon thee!

Oro. Rest it there.

He did deserve his death. Take him away.

[*They remove the body.*

You see, sir, and those mistaken men
Must be our witnesses, we do not come
As enemies, and thirsting for your blood.

If we desir’d your ruin, the revenge
Of our companion’s death had push’d it on.
But that we overlook, in a regard
To common safety and the public good.

Oro. Regard that public good: draw off your
men

And leave us to our fortune: we’re resolv’d.

Gov. Resolv’d on what?—Your resolutions

Are broken, overturn’d, prevented, lost:

What fortune now can you raise out of them?

Nay, grant we should draw off, what can you do?

Where can you move?—What more can you resolve

Unless it be to throw yourselves away?

Famine must eat you up, if you go on.

You see, our numbers could with ease compel

What we request:—and what do we request?

Only to save yourselves.

[*The Women, with their Children, gathering about the Men.*

Oro. I’ll hear no more!

Gov. To those poor wretches who have been
seduced

And led away, to all and ev’ry one,

We offer a full pardon.

Oro. Then, fall on! [*Preparing to engage.*

Gov. Lay hold upon’t, before it be too late;

Pardon and mercy.

[*The Men leave OROONOKO, and fall upon their faces, crying out for pardon.*

Slaves. Pardon! Mercy! Pardon!

Oro. Let them go, all. Now, Governor, I see,

I own, the folly of my enterprise,

The rashness of this action; and must blush,

Quite through this veil of night, a whitely shame,

To think I could design to make those free,

Who were by nature slaves; wretches, design’d

To be their masters’ dogs, and lick their feet.

We were too few before for victory.

[*Exeunt all Slaves.*

We’re still enow to die. [*To IMOINDA and ABOAN,*

Enter BLANDFORD.

Gov. Live, royal sir,—

Live, and be happy long, on your own terms;

Only consent to yield, and you shall have

What terms you can propose, for you and yours,

Oro. Consent to yield! Shall I betray myself?

Bla. I’m glad you have proceeded by fair means.

[*To the Governor.*

I came to be a mediator.

Gov. Try what you can work upon him.

Oro. Are you come against me, too?

Bla. Is this to come against you?

[*Crossing to OROONOKO, and offering him his sword.*

Unarm’d to put myself into your hands?

I come, I hope, to serve you.

Oro. You have serv’d me;

I thank you for’t; and I am pleas’d to think

You were my friend, while I had need of one:

But now ’tis past:—this farewell, and begone.

[*Embraces him.*

Bla. It is not pass’d, and I must serve you still,

I would make up these breaches, which the sword

Will widen more, and close us all in love.

Oro. I know what I have done, and I should be

A child, to think they ever can forgive.—

Forgive! Were there but that, I would not live

To be forgiven:—Is there a power on earth

That I can ever need forgiveness from?

Bla. You shall not need it.

Oro. No, I will not need it.

Bla. You see, he offers you your own conditions,

For you and yours.

Oro. Must I capitulate?

Precariously compound, on stinted terms,

To save my life?

Bla. Sir, he imposes none.

“You make them for your own security.

If your great heart cannot descend to treat,

In adverse fortune, with an enemy,

Yet, sure, your honour’s safe, you may accept

Offers of peace and safety from a friend!

"Gov. He will rely on what you say to him :

[To BLANDFORD.

Offer him what you can, I will confirm

And make all good. Be you my pledge of trust.

"Bla. I'll answer, with my life, for all he says.

Gov. Ay, do, and pay the forfeit, if you please.

[Aside."

Bla. Consider, sir, can you consent to throw

That blessing from you, you so hardly found,

[Points to IMOINDA.

And so much valued once?

Oro. Imoinda, oh!

"'Tis she that holds me on this argument

Of tedious life : I could resolve it soon,

Were this cursed being only in debate.

But my Imoinda struggles in my soul,—

She makes a coward of me, I confess.

I am afraid to part with her in death ;

And more afraid of life, to lose her here.

Bla. "This way, you must lose her;" think upon

The weakness of her sex, made yet more weak

With her condition, requiring rest

And soft indulging ease, to nurse your hopes

And make you a glad father.

Oro. There, I feel

A father's fondness and a husband's love.

They seize upon my heart, strain all its strings

To pull me to them from my stern resolve.

Husband and father! all the melting art

Of eloquence lives in those soft'ning names.

"Methinks I see the babe, with infant hands,

Pleading for life, and begging to be born.

Shall I forbid his birth? deny him life?

The heavenly comforts of all-cheering light?

These are the calls of Nature, that call loud,

They will be heard, and conquer in their cause."

He must not be a man who can resist them.

No, my Imoinda! I will venture all

To save thee, and that little innocent :

The world may be a better friend to him

Than I have found it. Now I yield myself :

[Gives up his sword.

The conflict's pass'd, and we are in your hands.

[The Sailors gather about OROOKO and ABOAN, and seize them.

Gov. So you shall find you are.—Dispose of them

As I commanded you.

Bla. Good Heav'n forbid! You cannot mean—

Gov. This is not your concern.

[To BLANDFORD, who goes hastily to STANMORE.

Bla. For Heaven's sake, use your interest with him, Stanmore!

Gov. I must take care of you. [To IMOINDA.

Imo. I'm at the end

Of all my care : here will I die with him!

[Holding OROOKO.

Oro. You shall not force her from me.

[He holds her.

Gov. Then I must [They force her from him.

Try other means, and conquer force by force :

Break—cut off his hold! Bring her away!

Sta. Dear Governor, consider what you do!

Imo. I do not ask to live—kill me but here!

Gov. Away!

Oro. Oh, bloody dogs! Inhuman murderers!

[IMOINDA is forced out by the Governor.—Exit OROOKO and ABOAN, guarded.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—Governor's House.

Enter the Lieutenant-Governor, with BLANDFORD and STANMORE.

Bla. Have you no reverence of future fame?
No awe upon your actions, from the tongues,
The censoring tongues of men, that will be free?
If you confess humanity, believe
There is a God, to punish or reward
Our doings here, do not provoke your fate.

Gov. Tell me no more of fame and breach of faith,—

The public good requires that he should die.

Sta. The public good must totter when the base
Is fraud, and craft, and prostituted honour.

Bla. When guilt is sanctified by bold pretences

That wrong is in its consequences right,

The bond that holds society together

Is broken, rule and order at an end,

And anarchy must desolate the world.

Gov. The planters hold not these opinions, sir;

They think it well that bloodshed was prevented

By any means, and now are clamorous

To have this slave cut off.

Bla. We are not, sure, so wretched, to have these.

The rabble, judge for us; the changing crowd,

The arbitrary guard of fortune's power

Who wait to catch the sentence of her frowns,

And hurry all to ruin she condemns.

Sta. So far from farther wrongs, that 'tis a shame

He should be where he is. Good Governor,

Order his liberty; he yielded up

Himself, his all.

Bla. He yielded on your word;

And I am made the cautionary pledge,

The gage and hostage of your keeping it.

Remember, sir, he yielded on your word;

Your word!—Which honest men will think should be.

The last resort of truth, and trust on earth,

You cannot sure persist in such an act,

And be sedately cruel and perfidious.

Sta. Besides, the wretch has now no longer power

Of doing harm, were he disposed to use it.

Bla. But he is not disposed.

Sta. We'll be his sureties, sir.

Bla. Yes, we will answer for him now, my friend;

The Governor, I know, will thank us.

Gov. Well, you will have it so; do what you please—just what you will with him; I give you leave.

[Exit.

Bla. We thank you, sir; this way, pray come with me.

[Exeunt.

SCENE II.—OROOKO discovered upon his back, his legs and arms stretched out, and chained to the ground.

Enter BLANDFORD and STANMORE.

Bla. O miserable sight! help,
Assist me to free him from his chains.

[They help him up, and bring him forward, looking down.

Most injured prince! how shall we clear ourselves?

Sta. We are not guilty of your injuries,

No way consenting to them ; but abhor,
Abominate, and loathe this cruelty.

Oro. If you would have me think you are not all
Confederates, all accessory to
The base injustice of your Governor ;
If you would have me live, as you appear
Concern'd for me ; if you would have me live
To thank and bless you, there is yet a way
To tie me ever to your honest love ;
Bring my Imoinda to me ; give me her,
To charm my sorrows, and, if possible,
I'll sit down with my wrongs, never to rise
Against my fate, or think of vengeance more.

Bla. Be satisfied—you may depend upon us ;
We'll bring her safe to you, and suddenly.
In the meantime

Endeavour to forget, sir, and forgive ;
And hope a better fortune.

[*Exeunt BLANDFORD and STANMORE.*]

Oro. Forget ! forgive ! I must indeed forget,
When I forgive ; but, while I am a man,
In flesh, that bears the living marks of shame,
The print of his dishonourable chains,
I never can forgive this Governor,
This villain.

What shall I do ? If I declare myself,
I know him, he will creep behind his guard
Of followers, and brave me in his fears ;
“ Else, lion-like, with my devouring rage,
I would rush on him, fasten on his throat,
Tear a wide passage to his treacherous heart,
And that way lay him open to the world.”

[*Pausing.*]

If I should turn his Christian arts on him,
Promise him, speak him fair, flatter, and creep
With fawning steps to get within his faith,
I could betray him then, as he has me.
But, am I sure by that to right myself ?
Lying's a certain mark of cowardice ;
And, when the tongue forgets its honesty,
The heart and hand may drop their functions too,
And nothing worthy be resolved or done.
Honour should be concerned in honour's cause.
Let me but find out
An honest remedy, I have the hand,
A ministering hand, that will apply it home. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—*The Governor's House.*

Enter the Lieutenant-Governor, BLANDFORD, and STANMORE.

Gov. [*Impatiently.*] Well, what's the matter now ?

Bla. I'm sorry we intrude, sir ; but our business
Will quickly be dispatch'd ; we come to seek
Clemene, sir ; we've promised Oroonoko
To bring her to him.

Gov. You do very well ; 'tis kindly done of you ;
Even carry her to him with all my heart.

Sta. You must tell us where she is.

Gov. I tell you ! why, don't you know ?

Bla. Your servant says she's in the house.

Gov. No, no ; I brought her home at first, in-
deed ; but I thought it would not look well to keep
her here ; I removed her in the hurry, only to take
care of her. What ! she belongs to you, I have
nothing to do with her !

Sta. But where is she now, sir ?

Gov. Why, faith ! I can't say certainly ; you'll
hear of her at Parham-house, I suppose ; there or
thereabouts : I think I sent her there.

Bla. [*Aside.*] I'll have an eye on him.

[*Exeunt BLANDFORD and STANMORE.*]

Gov. I have lied myself into a little time,
And must employ it ; they'll be here again ;
But I must be before them.

[*Going out, he meets IMOINDA, and seizes her.*]
Are you come ?

I'll court no longer for a happiness
That is in my own keeping : you may still
Refuse to grant, so I have power to take,—
The man that asks, deserves to be denied.

Enter BLANDFORD, behind him.

Imo. He does, indeed, that asks unworthily.

Bla. You hear her, sir ; that asks unworthily.

Gov. You are no judge.

Bla. I am, of my own slave.

Gov. Begone, and leave us.

Bla. When you let her go.

Gov. To fasten upon you.

Imo. Help ! murder ! help !

[*Exit.*]

Gov. She shall not 'scape me so. I've gone too
far,

Not to go farther. Curse on my delay !

But yet she is, and shall be, in my pow'r. [*Exit.*]

Bla. Nay, then it is the war of honesty ;
I know you, and will save you from yourself.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.

Enter OROONOKO.

Oro. To honour bound ! and yet a slave to love !
I am distracted by their rival powers,
And both will be obey'd. O, great revenge !
Thou raiser and restorer of fallen fame !
Let me not be unworthy of thy aid,
For stopping in thy course : I still am thine,
But can't forget I am Imoinda's, too.
She calls me from my wrongs, to rescue her.
No man condemn me, who has never felt
A woman's power, or tried the force of love :
Love, love will be
My first ambition, and my fame the next.

Enter ABOAN, bloody.

Aboan !

My ever faithful friend !

Abo. I have no name

That can distinguish me from the vile earth
To which I'm going : a poor abject worm,
That crawl'd a while upon the bustling world,
And now am trampled to my dust again.

Oro. I see thee gash'd and mangled.

Abo. Spare my shame,

To tell how they have used me : but believe
The hangman's hand would have been merciful.
Do not you scorn me, sir, to think I can
Intend to live under this infamy.

I do not come for pity, but for pardon.

Oro. For pardon ! wound me not with keener
anguish

Than yet I feel, by thinking thou canst need it :
Thou'st spent an honourable life with me ;
The earliest servant of my rising fame.

Abo. And would attend it with my latest care :
My life was yours, and so shall be my death.
You must not live ; alas ! you must not live :
Bending and sinking, I have dragg'd my steps
Thus far, to tell you that you cannot live ;
To warn you of those ignominious wrongs,
Whips, rods, and all the instruments of death,

Which I have felt, and are prepar'd for you.
This was the duty that I had to pay.

'Tis done, and now I beg to be discharg'd.

Oro. What shall I do for thee?

Abo. My body tires,

And will not bear me off to liberty :

I shall again be taken, made a slave.

A sword, a dagger, yet would rescue me.

I have not strength to go to find out death ;

You must direct him to me.

Oro. Here he is.

[Gives him a dagger.]

The only present I can make thee now :

And, next the honourable means of life,

I would bestow the honest means of death.

Abo. I cannot stay to thank you. Only this,

The villain, Hotman, as I stagger'd hither,
Arm'd with a sword, I met. I wrench'd it from him,

Collecting all my strength ; and in his heart,
Stain'd to the hilt, I left it.

O, my dear honour'd master, if there is

A being after this, I shall be yours

In the next world : your faithful slave again.

This is to try.

[Stabs himself.]

I will not say farewell ;

For you must follow me.

[Dies.]

Oro. In life and death,

The guardian of my honour ! Follow thee !

" I should have gone before thee : then, perhaps,
Thy fate had been prevented.

Why, why, you gods ! why am I so accus'd,
That it must be a reason of your wrath "

A guilt, a crime sufficient to the fate

Of any one, but to belong to me ?

My friend has found it, and my wife will soon :

My wife ! the very fear's too much for life, —
I can't support it. Where ? — Imoinda ! Oh !

[Going out, she meets him, running into his arms.]

" Thou bosom softness ! down of all my cares !
Thou art disorder'd, pale, and out of breath ! "

If fate pursues thee, find a shelter here.

What is it thou wouldst tell me ?

Imo. 'Tis in vain to call him villain.

Oro. Call him governor ; is it not so ?

Imo. There's not another, sure, so great.

" Oro. Villain's the common name of mankind
here,

But his most properly." What ! what of him ?

" I fear to be resolv'd, and must inquire."

He had thee in his power ?

Imo. I blush to think it.

Oro. Blush ! to think what ?

Imo. That I was in his power.

Oro. He could not use it ?

Imo. What can't such men do ?

Oro. But did he, durst he ?

Imo. What he could he dared.

Oro. His own gods damn him, then ! for ours
have none,

No punishment for such unheard-of crime.

Imo. This monster, cunning in his flatteries,

When he had wearied all his useless arts,

Leap'd out, fierce as a beast of prey, to seize me.

I trembled, feared.

Oro. I fear and tremble now.

What could preserve thee ? — What deliver thee ?

Imo. That worthy man, you used to call your friend.

Oro. Blandford ?

Imo. Came in, and saved me from his rage.

Oro. He was a friend, indeed, to rescue thee !

And, for his sake, I'll think it possible

A Christian may be yet an honest man.

Imo. O, did you know what I have struggled
through,

To save me yours, sure you would promise me
Never to see me forced from you again.

Oro. To promise thee ! O ! do I need to promise !
But there is now no farther use of words.

Death is security for all our fears.

[Shows ABOAN'S body on the floor.]

Imo. Aboan !

Oro. Mangled and torn, resolv'd to give me time
To fit myself for what I must expect,

Groan'd out a warning to me, and expir'd.

Imo. For what you must expect ?

Oro. Would that were all !

Imo. What ! to be butcher'd thus —

Oro. Just as thou seest.

Imo. By barb'rous hands, to fall at last their
prey.

Oro. I have run the race with honour, shall I now
Lag, and be overtaken at the goal ?

Imo. No.

Oro. I must look back to thee.

[Tenderly.]

Imo. You shall not need.

I'm always present to your purpose ; say,

Which way you would dispose me ?

Oro. Have a care.

Thou'rt on a precipice, and dost not see

Whether that question leads thee.

I cannot as I would dispose thee ;

And, as I ought, I dare not. Oh, Imoinda !

Imo. Alas, that sigh ! Why do you tremble so ?

Nay, then, 'tis bad, indeed, if you can weep.

Oro. My heart runs over ; if my gushing eyes

Betray a weakness which they never knew,

Believe, thou, only thou, couldst cause these tears.

" The gods themselves conspire with faithless men
To our destruction.

" Imo. Heaven and earth our foes !

If Heaven could be appeased, these cruel men

Are not to be entreated or believed ;

Oh, think on that, and be no more deceived.

" Oro. But we were born to suffer.

" Imo. Suffer, both ? —

Both die, and so prevent them.

" Oro. By thy death !

Oh, let me hunt my travelled thoughts again, —

Range the wild waste of desolate despair !

Start any hope ! Alas, I lose myself !

'Tis pathless, dark, and barren, all to me !

Thou art my only guide — my light of life,

And thou art leaving me. Send out thy beams

Upon the wing ; let them fly all around, —

Discover every way ; is there a dawn,

A glimmering of comfort ? The great God,

That rises on the world must shine on us.

" Imo. And see us set before him.

" Oro. Thou bespeak'st,

And goest before me.

" Imo. So I would in love, —

In the dear, unsuspected part of life, —

In death, for love. Alas ! what hope's for me ?

I was preserved but to acquit myself —

I beg to die with you.

" Oro. Which is the way ?

" Imo. The god of love is blind, and cannot find
it ;

But, quick, make haste ! our enemies have eyes

To find us out, and show us the worst way

Of parting : think on them !

" Oro. Why dost thou wake me ?

" Imo. Oh, no more of love !

For, if I listen to you, I shall quite

Forget my dangers, and desire to live.
I can't live yours.

Oro. "There all the stings of death
Are shot into my heart." [*Takes up the dagger.*]

What shall I do?

Imo. This dagger will instruct you. [*Gives it him.*]

Oro. Ha! this dagger,
Like Fate, appoints me to the horrid deed.

Imo. Strike, strike it home, and bravely save us
both!

There is no other safety.

Oro. It must be!

But, first, a dying kiss—

This last embrace—

And now —

Imo. I'm ready.

Oro. Oh, where shall I strike?

Is there the smallest grain of that lov'd body,
That is not dearer to me than mine eyes,
My bosom'd heart, and all the life-blood there?
Bid me cut off these limbs, hew off these hands,
Dig out these eyes, though I would keep them last
To gaze upon thee: but, to murder thee,—
The joy and charm of ev'ry ravish'd sense,—
My wife! Forbid it, Nature!

Imo. 'Tis your wife

Who, on her knees, conjures you. Oh, in time,
Prevent those mischiefs that are falling on us.

You may be hurried to a shameful death,

And I, too, dragged to the vile Governor;

Then I may cry in vain. When you are gone,

Where shall I find a friend again to save me?

Oro. "It will be so. 'Thou unexampled virtue!
Thy resolution has recovered mine;"

And now prepare thee.

Imo. Thus, with open arms,

I welcome you, and death.

[*He drops his dagger as he looks on her, and
throws himself on the ground.*]

Oro. I cannot bear it!

Oh, let me dash against the rock of fate,

"Dig up this earth—tear, tear her bowels out,

To make a grave, deep as the centre down,

To swallow wide, and bury us together!

It will not be. O; then some pitying god

(If there be one a friend to innocence)

Find yet a way to lay her beauties down

Gently in death, and save me from her blood,

"Imo. O, rise; 'tis more than death to see you
thus.

I'll ease your love, and do the deed myself.

"[*She takes up the dagger—he rises in haste to
take it from her.*]

"Oro. Oh, hold! I charge thee, hold!

"Imo. Though, I must own,

It would be nobler for us both, from you."

Oro. Oh, for a whirlwind's wing to hurry us

To yonder cliff, which frowns upon the flood;

That, in embraces lock'd, we might plunge in,

And perish thus in one another's arms!

[*Distant noise without.*]

Imo. Alas! what is that I hear?

Oro. I see them coming.

They shall not overtake us. This last—
And now, farewell!

"Imo. Farewell! Farewell, for ever!

"Oro. I'll turn my face away, and do it so."

Now, are you ready?

Imo. Now. "But do not grudge me

The pleasure, in my death, of a last look;"

Pray, look upon me!—Now I'm satisfied.

Oro. So Fate must be, by this.

[*Going to stab her, he stops short—she lays her
hand on his, in order to give the blow.*]

Imo. "Nay, then, I must assist you."

Thus, thus 'tis finish'd, and I bless my fate,

That, where I liv'd, I die, in these lov'd arms. [*Stabs herself.*]

[*Dies.*]

Oro. She's gone. And now all's at end with me.

Soft, lay her down; oh, we will part no more!

[*Throws himself by her.*]

"But let me pay tribute of my grief

A few sad tears to thy loved memory,

And then I follow— [*Weeps over her.*]

But I stay too long." [*A noise again.*]

The noise comes nearer. Hold; before I go,

There's something would be done. It shall be so,

And then, Imoinda, I'll come all to thee. [*Rises.*]

Enter BLANDFORD and his Party, before the Governor and his Party; swords drawn on both sides.

Gov. You strive in vain to save him; he shall die.

Bla. Not while we can defend him with our lives.

Gov. Where is he?

Oro. Here's the wretch whom you would have.

"Put up your swords, and let not civil broils

Engage you in the cursed cause of one

Who cannot live, and now entreats to die.

This object will convince you.

Bla. 'Tis his wife! [*They gather about the body.*]

Alas! there was no other remedy.

Gov. Who did the bloody deed?

Oro. The deed was mine;

Bloody I know it is, and I expect

Your laws should tell me so. Thus, self-condemn'd,

I do resign myself into your hands,

The hands of justice—but I hold the sword—

For you—and for myself.

[*Stabs the Governor and himself, then throws
himself by IMOINDA'S body.*]

Oro. 'Tis as it should be now; I have sent his
ghost

To be a witness of that happiness

In the next world which he denied us here. [*Dies.*]

"Bla. I hope there is a place of happiness

In the next world for such exalted virtue.

Pagan or unbeliever, yet he lived

To all he knew; and, if he went astray,

There's mercy still above to set him right,

But Christians, guided by the heavenly ray,

Have no excuse if they mistake their way."

C A T O.

A TRAGEDY.

BY JOSEPH ADDISON.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

CATO.
LUCIUS.
PORCIUS.
SEMPRONIUS.
MARCUS.
DECIVS.
JUBA.
SYPHAX.
JUNIUS.
TITUS.
MARCIA.
LUCIA.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Hall in the Palace.

Enter PORCIUS and MARCUS.

Por. The dawn is overcast, the morning lowers,
And heavily in clouds brings on the day.
The great, the important day, big with the fate
Of Cato and of Rome. Our father's death
Would fill up all the guilt of civil war,
And close the scene of blood. Already Cæsar
Has ravag'd more than half the globe, and sees
Mankind grown thin by his destructive sword:
Should he go further, numbers would be wanting
To form new battles, and support his crimes.
Ye gods, what havoc does ambition make
Among your works!

Mar. Thy steady temper, Porcius,
Can look on guilt, rebellion, fraud, and Cæsar,
In the calm lights of mild philosophy:
I'm tortur'd, even to madness; when I think
On the proud victor: every time he's named,
Pharsalia rises to my view; I see
The insulting tyrant prancing o'er the field
Strow'd with Rome's citizens, and drench'd in
slaughter.
O, Porcius, is there not some chosen curse,

Some hidden thunder in the stores of heaven,
Red with uncommon wrath, to blast the man
Who owes his greatness to his country's ruin!

Por. Believe me, Marcus, 'tis an impious great-
ness,

And mix'd with too much horror to be envied.
How does the lustre of our father's actions,
Through the dark cloud of ills that cover him,
Break out, and burn with more triumphant bright-
ness!

His suff'rings shine, and spread a glory round him:
Greatly unfortunate, he fights the cause
Of honour, virtue, liberty, and Rome.

Mar. Who knows not this? But what can Cato do
Against a world, a base, degenerate world,
That courts the yoke, and bows the neck to Cæsar?
Pent up in Utica, he vainly forms
A poor epitome of Roman greatness,
And, cover'd with Numidian guards, directs
A feeble army, and an empty senate,
Remnants of mighty battles fought in vain.
By heavens, such virtues, join'd with such success,
Distract my very soul: our father's fortune
Would almost tempt us to renounce his precepts.

Por. Remember what our father oft has told us:
The ways of Heaven are dark and intricate:
Our understanding traces them in vain;
Lost and bewild'ring in the fruitless search,
Nor sees with how much art the windings run,
Nor where the regular confusion ends.

Mar. These are suggestions of a mind at ease:
O, Porcius, didst thou taste but half the griefs
That wring my soul, thou could'st not talk thus
calmly.

Passion unquiet, and successful love,
Plant daggers in my heart, and aggravate
My other griefs: Were but my Lucia kind—

Por. Thou seest not that thy brother is thy rival:
But I must hide it; for I know thy temper. [*Aside.*]
Now, Marcus, now thy virtue's on the proof:
Put forth thy utmost strength, work every nerve,
And call up all thy father in thy soul:
To quell the tyrant love, and guard thy heart.
On this weak side, where most our nature fails,
Would be a conquest worthy Cato's son.

Mar. Alas, the counsel which I cannot take,
Instead of healing, but upbraids my weakness.

Love is not to be reason'd down, or lost
In high ambition, and a thirst of greatness;
'Tis second life, that grows into the soul,
Warms every vein, and beats in every pulse:
I feel it here: my resolution melts—

Par. Behold young Juba, the Numidian Prince:
He loves our sister Marcia, greatly loves her;
But still the smother'd fondness burns within him:
The sense of honour and desire of fame
Drive the big passion back into his heart.—
What! shall an African, shall Juba's heir,
Reproach great Cato's son, and show the world
A virtue wanting in a Roman soul?

Mar. No more, no more! your words leave stings
behind 'em.

When'er did Juba, or did Porcius, show
A virtue that has cast me at a distance,
And thrown me out in the pursuits of honour?

Por. O, Marcus, did I know the way to ease
Thy troubled heart, and mitigate thy pains,
Believe me, I could freely die to do it.

Mar. Thou best of brothers, and thou best of
friends!

Pardon a weak distemper'd soul, that swells
With sudden gusts, and sinks as soon in calms,
The sport of passions.—But, Sempronius comes:
He must not find this softness hanging on me.

[*Exit.*—*PORTIUS retires back.*]

Enter SEMPRONIUS.

Sem. Conspiracies no sooner should be form'd
Than executed.—[*Aside.*—What means Porcius
here?

I like not that cold youth. I must dissemble,
And speak a language foreign to my heart.—
Good morrow, Porcius! [Porcius comes forward.]

Let us once embrace,

Once more embrace, whilst yet we both are free:
To-morrow, should we thus express our friendship,
Each might receive a slave into his arms:
This sun, perhaps, this morning's sun's the last
That e'er shall rise on Roman liberty.

Por. My father has this morning call'd together
His little Roman senate—

The leavings of Pharsalia—to consult
If yet he can oppose the mighty torrent
That bears down Rome and all her gods before it—
Or must, at length, give up the world to Cæsar.

Sem. Not all the pomp and majesty of Rome
Can raise her senate more than Cato's presence;
His virtues render her assembly awful,
They strike with something like religious fear,
And make even Cæsar tremble at the head
Of armies flush'd with conquest. O, my Porcius,
Could I but call that wondrous man my father,
Would but thy sister Marcia be propitious
To thy friend's vows, I might be bless'd indeed.

Por. Alas! Sempronius, would'st thou talk of
love

To Marcia, whilst her father's life's in danger?
Thou might'st as well court the pale trembling
vestal,

When she beholds the holy flame expiring.

Sem. The more I see the wonders of thy race,
The more I'm charm'd;—Thou must take heed, my
Porcius;

The world has all its eyes on Cato's son:
Thy father's merit sets thee up to view,
And shows thee in the fairest point of light,
To make thy virtues or thy faults conspicuous.

Por. Well dost thou seem to check my lingering
here

On this important hour.—I'll straight away,
To animate the soldier's drooping courage
With love of freedom, and contempt of life,
And try to rouse up all that's Roman in 'em.
'Tis not in mortals to command success;
But we'll do more, Sempronius, we'll deserve it.

[*Exit.*

Sem. Curse on the stripling! How he apes his
sire,

Ambitiously sententious!—But I wonder,
Old Syphax comes not. His Numidian genius
Is well dispos'd to mischief—

Cato has us'd me ill: he has refus'd
His daughter Marcia to my ardent vows:
Besides, his baffled arms and ruin'd cause
Are bars to my ambition. Cæsar's favour,
That showers down greatness on his friends, will
raise me

To Rome's first honours. If I give up Cato,
I claim in my reward his captive daughter.—
Syphax comes.

Enter SYPHAX.

Syph. Sempronius, all is ready;
I've sounded my Numidians, man by man,
And find them ripe for a revolt: they all
Complain aloud of Cato's discipline,
And wait but the command to change their master.

Sem. Believe me, Syphax, there's no time to
waste;

Even whilst we speak our conqueror comes on,
And gathers ground upon us every moment.
But tell me, hast thou yet drawn o'er young Juba?
That still would recommend thee more to Cæsar,
And challenge better terms.

Syph. Alas, he's lost,
He's lost, Sempronius! all his thoughts are full
Of Cato's virtues!—But I'll try once more,
For every instant I expect him here,
If yet I can subdue those stubborn principles
Of faith, of honour, and I know not what,
That have corrupted his Numidian temper,
And struck the infection into all his soul.

Sem. Be sure to press upon him every motive:
Juba's surrender, since his father's death,
Would give up Africa into Cæsar's hands,
And make him lord of half the burning zone.

Syph. But is it true, Sempronius, that your
senate

Is call'd together? Gods! thou must be cautious:
Cato has piercing eyes, and will discern
Our frauds, unless they're cover'd thick with art.

Sem. Let me alone, good Syphax: I'll conceal
My thoughts in passion: 'tis the surest way:
I'll bellow out for Rome and for my country,
And mouth at Cæsar, till I shake the senate:
Your cold hypocrisy's a stale device,
A worn-out trick: would'st thou be thought in
earnest,

Clothe thy feign'd zeal in rage, in fire, in fury.

Syph. In troth, thou'rt able to instruct grey hairs,
And teach the wily African deceit.

Sem. Once more, be sure to try thy skill on Juba.
Meanwhile I'll hasten to my Roman soldiers,
Inflame the mutiny, and, underhand,
Blow up their discontents, till they break out
Unlook'd for, and discharge themselves on Cato.
Remember, Syphax, we must work in haste;
O think, what anxious moments pass between
The birth of plots, and their last fatal periods;
It is a dreadful interval of time,
Fill'd up with horror all, and big with death;

Destruction hangs on every word we speak,
On every thought, till the concluding stroke
Determines all, and closes our design. [Exit.]

Syph. I'll try if yet I can reduce to reason
This headstrong youth, and make him spurn at Cato.
The time is short; Caesar comes rushing on us;—
But hold—Young Juba sees me and approaches.

Enter JUBA.

Juba. Syphax, I joy to meet thee thus alone.
I have observ'd of late thy looks are fallen,
O'ercast with gloomy cares and discontent:
Then tell me, Syphax, I conjure thee tell me,
What are the thoughts that knit thy brow in frowns,
And turn thine eye thus coldly on thy prince?

Syph. 'Tis not my talent to conceal my thoughts,
Nor carry smiles and sunshine in my face,
When discontent sits heavy at my heart;
I have not yet so much the Roman in me.

Juba. Why dost thou cast out such ungenerous
terms

Against these wonderous sovereigns of the world?
Dost thou not see mankind fall down before 'em,
And own the force of their superior virtue?

Syph. Gods! where's the worth that sets this
people up

Above your own Numidia's tawny sons?
Do they with tougher sinews bend the bow?
Or flies the javelin swifter to its mark,
Launch'd from the vigour of a Roman arm?
Who, like our active African, instructs
The fiery steed, and trains him to his hand?
Or guides in troops the embattled elephant,
Loaden with war? These, these are arts, my prince,
In which your Zama does not stoop to Rome.

Juba. These all are virtues of a meaner rank,
Perfections that are plac'd in bones and nerves:
A Roman soul is bent on higher views.

To make man mild, and sociable to man;
To cultivate the wild licentious savage
With wisdom, discipline, and liberal arts—
The embellishments of life; virtues like these
Make human nature shine, reform the soul,
And break our fierce barbarians into men.

Syph. Patience, kind heavens!—Excuse an old
man's warmth;

What are these wonderous civilizing arts,
This Roman polish, and his smooth behaviour,
That render man thus tractable and tame?

Are they not only to disguise our passions,
To set our looks at variance with our thoughts?
In short, to change us into other creatures
Than what our nature and the gods design'd us?

Juba. To strike thee dumb, turn up thy eyes to
Cato;

There may'st thou see to what a godlike height
The Roman virtues lift up mortal man:
Renouncing sleep, and rest, and food, and ease,
He strives with thirst and hunger, toil and heat;
And, when his fortune sets before him all
The pomps and pleasures that our soul can wish,
His rigid virtue will accept of none.

Syph. Believe me, prince, there's not an African
That traverses our vast Numidian deserts
In quest of prey, and lives upon his bow,
But better practises these boasted virtues;
Coarse are his meals, the fortune of the chase;
Amidst the running stream he slakes his thirst,
Toils all the day, and, at the approach of night,
On the first friendly bank he throws him down,
Or rests his head upon a rock till morn;

Then rises fresh, pursues his wonted game,
And if, the following day, he chance to find
A new repast, or an untasted spring,
Blesses his stars, and thinks it luxury.

Juba. Thy prejudices, Syphax, won't discern
What virtues grow from ignorance and choice;
Nor how the hero differs from the brute.
But, grant that others could, with equal glory,
Look down on pleasures and the baits of sense,
Where shall we find the man that bears affliction,
Great and majestic in his griefs, like Cato?
How does he rise against a load of woes,
And thank the gods that throw the weight upon him!

Syph. 'Tis pride, rank pride, and haughtiness of
soul;

I think the Romans call it *Stoicism*.
Had not your royal father thought so highly
Of Roman virtue, and of Cato's cause,
He had not fallen, by a slave's hand, inglorious;
Nor would his slaughter'd army now have lain
On Africk's sands, disfigur'd with their wounds,
To gorge the wolves and vultures of Numidia.

Juba. Why dost thou call my sorrows up afresh?
My father's name brings tears into my eyes.

Syph. Oh, that you'd profit by your father's ills!

Juba. What would'st thou have me do?

Syph. Abandon Cato.

Juba. Never:—I should be more than twice an
orphan

By such a loss.

Syph. Ay, there's the tie that binds you,
You long to call him father; Marcia's charms
Work in your heart unseen, and plead for Cato;
No wonder you are deaf to all I say.

Juba. No more;—your zeal becomes importunate.
I've hitherto permitted it to rave,
And talk at large: but learn to keep it in,
Lest it should take more freedom than I'll give it.

Syph. Yet hear me, prince, tho' hard to conquer
love,

'Tis easy to divert and break its force:
Absence might cure it, or a second mistress
Light up another flame, and put out this.
The glowing dames of Zama's royal court
Have faces flush'd with more exalted charms;
The sun, that rolls his chariot o'er their heads,
Works up more fire and colour in their cheeks:
Were you with these, my prince, you'd soon forget
The pale, unripen'd beauties of the north.

Juba. 'Tis not a set of features, nor complexion,
The tincture of a skin, that I admire:
Beauty soon grows familiar to the lover,
Fades in his eye, and palls upon the sense.
The virtuous Marcia towers above her sex:
True, she is fair—O how divinely fair!—
But still the lovely maid improves her charms
With inward greatness, unaffected wisdom,
And sanctity of manners. Cato's soul
Shines out in every thing she acts or speaks,
While winning mildness and attractive smiles
Dwell in her looks, and with becoming grace
Softens the rigour of her father's virtues.

Syph. How does your tongue grow wanton in her
praise!

But, on my knees, I beg you would consider—

Juba. Ha! isn't not she?—It is:—she moves this
way:

And with her Lucia, Lucius's fair daughter.
My heart beats thick. I pr'ythee, Syphax, leave me.

Syph. Ten thousand curses fasten on them both!
Now will this woman, with a single glance,
Undo what I've been labouring all this while.

[Exit.]

Enter MARCIA and LUCIA.

Juba. Hail, charming maid! How does thy beauty smooth

The face of war, and make even horror smile!
At sight of thee my heart shakes off its sorrows;
I feel a dawn of joy break in upon me,
And for a while forget the approach of Cæsar.

Mar. I should be griev'd, young prince, to think my presence

Unbent your thoughts, and slacken'd them to arms,
While, warm with slaughter, our victorious foe
Threatens aloud, and calls you to the field.

Juba. O, Marcia, let me hope thy kind concerns
And gentle wishes follow me to battle:

The thought will give new vigour to my arm,
Add strength and weight to my descending sword,
And drive it in a tempest on the foe.

Mar. My prayers and wishes always shall attend
The friends of Rome, the glorious cause of virtue,
And men approv'd of by the gods and Cato.

Juba. That Juba may deserve thy pious cares,
I'll gaze for ever on thy godlike father,
Transplanting, one by one, into my life
His bright perfections, till I shine like him.

Mar. My father never at a time like this
Would lay out his great soul in words, and waste
Such precious moments.

Juba. Thy reproofs are just,
Thou virtuous maid. I'll hasten to my troops,
And fire their languid souls with Cato's virtue.
If e'er I lead them to the field, when all
The war shall stand rang'd in its just array,
And dreadful pomp, then will I think on thee—
O, lovely maid!—then will I think on thee;
And, in the shock of charging hosts, remember,
What glorious deeds should grace the man, who
hopes

For Marcia's love

[*Exit.*]

Luc. Marcia, you're too severe:

How could you chide, and drive so sternly from you,
A prince that loves and dotes on you to death?

Mar. How, Lucia! would'st thou have me sink
away

In pleasing dreams, and lose myself in love,
When every moment Cato's life's at stake?

Luc. Why have not I this constancy of mind,
Who have so many griefs to try its force?
Pity and love, by turns, oppress my heart.

Mar. Lucia, disburthen all thy cares on me,
And let me share thy most retir'd distress:
Tell me, who raises up this conflict in thee?

Luc. I need not blush to name them, when I say,
They're Marcia's brothers, and the sons of Cato.

Mar. But tell me, whose address thou favour'st
most:

I long to know, and yet I dread to hear it.

Luc. Suppose 'twere Porcius—could you blame
my choice?

O, Porcius, thou hast stolen away my soul!
Marcius is furious, wild, in his complaints;
I fear him with a secret kind of dread,
And tremble at his vehemence of temper.

Mar. Alas, poor youth!—And canst thou throw
him from thee?

How will thy coldness raise
Tempests and storms in his afflicted bosom!
I dread the consequence.

Luc. You seem to plead
Against your brother Porcius

Mar. Lucia, no:

Had Porcius been the unsuccessful lover,
The same compassion would have fallen on him.

Luc. Porcius himself oft falls in tears before me,
As if he mourn'd his rival's ill success;
Then bids me hide the motions of my heart,
Nor shew which way it turns: so much he fears
The sad effects that it would have on Marcus.

Mar. Let us not, Lucia, aggravate our sorrows;
But to the gods submit the event of things.
Our lives, discolour'd with our present woes,
May still grow bright, and smile with happier hours:
So the pure limpid stream, when foul with stains
Of rushing torrents, and descending rains,
Works itself clear, and, as it runs, refines,
Till, by degrees, the floating mirror shines,
Reflects each flower that on the border grows,
And a new heaven in its fair bosom shows.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Senate House.—A Flourish of Trumpets*

SEMPRONIUS, LUCIUS, and Senators discovered.

Sem. Rome still survives in this assembled senate.
Let us remember we are Cato's friends,
And act like men who claim that glorious title.

Luci. Cato will soon be here, and open to us
The occasion of our meeting.—

[*A sound of Trumpets.*]

Hark, he comes.—

May all the guardian-gods of Rome direct him!

[*Trumpets.*]

Enter CATO, PORCIUS, and MARCUS.

Cato. [Sits between PORCIUS and MARCUS.]
Fathers, we once again are met in council:
Cæsar's approach has summon'd us together,
And Rome attends her fate from our resolves.
How shall we treat this bold aspiring man?
Success still follows him, and backs his crimes:
Pharsalia gave him Rome; Egypt has since
Receiv'd his yoke, and the whole Nile is Cæsar's.
Why should I mention Juba's overthrow,
And Scipio's death? Numidia's burning sands
Still smoke with blood.—'Tis time, we should decree
What course to take. Our foe advances on us,
And envies us even Libya's sultry deserts.
Fathers, pronounce your thoughts:—are they still
fix'd

To hold it out, and fight it to the last?
Or are your hearts subdu'd at length, and wrought
By time and ill success to a submission?
Sempronius, speak.

Sem. [Rises.] My voice is still for war.
Gods! can a Roman senate long debate
Which of the two to choose—slavery or death?
No; let us rise at once, gird on our swords,
And, at the head of our remaining troops,
Attack the foe, break through the thick array
Of his throng'd legions, and charge home upon him.
Perhaps some arm, more lucky than the rest,
May reach his heart, and free the world from bond-
age.

Rise, fathers, rise! 'tis Rome demands your help;

Rise, and revenge her slaughter'd citizens ;
Rouse up for shame ! our brothers of Pharsalia
Point at their wounds, and cry aloud—to battle :
Great Pompey's shade complains that we are slow,
And Scipio's ghost walks unreveng'd amongst us.

[Sits.]

Cato. Let not a torrent of impetuous zeal
Transport thee thus beyond the bounds of reason.
True fortitude is seen in great exploits
That justice warrants, and that wisdom guides :
All else is towering frenzy and distraction.
Are not the lives of those who draw the sword
In Rome's defence intrusted to our care ?
Should we thus lead them to a field of slaughter,
Might not the impartial world too justly say,
We lavish'd at our death the blood of thousands,
To grace our fall, and make our ruin glorious ?
Lucius, we next would know what's your opinion.

Luci. [Rises.] My thoughts, I must confess, are
turn'd on peace.

We took up arms, not to revenge ourselves,
But free the commonwealth : when this end fails,
Arms have no further use : our country's cause,
That drew our swords, now wrests them from our
hands,

And bids us not delight in Roman blood
Unprofitably shed.—What men could do
Is done already : heaven and earth will witness,
If Rome must fall, that we are innocent.

[Sits.]

Cato. Let us appear nor rash, nor diffident :
Immoderate valour swells into a fault ;
And fear, admitted into public counsels,
Betrays like treason : let us shun them both.
Fathers, I cannot see that our affairs
Are grown thus desperate : we have bulwarks round
us ;

Within our walls are troops inur'd to toil
In Africk's heats, and season'd to the sun ;
Numidia's spacious kingdom lies behind us,
Ready to rise at its young prince's call.
While there is hope, do not distrust the gods :
But wait, at least, till Cæsar's near approach
Force us to yield. 'Twill never be too late
To sue for chains, and own a conqueror.
Why should Rome fall a moment ere her time ?
No, let us draw her term of freedom out
In its full length, and spin it to the last ;
So shall we gain still one day's liberty :
And let me perish, but, in Cato's judgment,
A day, an hour, of virtuous liberty
Is worth a whole eternity in bondage.

Enter JUNIUS.

Jun. Fathers, even now, a herald is arriv'd
From Cæsar's camp ; and with him comes old Decius,
The Roman knight : he carries in his looks
Impatience, and demands to speak with Cato.

Cato. By your permission, father.—Bid him enter.

[Exit JUNIUS.]

Decius was once my friend ; but other prospects
Have loos'd those ties, and bound him fast to Cæsar.
His message may determine our resolves.

Enter DECIVS, JUNIUS, and TITUS.

Dec. Cæsar sends health to Cato—

Cato. Could he send it

To Cato's slaughter'd friends, it would be welcome.
Are not your orders to address the senate ?

Dec. My business is with Cato. Cæsar sees

The straits to which you're driven ; and as he knows
Cato's high worth is anxious for your life.

Cato. My life is grafted on the fate of Rome.
Would he save Cato ? Bid him spare his country.
Tell your dictator this : and tell him, Cato
Disdains a life which he has power to offer.

Dec. Rome and her senators submit to Cæsar :
Her generals and her consuls are no more,
Who check'd his conquests, and denied his triumphs.
Why will not Cato be this Cæsar's friend ?

Cato. Those very reasons thou hast urg'd, forbid it.

Dec. Cæsar is well acquainted with your virtues,
And therefore sets this value on your life :
Let him but know the price of Cato's friendship,
And name your terms.

Cato. Bid him disband his legions ;
Restore the commonwealth to liberty ;
Submit his actions to the public censure,
And stand the judgment of a Roman senate :—
Bid him do this, and Cato is his friend.

Dec. Cato, the world talks loudly of your wisdom—

Cato. Nay, more—though Cato's voice was ne'er
employ'd

To clear the guilty, and to varnish crimes—
Myself will mount the rostrum in his favour,
And strive to gain his pardon from the people.

Dec. A style like this becomes a conqueror.

Cato. Decius, a style like this becomes a Roman.

Dec. What is a Roman, that is Cæsar's foe ?

Cato. Greater than Cæsar ; he's a friend to virtue.

Dec. Consider, Cato, you're in Utica,
And at the head of your own little senate ;
You don't now thunder in the capitol,
With all the mouths of Rome to second you.

Cato. Let him consider that who drives us hither :

'Tis Cæsar's sword has made Rome's senate little,
And thin'd its ranks. Alas, thy dazzled eye
Beholds this man in a false glaring light,
Which conquest and success have thrown upon him !
Didst thou but view him right, thou'dst see him black
With murder, treason, sacrilege, and crimes
That strike my soul with horror but to name 'em.
I know thou look'st on me, as on a wretch
Beset with ills, and cover'd with misfortunes ;
But, by the gods I swear, millions of worlds
Should never buy me to be like that Cæsar.

Dec. Does Cato send this answer back to Cæsar,
For all his generous cares, and proffer'd friendship ?

Cato. His cares for me are insolent and vain :
Presumptuous man ! the gods take care of Cato.—
Would Cæsar show the greatness of his soul,
Bid him employ his care for these my friends,
And make good use of his ill-gotten power,
By sheltering men much better than himself.

Dec. Your high unconquer'd heart makes you forget

You are a man. You rush on your destruction.
But I have done. When I relate hereafter
The tale of this unhappy embassy,
All Rome will be in tears.

[Exit with JUNIUS, and TITUS.]

Sem. [Rises.] Cato, we thank thee :
Cæsar will shrink to hear the words thou utter'st,
And shudder in the midst of all his conquests.

[Sits.]

Luci. [Rises.] The senate owns its gratitude to
Cato ;

Who with so great a soul consults its safety,
And guards our lives, while he neglects his own.

[Sits.]

Sem. [Rises.] Sempronius gives no thanks on this
account.

Lucius seems fond of life: but what is life?
'Tis not to draw fresh air from time to time;
'Tis to be free. When liberty is gone,
Life grows insipid, and has lost its relish.
Oh! could my dying hand but lodge a sword
In Cæsar's bosom, and revenge my country,
By heavens, I could enjoy the pangs of death,
And smile in agony!

[Sits.

Luci. Others, perhaps,
May serve their country with as warm a zeal,
Though 'tis not kindled into such a rage.

Sem. This sober conduct is a mighty virtue
In luke-warm patriots.

Cato. Come! no more, Sempronius.
All here are friends to Rome, and to each other:
Let us not weaken still the weaker side
By our divisions.

Sem. Cato, my resentments
Are sacrific'd to Rome. I stand reprov'd.

Cato. Fathers, 'tis time you come to a resolve.

Luci. Cato, we all go in to your opinion:
Cæsar's behaviour has convinc'd the senate
We ought to hold it out, till terms arrive.

Sem. We ought to hold it out till death. But,
Cato,
My private voice is drown'd amid the senate's.

Cato. Then let us rise, my friends, and strive to fill
This little interval, this pause of life,
While yet our liberty and fates are doubtful,
With resolution, friendship, Roman bravery,
And all the virtues we can crowd into it;
That heaven may say, it ought to be prolong'd.
Fathers, farewell.—The young Numidian prince
Comes forward, and expects to know our counsels.

[*EXECUTUS PORCIUS, MARCUS, LUCIUS, SEMPRONIUS,* and the other *Senators.*]

Enter JUBA.

Cato. Juba, the Roman senate has resolv'd,
Till time give better prospects, still to keep
The sword unsheath'd, and turn its edge on Cæsar.

Juba. The resolution fits a Roman senate.
But, Cato, lend me for a while thy patience,
And condescend to hear a young man speak.
My father, when some days before his death
He order'd me to march for Utica;—
Alas, I thought not then his death so near!
Wept o'er me, press'd me in his aged arms,
And, as his griefs gave way, My son, he said,
How fortune may dispose of me,
Be Cato's friend; he'll train thee up to great
And virtuous deeds: do but observe him well,
Thou'lt shun misfortunes, or thou'lt learn to bear 'em.

Cato. Thy sire, good Juba, was a worthy prince,
And merited, alas! a better fate:—
But heaven thought otherwise.

Juba. His cruel fate,
In spite of all the fortitude that shines
Before my face in Cato's great example,
Subdues my soul, and fills my eyes with tears.

Cato. It is an honest sorrow, and becomes thee.

Juba. His virtues drew respect from foreign climes:
The kings of Africk sought him for their friend,
Kings far remote, that rule, as fame reports,
Behind the hidden sources of the Nile;
Oft have their black ambassadors appear'd,
Loaden with gifts, and fill'd the courts of Zama.

Cato. I am no stranger to thy father's greatness.

Juba. I do not mean to boast his power and greatness,
But point out new alliances to Cato.

Had we not better leave this Utica,
To arm Numidia in our cause, and court
The assistance of my father's numerous friends?
Did they know Cato, our remotest kings
Would pour embattled multitudes about him;
Their swathy hosts would darken all our plains,
Doubling the native horror of the war,
And making death more grim.

Cato. And canst thou think,
Cato will fly before the sword of Cæsar,
Reduc'd, like Hannibal, to seek relief
From court to court, and wander up and down
A vagabond in Africk?

Juba. Cato, perhaps,
I'm too officious; but my forward cares
Would fain preserve a life of so much value.
My heart is wounded, when I see such virtue
Afflicted by the weight of such misfortunes.

Cato. Thy nobleness of soul obliges me.
But know, young prince, that valour soars above
What the world calls misfortune and affliction.
These are not ills; else would they never fall
On heaven's first favourites, and the best of men:
The gods, in bounty, work up storms about us,
That give mankind occasion to exert
Their hidden strength, and throw out into practice
Virtues, which lie conceal'd

In the smooth seasons and the calms of life.

Juba. I'm charm'd whene'er thou talk'st: I pant
for virtue,
And all my soul endeavours at perfection.

Cato. Dost thou love watchings, abstinence, and
toil?—

Laborious virtues all!—Learn them from Cato:
Success and fortune must thou learn from Cæsar.

Juba. The best good fortune that can fall on
Juba,

The whole success at which my heart aspires,
Depends on Cato.

Cato. What does Juba say?

Tell me thy wishes, prince.

Juba. O, they're extravagant!
Still let me hide them.

Cato. Speak: what can'st thou ask
That Cato will refuse?

Juba. I fear to name it:

Marcia—inherits all her father's virtues.

Cato. Adieu, young prince, I would not hear a
word

Might lessen thee in my esteem. Remember,
The hand of fate is over us, and heaven
Exact severity from all our thoughts:
It is not now a time to talk of aught
But chains or conquest, liberty or death. [Exit

Enter SYPHAX.

Syph. How's this, my prince? What! cover'd
with confusion?

You look, as if you stern philosopher
Had just now chid you.

Juba. Syphax, I'm undone

Syph. I know it well.

Juba. Cato thinks meanly of me.

Syph. And so will all mankind.

Juba. I've open'd to him

The weakness of my soul, my love for Marcia

Syph. Cato's a proper person to intrust
A love-tale with!

Juba. O, I could pierce my heart,
My foolish heart! Was ever wretch like Juba!

Syph. Alas, my prince, how are you chang'd of late!

I've known young Juba rise before the sun,
To beat the thicket where the tiger slept,
Or seek the lion in his dreadful haunts:
How did the colour mount into your cheeks,
When first you rous'd him to the chase! I've seen
you,

Even in the Libyan dog-days, hunt him down;
Then charge him close, provoke him to the rage
Of fangs and claws, and, stooping from your horse,
Rivet the panting savage to the ground.

Juba. Pr'ythee, no more.

Syph. How would the old king smile
To see you weigh the paws, when tip'd with gold,
And throw the shaggy spoils about your shoulders!

Juba. Syphax, this old man's talk, though honey
flow'd

In every word, would now lose all its sweetness.
Cato's displeas'd, and Marcia's lost for ever!

Syph. Young prince, I yet could give you good
advice:

Marcia might still be yours.

Juba. What say'st thou, Syphax?

By heavens, thou turn'st me all into attention.

Syph. Marcia might still be yours.

Juba. As how, dear Syphax?

Syph. Juba commands Numidia's hardy troops,
Mounted on steeds unus'd to the restraint
Of curbs and bits, and fleetlier than the wind:
Give but the word, we'll snatch this damsel up,
And bear her off.

Juba. Can such dishonest thoughts
Rise up in man? Would'st thou seduce my youth
To do an act that would destroy my honour?

Syph. Gods, I could tear my beard to hear you
talk!

Honour's a fine imaginary notion,
That draws in raw and unexperienc'd men
To real mischiefs, while they hunt a shadow.

Juba. Would'st thou degrade thy prince into a
ruffian?

Syph. The boasted ancestors of these great men
Whose virtues you admire, were all such ruffians:
This dread of nations, this almighty Rome,
That comprehends in her wide empire's bounds
All under heaven, was founded on a rape:
Your Scipios, Cæsars, Pompeys, and your Catos,—
These gods on earth,—are all the spurious brood
Of violated maids, of ravish'd Sabines.

Juba. Syphax, I fear, that hoary head of thine
Abounds too much in our Numidian wiles.

Syph. My prince, you want to know the world:
You have not read mankind: your youth admires
The throes and swellings of a Roman soul,
Cato's bold flights, the extravagance of virtue.

Juba. If knowledge of the world makes man per-
fidious,

May Juba ever live in ignorance!

Syph. Go, go, you're young.

Juba. Gods! must I tamely bear

This arrogance unanswer'd—Thou'rt a traitor,
A false old traitor.

Syph. [Aside.] I have gone too far.

Juba. Cato shall know the baseness of thy soul.

Syph. [Aside.] I must appease this storm, or
perish in it.—

Young prince, behold these locks that are grown
white

Beneath a helmet in your father's battles.

Juba. Those locks shall ne'er protect thy insolence.

Syph. Must one rash word, the infirmity of age,
Throw down the merit of my better years?
This the reward of a whole life of service?

[Aside.] Curse on the boy! how steadily he hears me!
Juba. Is it, because the throne of my forefathers'
Still stands unfill'd, and that Numidia's crown
Hangs doubtful yet whose head it shall inclose,
Thou thus presum'st to treat thy prince with scorn?

Syph. Why will you rive my heart with such ex-
pressions?

Does not old Syphax follow you to war?
What are his aims? What is it he aspires to?
Is it not this? To shed the slow remains,
His last poor ebb of blood in your defence?

Juba. Syphax, no more: I would not hear you
talk.

Syph. Nor hear me talk? What, when my faith
to Juba,

My royal master's son, is call'd in question?
My prince may strike me dead, and I'll be dumb:
But, whilst I live, I must not hold my tongue,
And languish out old age in his displeasure.

Juba. Thou know'st the way too well into my
heart:

I do believe thee loyal to thy prince.

Syph. What greater instance can I give? I've
offer'd

To do an action which my soul abhors,
And gain you whom you love, at any price:
And 'tis for this my prince has call'd me traitor.

Juba. Sure thou mistak'st: I did not call thee so.

Syph. You did indeed, my prince, you call'd me
traitor:

Nay, further, threaten'd you'd complain to Cato.
Of what, my prince, would you complain to Cato?
That Syphax loves you, and would sacrifice
His life,—nay, more, his honour,—in your service?

Juba. Syphax, I know thou lov'st me: but thy
zeal

To serve thy master, carried thee too far.
Honour's a sacred tie, the law of kings,
The noble mind's distinguishing perfection,
That aids and strengthens virtue where it meets her,
And imitates her actions, where she is not:
It ought not to be sported with.

Syph. Believe me, prince, you make old Syphax
weep,

To hear you talk,—but 'tis with tears of joy.
If e'er your father's crown adorn your brows,
Numidia will be blest by Cato's lectures.

Juba. Give me thy hand: we'll mutually forget
The warmth of youth, and frowardness of age.
Thy prince esteems thy worth, and loves thy person:

[Embraces SYPHAX.]

If e'er the sceptre comes into my hand,
Syphax shall stand the second in my kingdom.

Syph. Why will you overwhelm my age with
kindness?

My joy grows burdensome: I sha'n't support it.

Juba. My friend, farewell. I'll hence, and try to
find

Some best occasion that may set me right
In Cato's thoughts. I'd rather have that man
Approve my deeds, than worlds for my admirers.

[Exit.]

Syph. Young men soon give, and soon forget
affronts;

Old age is slow in both.—A false old traitor!
Those words, rash boy, may chance to cost thee dear.
My heart had still some foolish fondness for thee:—
But hence! 'tis gone: I give it to the winds:—
Cæsar, I'm wholly thine.

Enter SEMPRONIUS.

All hail, Sempronius!

Well, Cato's senate is resolv'd to wait
The fury of a siege, before it yields.

Sem. Syphax, we both were on the verge of fate:
Lucius declar'd for peace, and terms were offer'd
To Cato by a messenger from Cæsar.

Syph. Who is this messenger?

Sem. I've practis'd with him;
And found means to let the victor know
That Syphax and Sempronius are his friends.—
Is Juba fix'd?

Syph. Yes,—but it is to Cato.
I've tried the force of every reason on him,
Laid safety, life, and interest in his sight;
But all are vain; he scorns them all for Cato.

Sem. Well, 'tis no matter; we shall do without
him.

My friend, I now may hope thou hast forsook
Thy Juba's cause, and wishest Marcia mine.

Syph. May she be thine as fast as thou would'st
have her!

But are thy troops prepar'd for a revolt?
Does the sedition catch from man to man,
And run among their ranks?

Sem. All, all is ready;
The factious leaders are our friends, and spread
Murmurs and discontents among the soldiers:
Within an hour, they'll storm the senate-house.

Syph. Meanwhile, I'll draw up my Numidian
troops

Within the square, to exercise their arms,
And, as I see occasion, favour thee.
I laugh to think how your unshaken Cato
Will look agast, while unforeseen destruction
Pours in upon him thus from every side.
So where our wide Numidian wastes extend,
Sudden th'impetuous hurricanes descend,
Wheel through the air, in circling eddies play,
Tear up the sands, and sweep whole plains away.
The helpless traveller, with wild surprise,
Sees the dry desert all around him rise,
And smother'd in the dusty whirlwind, dies.

[*Ereunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Portico of the Palace.*

Enter MARCUS and PORCIUS.

Mar. Thanks to my stars, I have not rang'd
about

The wilds of life, ere I could find a friend:
Nature first pointed out my Porcius to me,
And early taught me, by her secret force,
To love thy person, ere I knew thy merit;
Till what was instinct, grew up into friendship.

Por. The friendships of the world are oft, my
brother,

Confed'racies in vice, or leagues of pleasure;
Ours has severest virtue for its basis,
And such a friendship ends not but with life.

Mar. Porcius, thou know'st my soul in all its
weakness:

Then, pry'thee, spare me on its tender side;
Indulge me but in love, my other passions
Shall rise and fall by virtue's nicest rules.

Por. When love's well-tim'd, 'tis not a fault to
love:

The strong, the brave, the virtuous, and the wise
Sink in the soft captivity together,
I would not urge thee to dismiss thy passion,—
I know 'twere vain; but to suppress its force,
Till better times may make it look more graceful.

Mar. Alas! thou talk'st like one who never felt
The impatient throbs and longings of a soul
That pants and reaches after distant good.
A lover does not live by vulgar time:
In every moment of my Lucia's absence
Life hangs upon me, and becomes a burthen;
And yet, when I behold the charming maid,
I'm ten times more undone; while hope, and fear,
And grief, and rage, and love, rise up at once,
And with variety of pain distract me.

Por. What can I say, or do, to give thee help?

Mar. Porcius, thou oft enjoy'st the fair one's
presence:

Then undertake my cause, and plead it to her
With all the strength and heat of eloquence
Fraternal love and friendship can inspire.
Tell her, thy brother languishes to death,
And fades away, and withers in his bloom;
That he forgets his sleep, and loathes his food,
That youth, and health, and war, are joyless to him:
Describe his anxious days, and restless nights,
And all the torments that thou see'st me suffer.

Por. I do intreat thee, give me not an office
That suits with me so ill:—thou know'st my temper.

Mar. Can'st thou behold me sinking in my woes
And wilt thou not reach out a friendly arm,
To raise me from amidst this plunge of sorrows?
O, Porcius, Porcius, from my soul I wish
Thou didst but know thyself what 'tis to love:
Then would'st thou pity and assist thy brother.

Por. [*Aside.*] What should I do? If I disclose
my passion,

Our friendship's at an end: if I conceal it,
The world will call me false to a friend and brother.

Mar. But see where Lucia, at her wonted hour,
Amid the cool of yon high marble arch,
Enjoys the noon-day breeze! Behold her! Porcius,
That face, that shape, those eyes, that heaven of
beauty!—

Observe her well, and blame me if thou canst.

Por. She sees us, and advances.

Mar. I'll withdraw,
And leave you for a while. Remember, Porcius,
Thy brother's life depends upon thy tongue.

[*Exit.*

Enter LUCIA.

Luc. Did I not see your brother Marcus here?
Why did he fly the place, and shun my presence?

Por. O, Lucia, language is too faint to show
His rage of love; it preys upon his life;
He pines, he sickens, he despairs, he dies.
My heart bleeds for him:

Even now, while thus I stand blest in thy presence,
A secret damp of grief comes o'er my thoughts,
And I'm unhappy, though thou smil'st upon me.

Luc. How wilt thou guard thy honour in the shock
Of love and friendship? Think betimes, my Porcius,
Think how the nuptial tie, that might ensure

Our mutual bliss, would raise to such a height
Thy brother's griefs, as might, perhaps, destroy him.

Por. Alas, poor youth! What dost thou think,
my Lucia?

His generous, open, undesigning heart
Has begg'd his rival to solicit for him;
Then do not strike him dead with a denial;
But hold him up in life, and cheer his soul
With the faint glimmering of a doubtful hope:
Perhaps, when we have pass'd these gloomy hours,
And weather'd out the storm that beats upon us—

Luc. No, Porcius, no: I see thy sister's tears,
Thy father's anguish, and thy brother's death;
In the pursuit of our ill-fated loves:
And, Porcius, here I swear—[*Kneels.*—to heaven I
swear,

To heaven, and all the powers that judge mankind,
Never to join my plighted hand with thine,
While such a cloud of mischief hangs about us—
But to forget our loves, and drive thee out
From all my thoughts, as far—as I am able.

Por. [*Raises her.*] What hast thou said? Recall
those hasty words,

Or I am lost for ever.

Luc. Think, Porcius, think thou see'st thy dying
brother

Stabb'd at his heart, and all besmear'd with blood,
Storming at heaven and thee. Thy awful sire
Sternly demands the cause, the accursed cause
That robs him of his son.—Farewell, my Porcius!
Farewell, though death is in the word, for ever!

Por. Thou must not go; my soul still hovers o'er
thee,

And can't get loose.

Luc. If the firm Porcius shake
To hear of parting, think what Lucia suffers.
But see, thy brother Marcus bends this way;
I sicken at the sight. Once more, farewell!
Farewell!—and know, thou wrong'st me, if thou
think'st

Ever was love, or ever grief, like mine. [*Exit.*

Enter MARCUS.

Mar. Porcius, what hopes? How stands she?
Am I doom'd

To life or death?

Por. What would'st thou have me say?

Mar. Thy downcast looks, and thy disorder'd
thoughts,

Tell me my fate: I ask not the success
My cause has found.

Por. I'm griev'd I undertook it.

Mar. What! does the barbarous maid insult my
heart,

And triumph in my pains?

Por. Away! you're too suspicious in your griefs:
Lucia, though sworn never to think of love,
Compassionates your pains, and pities you.

Mar. Compassionates my pains, and pities me!
What is compassion, when 'tis void of love?—
Fool that I was, to choose so cold a friend
To urge my cause!—Compassionates my pains!
To one that asks the warm returns of love,
Compassion's cruelty—'tis scorn—'tis death.

Por. Marcus, no more! Have I deserv'd this treat-
ment?

Mar. What have I said?—O, Porcius! O,
forgive me!—

A soul exasperated in ills, falls out
With every thing, its friends, itself.—

[*Trumpets &c.*

But hah!—

What means that sound, big with the threat of war?
What new alarm? [*Trumpets again.*

Por. A second, louder yet,

Swells in the wind, and comes more full upon us.

Mar. Oh, for some glorious cause to fall in battle!
Lucia, thou hast undone me: thy disdain
Has broke my heart: 'tis death must give me ease.

Por. Quick, let us hence: who knows if Cato's
life

Stands sure? O, Marcus, I am on fire; my heart
Leaps at the trumpet's voice, and burns for glory.

[*Exeunt.*—*Trumpets, &c.* till SEMPRONIUS enters.

SCENE II.—A Square before the Palace.

Enter SEMPRONIUS, JUNIUS, TITUS, and other
Mutineers.

Sem. At length the winds are rais'd, the storm
blows high!

Be it your care, my friends, to keep it up
In its full fury, and direct it right,
Till it has spent itself on Cato's head.

Meanwhile, I'll herd among his friends, and seem
One of the number; that, whate'er arrive,
My friends and fellow soldiers may be safe. [*Exit.*

Jun. We are all safe; Sempronius is our friend.
[*Trumpets.*

Enter CATO, PORCIUS, MARCUS, LUCIUS, SEMPRO-
NIUS, and Senators, &c.

Cato. Where are these bold intrepid sons of war,
That greatly turn their backs upon the foe,
And to their general send a brave defiance?

Sem. [*Aside.*] Curse on their dastard souls, they
stand astonish'd!

Cato. Perfidious men!—and will you thus dis-
honour

Your past exploits, and sully all your wars?
Do you confess, 'twas not a zeal for Rome,
Nor love of Liberty,

Drew you thus far, but hopes to share the spoil
Of conquer'd towns, and plunder'd provinces?

Fir'd with such motives, you do well to join
With Cato's foes, and follow Caesar's banners.

Behold—ungrateful men!—
Behold my bosom naked to your swords,

And let the man that's injured strike the blow.—
Which of you all suspects that he is wrong'd

Or thinks he suffers greater ills than Cato?
Am I distinguish'd from you but by toils,

Superior toils, and heavier weight of cares?
Painful pre-eminence!

Sem. [*Aside.*] By heavens, they droop:—
Confusion to the villains!—all is lost.

Cato. Hence, worthless men!—hence, and com-
plain to Caesar,

You could not undergo the toils of war,
Nor bear the hardships that your general bore.

Luci. See, Cato, see—the unhappy men!—they
weep:

Fear and remorse, and sorrow for their crime
Appear in every look, and plead for mercy.

Cato. Learn to be honest men; give up your lea-
ders,

And pardon shall descend on all the rest.

Sem. Cato, commit these wretches to my care:
First let them each be broken on the rack—

Then, with what life remains, impal'd, and left

To writhe at leisure round the bloody stake;—
There let them hang, and taint the southern wind;
The partners of their crime will learn obedience,
When they look up, and see their fellow-traitors
Stuck on a fork, and blackening in the sun.

Cato. Fearbear, Sempronius:—see, they suffer death;

But, in their deaths, remember they are men.—
Lucius, the base degenerate age requires
Severity and justice in its rigour;
This curbs an impious, bold, offending world,
Commands obedience, and gives force to laws.
When by just vengeance guilty mortals perish,
The gods behold their punishment with pleasure,
And lay the uplifted thunderbolt aside.

Sem. Cato, I gladly execute thy will.

Cato. Meanwhile, we'll sacrifice to liberty.
Remember, O my friends, the laws, the rights,
The generous plan of power deliver'd down,
From age to age, by your renown'd forefathers,
So dearly bought, the price of so much blood:—
O let it never perish in your hands,
But piously transmit it to your children!
Do thou, great Liberty, inspire our souls,
And make our lives in thy possession happy,
Or our deaths glorious in thy just defence!

[*Flourish.*—*Exeunt* CATO, PORCIUS, MARCUS,
LUCIUS, Senators, Ensign, Lictors, and
Guards.

Jun. Sempronius, you have acted like yourself;
One would have thought, you had been half in earnest.

Sem. Villain, stand off!—Base, groveling, worthless wretches!

Mongrels in faction! poor faint-hearted traitors!

Tit. Nay, now you carry it too far, Sempronius:
Throw off the mask; there are none here but friends.

Sem. Know, villains, when such paltry slaves presume

To mix in treason, if the plot succeeds,
They're thrown neglected by; but, if it fails,
They're sure to die like dogs, as you shall do.—
Guards—

Enter Guards.

Here, take these factious monsters, drag them forth
To sudden death.

Jun. Nay; since it comes to this—

Sem. Dispatch them quick;—but first, pluck out
their tongues;

Lest with their dying breath they sow sedition.

[*Exeunt Guards, with the Mutineers.*

Enter SYPHAX.

Syph. Our first design, my friend, has prov'd
abortive;

Still there remains an after-game to play:

My troops are mounted: their Numidian steeds

Snuff up the wind, and long to scour the desert:

Let but Sempronius head us in our fight,

We'll force the gate where Marcus keeps his guard,
And hew down all that would oppose our passage.

A day will bring us into Caesar's camp.

Sem. Confusion! I have fail'd of half my purpose:
Marcia, the charming Marcia's left behind!

Syph. How? will Sempronius turn a woman's
slave?

Sem. Think not that I can ever feel the soft
Unmanly warmth and tenderness of love.

Syphax, I long to clasp that haughty maid,

And bend her stubborn virtue to my passion:

When I have gone thus far, I'd cast her off.

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Syph. What hinders then, but that thou find her
out,

And hurry her away by manly force?

Sem. But how to gain admision? for access
Is given to none but Juba and her brothers.

Syph. Thou shalt have Juba's dress and Juba's
guards:

The doors will open when Numidia's prince
Seems to appear before the slaves that watch them.

Sem. I thank thy friendly zeal:—Marcia's my
own!

How will my bosom swell with anxious joy,

When I behold her struggling in my arms,

With glowing beauty and disorder'd charms;

While fear and anger, with alternate gages,

Pant in their breast, and vary in her face!

So Pluto, seiz'd of Proserpine, convey'd

To hell's tremendous gloom the affrighted maid;

There grimly smil'd, pleas'd with the beauteous prize,
Nor envied Jove his sunshine and his skies.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Portico of the Palace.

Enter MARCIA and LUCIA.

Luc. Now tell me, Marcia, tell me from thy soul,
If thou believ'st 'tis possible for woman
To suffer greater ills than Lucia suffers?

Mar. O, Lucia, Lucia, might my big-swollen heart
Vent all its griefs, and give a loose to sorrow,
Marcia could answer thee in sighs, keep pace
With all thy woes, and count out tear for tear.

Luc. I know, thou'rt doom'd alike to be belov'd
By Juba, and thy father's friend Sempronius:
But which of these has power to charm like Porcius?

Mar. Still must I beg thee not to name Sempronius?

Lucia, I like not that loud boisterous man:

Juba to all the bravery of a hero

Adds softest love and sweetness: he, I own,

Might make indeed the proudest woman happy.

Luc. But, should your father give you to Sempronius?

Mar. I dare not think he will: but, if he should—

I hear the sound of feet:—they march this way.

Let us retire, and try if we can drown

Each softer thought in sense of present danger.

When love once pleads admission to our hearts,

In spite of all the virtue we can boast,

The woman that deliberates is lost.

[*Exeunt.*

*Enter SEMPRONIUS, dressed like JUBA, with
Numidian Guards.*

Sem. The deer is lodg'd; I've track'd her to her
covert:

Be sure you mind the word; and, when I give it,
Rush in at once, and seize upon your prey:

Let not her cries or tears have force to move you.

How will the young Numidian rave, to see

His mistress lost! If aught could glad my soul

Beyond the enjoyment of so bright a prize,

'Twould be to torture that young gay barbarian.

But hark, what noise? Death to my hopes! 'tis he,
'Tis Juba's self. There is but one way left:
He must be murder'd, and a passage cut
Through those his guards. Hah, dastards, do you
tremble?
Or act like men; or, by yon azure heaven—

Enter JUBA, with Guards.

Juba. What do I see? Who's this, that dare
usurp

The guards and habit of Numidia's prince?

Sem. One that was born to scourge thy arrogance,
Presumptuous youth.

Juba. What can this mean? Sempronius!

Sem. My sword shall answer thee:—have at thy
heart.

Juba. Nay, then beware thy own, proud barbarous
man.

[*They fight.—SEMPRONIUS falls.—His Guards
surrender to JUBA's.—Their swords are taken
from them.*]

Sem. Curse on my stars! Am I then doom'd to
fall

By a boy's hand, and for a worthless woman?
This my close of life!

Oh, for a peal of thunder, that would make
Earth, sea, and air, and heaven, and Cato tremble!

[*Dies.*]

Juba. With what a spring his furious soul broke
loose,

And left the limbs still quivering on the ground!

Hence let us carry off those slaves to Cato,

That we may there at length unravel all

This dark design, this mystery of fate.

[*Exit with Guards and Prisoners.*]

Enter MARCIA and LUCIA.

Luc. Sure, 'twas the clash of swords: my troubled
heart

Is so cast down and sunk amidst its sorrows,
It throbs with fear, and aches at every sound.

O, Marcia, should thy brothers, for my sake—
I die away with horror at the thought.

Mar. See, Lucia, see! here's blood!

What! a Numidian! Heavens preserve the prince!

The face lies muffled up within the garment—

But hah!—death to my sight!—a diadem?—

O gods! 'tis he! Juba lies dead before us.

Luc. Now, Marcia, now call up to thy assistance
Thy wonted strength and constancy of mind.

Mar. Lucia, look there, and wonder at my
patience:

Have I not cause to rave, and beat my breast,

To rend my heart with grief, and run distracted?

Luc. What can I think or say to give thee comfort?

Enter JUBA, with Guards.

Mar. Talk not of comfort, 'tis for lighter ills.

Behold a sight that strikes all comfort dead.

I will indulge my sorrows;

That man, that best of men, deserv'd it from me.

Juba. What do I hear? and was the false Sem-
pronius

That best of men? O, had I fall'n like him,
And could have thus been mourn'd, I had been
happy.

Mar. O Juba! Juba! Juba! [*Kneels by SEM.*
He's dead, and never knew how much I lov'd him.

Lucia, who knows but his poor bleeding heart,

Amidst its agonies, remember'd Marcia,

And the last words he utter'd call'd me cruel?

Alas, he knew not—hapless youth!—he knew not
Marcia's whole soul was full of love and Juba.

Juba. Do I live—or am indeed

What Marcia thinks? All is Elysium round me.

[*Aside.*]

Mar. Ye dear remains of the most lov'd of men,

Nor modesty nor virtue here forbids

A last embrace, while thus—

Juba. [*Comes forward.*] See, Marcia, see,
The happy Juba lives: [*She rises.*] he lives, to catch

That dear embrace, and to return it too

With mutual warmth and eagerness of love.

[*They embrace.*]

Mar. With pleasure and amaze I stand trans-
ported.

If thou art Juba, who lies there?

Juba. A wretch,

Disguis'd like Juba on a curs'd design.

The tale is long, nor have I heard it out;

Thy father knows it all. I could not bear

To leave thee in the neighbourhood of death,

But flew, in all the haste of love, to find thee:

I found thee weeping; and confess, this once,

Am rapt with joy, to see my Marcia's tears.

Mar. I've been surpris'd in an unguarded hour,

But must not now go back; the love that lay

Half smother'd in my breast, has broke through all

Its weak restraints, and burns in its full lustre:

I cannot, if I would, conceal it from thee.

Juba. My joy! my best lov'd! my only wish!

How shall I speak the transport of my soul!

Mar. Lucia, thy arm; O let me rest upon it!

The vital blood that had forsook my heart,

Returns again in such tumultuous tides,

It quite o'ercomes me. Lead to my apartment.

O prince! I blush, to think what I have said;

But fate has wrested the confession from me.

Go on, and prosper in the paths of honour:

Thy virtue will excuse my passion for thee,

And make the gods propitious to our love.

[*Exit with LUCIA.*]

Juba. I am so bless'd, I fear 'tis all a dream.

Fortune, thou now hast made amends for all

Thy past unkindness: I absolve my stars—

What, though Numidia add her conquer'd towns

And provinces, to swell the victor's triumph?

Juba will never at his fate repine:

Let Cæsar have the world, if Marcia's mine. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*A Square before the Palace.*
Trumpets.

Enter LUCIUS, CATO, and Freedmen.

Luci. I stand astonish'd. What! the bold Sem-
pronius,

That still broke foremost thro' the crowd of patriots,
As with a hurricane of zeal transported!

And, virtuous even to madness—

Cato. Trust me, my friend,

Our civil discords have produced such crimes,

Such monstrous crimes, I am surpris'd at nothing.

O Lucius, I am sick of this bad world:

The daylight and the sun grow painful to me.

Enter PORCIUS.

But see where Porcius comes.—What means this
haste?

Por. My heart is griev'd;

I bring such news as will afflict my father.

Cato. Has Cæsar shed more Roman blood?

Por. Not so:—

The traitor Syphax, as within the square
He exercised his troops, the signal given,
Flew off at once with his Numidian horse
To the south gate, where Marcus holds the watch:
I saw, and call'd to stop him; but in vain;
He toss'd his arm aloft, and proudly told me,
He would not stay and perish like Sempronius.

Cato. Perfidious men!—But haste, my son, and see

Thy brother Marcus acts a Roman's part.

[*Exit PORCIUS, and the Freedmen, with drawn swords.*]

Lucius, the torrent bears too hard upon me:
Justice gives way to force; the conquer'd world
Is *Cæsar's*: *Cato* has no business in it.

Luci. While pride, oppression, and injustice reign,
The world will still demand her *Cato's* presence,
In pity to mankind, submit to *Cæsar*,
And reconcile thy mighty soul to life.

Cato. Would *Lucius* have me live, to swell the number

Of *Cæsar's* slaves?—or, by a base submission,
Give up the cause of Rome, and own a tyrant?

Luci. The victor never will impose on *Cato*
Ungenerous terms:—his enemies confess,
The virtues of humanity are *Cæsar's*.

Cato. Curse on his virtues! they've undone his country:

Such popular humanity is treason.

But *Juba* comes.—The ingenuous prince appears
Full of the guilt of his perfidious subjects.

Enter JUBA.

Juba. I blush, and am confounded, to appear
Before thy presence, *Cato*.

Cato. What's thy crime?

Juba. I'm a Numidian.

Cato. And a brave one too:
Thou hast a Roman soul.

Juba. Hast thou not heard

Of my false countrymen?

Cato. Alas, good youth,

Falsehood and fraud shoot up in every soil,
The product of all climes;—Rome has its *Cæsars*.

Juba. 'Tis generous, thus to comfort the distress'd

Cato. 'Tis just, to give applause where 'tis deserv'd.

Thy virtue, prince, has stood the test of fortune,
Like purest gold, that, tortur'd in the furnace,
Comes out more bright, and brings forth all its weight.

Enter PORCIUS.

Por. Misfortune on misfortune! grief on grief!
My brother Marcus—

Cato. Hah! what has he done?

Has he forsook his post? Has he given way?

Did he look tamely on, and let them pass?

Por. Scarce had I left my father, but I met him,
Borne on the shields of his surviving soldiers,
Breathless and pale, and cover'd o'er with wounds.
Long, at the head of his few faithful friends,
He stood the shock of a whole host of foes,
Till, obstinately brave, and bent on death,
Oppress'd with multitudes, he greatly fell.

Cato. I'm satisfied.

Por. Nor did he fall, before
His sword had pierc'd thro' the false heart of Syphax.
I saw the hoary traitor
Grin in the pangs of death, and bite the ground.

Cato. Thanks to the gods! my boy has done his duty.

Porcius, when I am dead, be sure you place
His urn near mine.

Por. Long may they keep asunder!

Luci. O, *Cato*, arm thy soul with all its patience!
See where the corpse of thy dead son approaches;
The citizens and senators alarm'd
Have gather'd round it, and attend it weeping.

[*A dead march.*]

Enter Lictors, Senators.—Soldiers, bearing the body of MARCUS on a bier.—Freedmen, bearing his helmet, shield, sword, and spear.—Eagle and other ensigns S.P.Q.R. and Guards with their arms reversed.—Enter six Lictors with fasces.—CATO stands in front of the bier.

Cato. Welcome, my son!—Here set him down,
my friends,

Full in my sight; that I may view at leisure
The bloody corse, and count those glorious wounds.
How beautiful is death, when earn'd by virtue!
Who would not be that youth? What pity is it
That we can die but once, to serve our country!

Why sits this sadness on your brows, my friends?
I should have blush'd, if *Cato's* house had stood
Secure, and flourish'd in a civil war.

Porcius, behold thy brother; and remember,
Thy life is not thy own, when Rome demands it.
When Rome demands? [*Advances to the front.*] But

Rome is now no more:

The Roman empire's fall'n—O, curs'd ambition!—
Fall'n into *Cæsar's* hands:—our great forefathers
Had left him nought to conquer, but his country.

Juba. Behold that generous man! Rome fills his eyes

With tears, that flow'd not o'er his own dead son.

Por. While *Cato* lives, *Cæsar* will blush to see
Mankind enslav'd, and be asham'd of empire.

Cato. *Cæsar* asham'd! Has he not seen *Pharsalia*?

Luci. *Cato*, 'tis time, thou save thyself and us.

Cato. Lese not a thought on me; I'm out of danger;

Cæsar shall never say, "I've conquer'd *Cato*."

But, O my friends, your safety fills my heart
With anxious thoughts.—How shall I save my friends?

'Tis now, O *Cæsar*, I begin to fear thee.

Luci. *Cæsar* has mercy, if we ask it of him.

Cato. Then ask it, I conjure you: let him know,

Whate'er was done against him, *Cato* did it:

Add, if you please, that I request it of him,
The virtue of my friends may pass unpunish'd.

Juba, my heart is troubled for thy sake:

Should I advise thee to regain Numidia,

Or seek the conqueror?

Juba. If I forsake thee

Whilst I have life, may Heaven abandon *Juba*!

Cato. [*Lays his hand on JUBA.*] Thy virtues,
prince, if I foresee aright,

Will one day make thee great. At Rome, hereafter,
'Twill be no crime to have been *Cato's* friend.

Porcius, come hither to me. [*Turning to POR.*] Ah,
my son,

Despairing of success,

Let me advise thee to withdraw betimes

To our paternal seat, the Sabine field,

Where the great *Censor* toil'd with his own hands,

And all our frugal ancestors were bless'd

In humble virtues, and a rural life:

There live retir'd:

Content thyself to be obscurely good:

When vice prevails, and impious men bear sway,

The post of honour is a private station.

Por. I hope, my father does not recommend
A life to Porcius, that he scorns himself.

Cato. Farewell, my friends! [*LUCIUS and Senators join the other Senators.*] If there be
any of you

Who dare not trust the victor's clemency,
Know, there are ships prepar'd by my command,
Their sails already opening to the winds,
That shall convey you to the wish'd-for port.
Is there aught else, my friends, I can do for you?
The conqueror draws near. Once more, farewell!
If e'er we meet hereafter, we shall meet
In happier climes, and on a safer shore,
Where Cæsar never shall approach us more.

[*Pointing to the bier.*]

There the brave youth, with love of virtue fir'd
Who greatly in his country's cause expir'd,
Shall know he conquer'd. The firm patriot there,
Who made the welfare of mankind his care,
Though still by faction, vice, and fortune cross'd,
Shall find the generous labour was not lost.

[*The four Soldiers take up the Bier.—A dead March—Exeunt LUCIUS and Senators, two by two—CATO—Bier, attended as before—PORCIUS and JUBA—Eagle—Fasces, two by two—Ensigns S.P.Q.R.—Ensigns, Patentes—Guards, &c.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A Chamber in the Palace.—CATO discovered, sitting as in deep meditation, holding in his hand Plato's book on the Immortality of the Soul:—a drawn sword lying by him on the table.*

Cato. It must be so;—Plato, thou reasonest well;—
Else whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire,
This longing after immortality?
Or whence this secret dread and inward horror
Of falling into nought? Why shrinks the soul
Back on herself and startles at destruction?
'Tis the divinity that stirs within us;
'Tis Heaven itself that points out an hereafter,
And intimates eternity to man.

Eternity!—[*Rises and comes forward.*]—Thou pleasing, dreadful, thought!—

Through what variety of untried being,
Through what new scenes and changes must we pass!
The wide, the unbounded prospect lies before me,
But shadows, clouds, and darkness rest upon it.—
Here will I hold: If there's a Power above us—
(And that there is, all nature cries aloud
Through all her works)—he must delight in virtue;
And that which he delights in must be happy.
But when? or where?—This world was made for
Cæsar.—

I'm weary of conjectures: This must end 'em.

[*Goes back to the table, laying his hand on his sword.*]

Thus am I doubly arm'd: my death and life,
My bane and antidote, are both before me:
This in a moment brings me to an end;
But this informs me, I shall never die.

[*Comes forward with a roll of paper and a sword.*]

The soul, secur'd in her existence, smiles
At the drawn dagger, and defies its point.—
The stars shall fade away, the sun himself
Grow dim with age, and nature sink in years;
But thou shalt flourish in immortal youth,
Unhurt amidst the war of elements,
The wreck of matter, and the crush of worlds.—
What means this heaviness that hangs upon me?
Nature oppress'd, and harass'd out with care,
Sinks down to rest. This once I'll favour her,
That my awaken'd soul may take her flight,
Renew'd in all her strength, and fresh with life,
An offering fit for heaven. Let guilt or fear
Disturb man's rest: Cato knows neither of 'em,
Indifferent in his choice to sleep or die.—

[*Returns and sits.*]

Enter PORCIUS.

But ah! how's this?—My son! Why this intrusion?
Were not my orders that I would be private?
Why am I disobey'd?

Por. Alas, my father!

What means this sword? this instrument of death?
Let me convey it hence. [*Takes it up.*]

Cato. Rash youth, forbear!

Por. O let the prayers, the entreaties of your
friends,

Their tears, their common danger, wrest it from you.

Cato. Would'st thou betray me? would'st thou
give me up,

A slave, a captive, into Cæsar's hands?
Retire: and learn obedience to a father;
Or know, young man—

Por. Look not thus sternly on me:
You know I'd rather die than disobey you.

[*Lays it down.*]
Cato. 'Tis well: again I'm master of myself.

[*CATO takes the sword.*]

Now, Cæsar, let thy troops beset our gates,
And bar each avenue; thy gathering fleets
O'erspread the sea, and stop up every port;
Cato shall open to himself a passage,
And mock thy hopes. [*Comes forward.*]

Por. [*Kneels*] O sir, forgive my son,
Whose grief hangs heavy on him! O, my father—
How am I sure it is not the last time
I e'er shall call you so:—be not pleas'd,
O, be not angry with me, whilst I weep,
And, in the anguish of my heart, beseech you
To quit the dreadful purpose of your soul.

Cato. Thou hast been ever good and dutiful.

[*Lays his hand on his head.*]

Weep not, my son; all will be well again:
The righteous gods, whom I have sought to please,
Will succour Cato, and protect his children.

Por. Your words give comfort to my drooping
heart [*Rises.*]

Cato. Porcius, thou mayst rely upon my conduct:
Cato will never act what misbecomes him.—

But go, my son; take care that nought be wanting
Among thy father's friends; see them embark'd;
And tell me if the winds and seas befriend 'em.—
My soul is quite weigh'd down with care, and asks
The soft refreshments of a moment's sleep.

[*CATO goes up the Stage.—PORCIUS follows him and kneels at his feet.—CATO looks kindly upon him, and then exits.*]

Por. My thoughts are more at ease; my heart re-
vives.—

Enter MARCIA.

O, Marcia, O, my sister, still there's hope;

Our father will not cast away a life
So needful to us all, and to his country.
He is retir'd to rest, and seems to cherish
Thoughts full of peace. He has despatch'd me hence
With orders that bespeak a mind compos'd,
And studious for the safety of his friends.
Marcia, take care that none disturb his slumbers.

[*Erit PORCIUS.*]

Mar. O, ye immortal powers, that guard the just,
Watch round his couch, and soften his repose!
Banish his sorrows, and becalm his soul
With easy dreams! Remember all his virtues,
And shew mankind that goodness is your care!

Enter LUCIA.

Luc. Where is your father, Marcia? Where is
Cato?

Mar. Lucia, speak low:—he is retir'd to rest.
My friend, I feel a gentle dawning hope
Rise in my soul: we may be happy still.

Luc. Alas, I tremble when I think on Cato;
In every view, in every thought, I tremble.
Cato is stern, and awful as a god:

He knows not how to wink at human frailty,
Or pardon weakness that he never felt.

Mar. Though stern and awful to the foes of Rome,
He is all goodness, Lucia, always mild,
Compassionate and gentle, to his friends:
Fill'd with domestic tenderness—the best,
The kindest father!—I have ever found him
Easy, and good, and bounteous to my wishes.

Luc. 'Tis his consent alone can make us happy.
But who knows Cato's thoughts?
Who knows how yet he may dispose of Porcius?
Or how he has determin'd of thyself?

Mar. Let him but live, commit the rest to heaven.

Enter LUCIUS.

Luci. Sweet are the slumbers of the virtuous man.—
O Marcia, I have seen thy god-like father:
Some power invisible supports his soul,
And bears it up in all its wonted greatness.
A kind refreshing sleep has fallen upon him:
I saw him stretch'd at ease, his fancy lost
In pleasing dreams: as I drew near his couch,
He smil'd, and cried, Cæsar, thou canst not hurt me.

Mar. His mind still labours with some dreadful
thought.

Enter JUBA.

Juba. Lucius, the horsemen are return'd from
viewing

The number, strength, and posture of our foes,
Who now encamp within a short hour's march.
On the high point of yon bright western tower
We ken them from afar; the setting sun
Plays on their shining arms and burnish'd helmets,
And covers all the field with gleams of fire.

Luci. Marcia, 'tis time we should awake thy father,
Cæsar is still dispos'd to give us terms;
And waits at distance, till he hears from Cato.

Enter PORCIUS.

Porcius, thy looks speak somewhat of importance.
What tidings dost thou bring? Methinks, I see
Unusual gladness sparkling in thy eyes.

Por. As I was hasting to the port, where now

My father's friends, impatient for a passage,
Accuse the lingering winds, a sail arriv'd
From Pompey's son, who through the realms of Spain
Calls out for vengeance on his father's death,
And rouses the whole nation up to arms.
Were Cato at their head, once more might Rome
Assert her rights and claim her liberty.

[*Groans are heard.*]

But hark! what means that groan?—O give me way,
And let me fly into my father's presence.

[*Erit PORCIUS.*]

Luci. Cato amidst his slumbers, thinks on Rome,
And in the wild disorder of his soul
Mourns o'er his country.—

[*Groans again.*]

Hah! a second groan!—Heaven guard us all!

Mar. Alas! 'tis not the voice
Of one who sleeps: 'tis agonizing pain,
'Tis death is in that sound.

Enter PORCIUS, advances between MARCIA and JUBA.

Por. O sight of woe!

O Marcia, what we fear'd is come to pass!—
Cato has fallen upon his sword—

Luci. O Porcius,
Hide all the horrors of thy mournful tale,
And let us guess the rest.

Por. I've rais'd him up,
And plac'd him in his chair; where, pale and faint,
He gasps for breath, and, as his life flows from him,
Demands to see his friends. His servants weeping,
Obsequious to his orders, bear him hither.

Mar. O Heaven, assist me in this dreadful hour
To pay the last sad duties to my father!

*Enter two Freedmen leading CATO, supported
by his two Freedmen.—Two first Freed-
men remove the table, and remain by it.—
MARCIA runs to assist CATO. Takes his
right arm and helps to bring him to his
chair.*

Juba. These are thy triumphs, thy exploits, O,
Cæsar!

Luci. Now is Rome fallen indeed!

Cato. Here set me down.—

Porcius, come near me;—are my friends embark'd?
Can any thing be thought of for their service?

Whilst yet I live, let me not live in vain.—

O Lucius, art thou here?—Thou art too good!—

Let this our friendship live between our children;

Make Porcius happy in thy daughter Lucia.—

Alas, poor man, he weeps!—Marcia, my daughter—
O bend me forward!—Juba loves thee, Marcia.

A senator of Rome, while Rome surviv'd,
Would not have match'd his daughter with a king;
But Cæsar's arms have thrown down all distinction:
Who'er is brave and virtuous, is a Roman.—

I'm sick to death.—O, when shall I get loose
From this vain world, the abode of guilt and sorrow!—

And yet, methinks, a beam of light breaks in
On my departing soul.—Alas! I fear,
I've been too hasty.—O ye powers, that search
The heart of man, and weigh his inmost thoughts,
If I have done amiss, impute it not!—

The best may err—but you are good, and—oh!

[*Dies.*]

SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER.

A COMEDY IN FIVE ACTS,

BY OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SIR CHARLES MARLOW.
HARDCASTLE.
YOUNG MARLOW.
HASTINGS.
TONY LUMPKIN.
SERVANTS, &c.
MRS. HARDCASTLE.
MISS HARDCASTLE.
MISS NEVILLE.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Chamber in an old-fashioned house.*

Enter HARDCASTLE and MRS. HARDCASTLE.

Mrs. H. I vow, Mr. Hardcastle, you're very particular. Is there a creature in the whole country, but ourselves, that does not take a trip to town now and then, to rub off the rust a little? There's the two Miss Hoggs, and our neighbour, Mrs. Grigsby, go to take a month's polish every winter.

Hard. Ay, and bring back vanity and affectation to last them the whole year. I wonder why London cannot keep its own folks at home. In my time, the follies of the town crept slowly among us; but now they travel faster than a stage-coach. Its fopperies come down, not only as inside passengers, but in the very basket.

Mrs. H. Ay; your times were fine times, indeed; you have been telling us of them for many a long year. Here we live in an old, rumbling mansion, that looks for all the world like an inn, but that we never see company. Our best visitors are old Mrs. Oddfish, the curate's wife, and little Cripplelegate, the lame dancing-master; and all our entertainment, your old stories of Prince Eugene and the Duke of Marlborough. I hate such old-fashioned trumpery.

Hard. And I love it. I love every thing that's old: old friends, old times, old manners, old books, old wine; and I believe, Dorothy, (*taking her hand*) you'll own I have been pretty fond of an old wife.

Mrs. H. Lud! Mr. Hardcastle, you're for ever at your Dorothy's, and your old wives. You may be a Darby, but I'll be no Joan, I promise you. I'm not

so old as you'd make me by more than one good year. Add twenty to twenty, and make many of that.

Hard. Let me see: twenty added to twenty make just fifty and seven.

Mrs. H. It's false, Mr. Hardcastle! I was but twenty when I was brought to-bed of Tony; that I had by Mr Lumpkin, my first husband; and he's not come to years of discretion yet.

Hard. Nor ever will, I dare answer for him. Ay, you have taught him finely.

Mrs. H. No matter: Tony Lumpkin has a good fortune. My son is not to live by his learning. I don't think a boy wants much learning to spend fifteen hundred a-year.

Hard. Learning, quotha! a mere composition of tricks and mischief.

Mrs. H. Humour, my dear; nothing but humour. Come, Mr. Hardcastle, you must allow the boy a little humour.

Hard. I'd sooner allow him a horse-pond. If burning the footman's shoes, frightening the maids, worrying the kittens, be humour, he has it. It was but yesterday he fastened my wig to the back of my chair; and when I went to make a bow, I pop'd my bald head into Mrs. Frizzle's face.

Mrs. H. And am I to blame? The poor boy was always too sickly to do any good. A school would be his death. When he comes to be a little stronger, who knows what a year or two's latin may do for him?

Hard. Latin for him! A cat and fiddle. No, no; the alehouse and the stable are the only schools he'll ever go to.

Mrs. H. Well, we must not snub the poor boy; for I believe we sha'n't have him long among us. Any body that looks in his face may see he's consumptive.

Hard. Ay, if growing fat be one of the symptoms.

Mrs. H. He coughs sometimes.

Hard. Yes, when his liquor goes the wrong way.

Mrs. H. I'm actually afraid of his lungs.

Hard. And truly so am I; for he sometimes whoops like a speaking-trumpet. (*Tony hallooing behind the scenes,*) Oh! there he goes. A very consumptive figure truly!

Enter TONY, crossing the stage.

Mrs. H. Where are you going, my charmer? Won't you give papa and I a little of your company, lovee?

Tony. I'm in haste, mother; I can't stay.

Mrs. H. You sha'n't venture out this raw evening, my dear. You look most shockingly.

Tony. I can't stay, I tell you. The Three Pigeons expect me down every moment. There's some fun going forward.

Hard. Ay, the alehouse; the old place: I thought so.

Mrs. H. A low, paltry set of fellows.

Tony. Not so low, neither. There's Dick Muggins, the exciseman; Jack Slang, the horse-doctor; little Aminadab, that grinds the music-box; and Tom Twist, that spins the pewter-platter.

Mrs. H. Pray, my dear, disappoint them for one night, at least.

Tony. As for disappointing them, I should not so much mind; but I can't abide to disappoint myself.

Mrs. H. (Detaining him.) You sha'n't go.

Tony. I will, I tell you.

Mrs. H. I say, you sha'n't.

Tony. We'll see which is the strongest, you or I.

[*Exit, hauling her out.*]

Hard. Ay, there goes a pair that only spoil each other. But is not the whole age in a combination to drive sense and discretion out of doors? There's my pretty darling Kate; the fashions of the times have almost infected her, too. By living a year or two in town, she is as fond of gauze and French frippery as the best of them.

Enter MISS HARDCASTLE.

Blessings on my pretty innocence! Dressed out as usual, my Kate. Goodness! what a quantity of superfluous silk hast thou got about thee, girl! I could never teach the fools of this age, that the indigent world could be clothed out of the trimmings of the vain.

Miss H. You know our agreement, sir. You allow me the morning to receive and pay visits, and to dress in my own manner; and, in the evening, I put on my housewife's dress to please you.

Hard. Well, remember, I insist on the terms of our agreement; and, by the bye, I believe I shall have occasion to try your obedience this very evening.

Miss H. I protest, sir, I don't comprehend your meaning.

Hard. Then, to be plain with you, Kate, I expect the young gentleman I have chosen to be your husband from town this very day. I have his father's letter, in which he informs me his son is set out, and that he intends to follow him shortly after.

Miss H. Indeed! I wish I had known something of this before. Bless me! how shall I behave? It's a thousand to one I sha'n't like him. Our meeting will be so formal, and so like a thing of business, that I shall find no room for friendship or esteem.

Hard. Depend upon it, child, I'll never control your choice; but Mr. Marlow, whom I have pitched upon, is the son of my old friend, Sir Charles Marlow, of whom you have heard me talk so often. The young gentleman has been bred a scholar, and is designed for an employment in the service of his country. I am told he's a man of an excellent understanding.

Miss H. Is he?

Hard. Very generous.

Miss H. I believe I shall like him.

Hard. Young and brave.

Miss H. I'm sure I shall like him.

Hard. And very handsome.

Miss H. My dear papa, say no more. (*Kissing his hand.*) He's mine; I'll have him.

Hard. And, to crown all, Kate, he's one of the most bashful, reserved young fellows in the world.

Miss H. Eh! you have frozen me to death again. That word "reserved" has undone all the rest of his accomplishments. A reserved lover, it is said, always makes a suspicious husband.

Hard. On the contrary, modesty seldom resides in a breast that is not enriched with nobler virtues. It was the very feature in his character that first struck me.

Miss H. He must have more striking features to catch me, I promise you. However, if he be so young, so handsome, and so every thing, as you mention, I believe he'll do still. I think I'll have him.

Hard. Ay, Kate; but there is still an obstacle.—It's more than an even wager he may not have you.

Miss H. My dear papa, why will you mortify one so? Well, if he refuse, instead of breaking my heart at his indifference, I'll only break my glass for its flattery; set my cap to some newer fashion, and look out for some less difficult admirer.

Hard. Bravely resolved! In the meantime, I'll go preparé the servants for his reception. As we seldom see company, they want as much training as a company of recruits the first day's muster. [*Exit.*]

Miss H. Lud! this news of papa's puts me all in a flutter. Young, handsome: these he puts last, but I put them foremost. Sensible, good-natured; I like all that. But, then, reserved and sheepish;—that's much against him. Yet can't he be cured of his timidity, by being taught to be proud of his wife? Yes; and can't I!—But I vow I am disposing of the husband before I have secured the lover.

Enter MISS NEVILLE.

I'm glad you're come, Neville, my dear. Tell me, Constance, how do I look this evening? Is there any thing whimsical about me? Is it one of my well-looking days, child? Am I in face to-day?

Miss N. Perfectly, my dear. Yet, now I look again—bless me! sure no accident has happened among the canary-birds or the gold-fishes. Has your brother or the cat been meddling? Or has the last novel been too moving?

Miss H. No; nothing of all this. I have been threatened—I can scarce get it out—I have been threatened with a lover.

Miss N. And his name—

Miss H. Is Marlow.

Miss N. Indeed!

Miss H. The son of Sir Charles Marlow.

Miss N. As I live, the most intimate friend of Mr. Hastings, my admirer. They are never asunder. I believe you must have seen him when we lived in town.

Miss H. Never.

Miss N. He's a very singular character, I assure you. Among women of reputation and virtue, he is the modestest man alive; but his acquaintance give him a very different character among women of another stamp. You understand me?

Miss H. An odd character, indeed. I shall never be able to manage him. What shall I do? Psha! think no more of him; but trust to occurrences for success. But how goes on your own affair, my dear? Has my mother been courting you for my brother Tony, as usual?

Miss N. I have just come from one of our agreeable tête-à-têtes. She has been saying a hundred

tender things, and setting off her pretty monster as the very pink of perfection.

Miss H. And her partiality is such, that she actually thinks him so. A fortune like your's is no small temptation. Besides, as she has the sole management of it, I'm not surprised to see her unwilling to let it go out of the family.

Miss N. A fortune like mine, which chiefly consists in jewels, is no such mighty temptation.—But, at any rate, if my dear Hastings be but constant, I make no doubt to be too hard for her at last. However, I let her suppose that I am in love with her son; and she never once dreams that my affections are fixed upon another.

Miss H. My good brother holds 'out stoutly. I could almost love him for hating you so.

Miss N. It is a good-natured creature at bottom; and I'm sure would wish to see me married to any body but himself. But my aunt's bell rings for our afternoon's walk round the improvements. Allons! Courage is necessary, as our affairs are critical.

Miss H. Would it were bed-time, and all were well. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*An Ale-house room.*

Several shabby fellows, with punch and tobacco. TONY at the head of the table, a little higher than the rest: a mallet in his hand.

All. Hurra! hurra! hurra! bravo!

1st Fel. Now, gentlemen, silence for a song. The 'squire is going to knock himself down for a song.

All. Ay; a song, a song.

Tony. Then I'll sing you, gentlemen, a song I made upon this alehouse, the Three Pigeons.

SONG—TONY.

Let schoolmasters puzzle their brain,
With grammar, and nonsense, and learning;
Good liquor, I stoutly maintain,
Gives genius a better discerning.

Let them brag of their Heathenish gods,
Their Lethe, their Styx, and Stygians;
Their quips, and their quoes, and their quods,
They're all but a parcel of pigeons.

Toroddle, toroddle, toroll.

When methodist preachers come down
A-preaching that drinking is sinful,
I'll wager the rascals a crown
They always preach best with a skinful.
But when you come down with your pence,
For a slice of their scurvy religion,
I'll leave it to all men of sense,

But you, my good friend, are the pigeon.

Toroddle, toroddle, toroll.

Then, come, put the jorum about,
And let us be merry and clever;
Our hearts and our liquors are stout—
Here's the Three Jolly Pigeons for ever.
Let some cry up woodcock or hare,
Your bustards, your ducks, and your widgeons;
But of all the birds in the air,

Here's a health to the Three Jolly Pigeons.

Toroddle, toroddle, toroll.

All. Bravo, bravo!

1st Fel. The squire has got spunk in him.

2d Fel. I loves to hear him sing, bekase he never gives us nothing that's low.

3d Fel. Oh! d—n any thing that's low; I can't bear it.

4th Fel. The genteel thing is the genteel thing at any time, if so be that a gentleman bees in a concatenation accordingly.

3d Fel. I like the maxim of it, Master Muggins. What! though I am obligated to dance a bear, a man may be a gentleman for all that. May this be my poison, if my bear ever dances but to the very genteelst of tunes—"Water parted," or the minuet in Ariadne.

2d Fel. What a pity it is the 'squire is not come to his own. It would be well for all the publicans within ten miles round him.

Tony. Ecod! and so it would, Master Slang. I'd then shew what it was to keep choice company.

2d Fel. Oh! he takes after his own father for that. To be sure, old 'Squire Lumpkin was the finest gentleman I ever set my eyes on. For winding the strait-horn, or beating a thicket for a hare, or a wench, he never had his fellow. It was a saying in the place, that he kept the best horses, dogs, and girls in the whole county.

Tony. Ecod! and when I'm of age I'll be no bastard, I promise you. I have been thinking of Bet Bouncer, and the miller's grey mare, to begin with. But come, my boys, drink about and be merry, for you pay no reckoning. Well, Stingo, what's the matter?

Enter LANDLORD.

Land. There be two gentlemen, in a post-chaise at the door. They've lost their way upon the forest, and they are talking something about Mr. Hardcastle.

Tony. As sure as can be, one of them must be the gentleman that's coming down to court my sister. Do they seem to be Londoners?

Land. I believe they may. They look woundily like Frenchmen.

Tony. Then desire them to step this way, and I'll set them right in a twinkling.

[*Exit Landlord.*]

Gentlemen, as they mayn't be good enough company for you, step down for a moment, and I'll be with you in the squeezing of a lemon. [*Exeunt Mob.*] Father-in-law has been calling me a whelp and hound, this half-year. Now, if I pleased, I could be so revenged upon the old grumbletonian. But then I am afraid—afraid of what? I shall soon be worth fifteen hundred a-year, and let him frighten me out of that, if he can.

Enter Landlord, conducting MARLOW and HASTINGS.

Mar. What a tedious, uncomfortable day have we had of it! We were told it was but forty miles across the country, and we have come about three-score.

Hast. And all, Marlow, from that unaccountable reserve of your's, that would not let us inquire more frequently on the way.

Mar. I own, Hastings, I am unwilling to lay myself under an obligation to every one I meet; and often stand the chance of an unmannerly answer.

Hast. At present, however, we are not likely to receive any answer.

Tony. No offence, gentlemen; but I'm told you have been inquiring for one Mr. Hardcastle, in these parts. Do you know what part of the country you are in?

Hast. Not in the least, sir; but should thank you for information.

Tony. Nor in the way you came?

Hast. No, sir; but if you can inform us—

Tony. Why, gentlemen, if you know neither the road you are going, nor where you are, nor the road you came, the first thing I have to inform you^{is}, that—you have lost your way.

Mar. We wanted no ghost to tell us that.

Tony. Pray, gentlemen, may I be so bold as to ask the place from whence you came?

Mar. That's not necessary towards directing us where we are to go.

Tony. No offence; but question for question is all fair, you know. Pray, gentlemen, is not this same Hardcastle, a cross-grain'd, old-fashion'd, whimsical fellow, with an ugly face, a daughter, and a pretty son?

Hast. We have not seen the gentleman; but he has the family you mention.

Tony. The daughter, a tall, trapesing, trolloping, talkative, maypole; the son, a pretty, well-bred, agreeable youth, that everybody is fond of.

Mar. Our information differs in this: the daughter is said to be well-bred and beautiful; the son, an awkward booby, reared up and spoiled at his mother's apron-string.

Tony. He-he-hem. Then, gentlemen, all I have to tell you is, that you won't reach Mr. Hardcastle's house this night, I believe.

Hast. Unfortunate!

Tony. It's a d—d long, dark, boggy, dangerous way. Stingo, tell the gentlemen the way to Mr. Hardcastle's (*winking at the Landlord*)—Mr. Hardcastle's, of Quagmire-marsh. You understand me.

Land. Master Hardcastle's? Lack-a-daisy! my masters, you're come a deadly deal wrong. When you came to the bottom of the hill, you should have cross'd down Squash-lane.

Mar. Cross down Squash-lane?

Land. Then you were to keep straight forward till you came to the four roads.

Mar. Come to where four roads meet?

Tony. Ay; but you must be sure to take only one.

Mar. Oh, sir! you're facetious.

Tony. Then, keeping to the right, you are to go sideways till you come upon Crack-skull common; there you must look sharp for the track of the wheel, and go forward till you come to farmer Murrain's barn. Coming to the farmer's barn, you are to turn to the right, and then to the left, and then to the right about again, till you find out the old mill—

Mar. Zounds! man, we could as soon find out the longitude!

Hast. What's to be done, Marlow?

Mar. This house promises but a poor reception; though, perhaps, the landlord can accommodate us.

Land. Alack, master! we have but one spare bed in the whole house.

Tony. And, to my knowledge, that's taken up by three lodgers already. [*After a pause, in which the rest seem disconcerted.*] I have hit it: don't you think, Stingo, our landlady would accommodate the gentlemen by the fireside, with three chairs and a bolster?

Hast. I hate sleeping by the fireside.

Mar. And I detest your three chairs and a bolster.

Tony. You do, do you? Then let me see—what if you go on a mile further, to the Buck's Head, the old Buck's Head, on the hill, one of the best inns in the whole country—

Hast. O ho! so, we have escaped an adventure for this night, however.

Land. [*Apart to TONY.*] Sure you bean't sending them to your father's as an inn, be you?

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Tony. Mum! you fool, you; let them find that out. [*To them.*] You have only to keep on straight forward till you come to a large house on the road side: you'll see a pair of large horns over the door; that's the sign. Drive up the yard, and call stoutly about you.

Hast. Sir, we are obliged to you. The servants can't miss the way.

Tony. No, no: but I'll tell you though, the landlord is rich, and going to leave off business: so he wants to be thought a gentleman, saving your presence, he, he, he! He'll be for giving you his company; and, ecod! if you mind him, he'll persuade you that his mother was an alderman, and his aunt a justice of peace.

Land. A troublesome old blade, to be sure; but a keeps as good wines and beds as any in the whole county.

Mar. Well, if he supplies us with these, we shall want no further connexion. We are to turn to the right, did you say?

Tony. No, no, straight forward. I'll just step, myself, and shew you a piece of the way. [*To the Landlord.*] Mum!

Land. Ah, bless your heart, for a sweet, pleasant—d—d mischievous son of a w—! [*Aside.*] [*Exit.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—An old-fashioned House.

Enter HARDCASTLE, followed by three or four awkward servants.

Hard. Well, I hope you are perfect in the table exercise I have been teaching you these three days. You all know your posts and your places; and can shew that you have been used to good company, without stirring from home.

All. Ay, ay.

Hard. When company comes you are not to pop out and stare, and then run in again, like frightened rabbits in a warren.

All. No, no.

Hard. You, Diggory, whom I have taken from the barn, are to make a shew at the side-table; and you, Roger, whom I have advanced from the plough, are to place yourself behind my chair. But you're not to stand so, with your hands in your pockets. Take your hands from your pockets, Roger; and from your head, you blockhead you. See how Diggory carries his hands: they're a little too stiff, indeed, but that's no great matter.

Dig. Ay, mind how I hold them; I learned to hold my hands this way when I was upon drill for the militia; and so being upon drill—

Hard. You must not be so talkative, Diggory; you must be all attention to the guests: you must hear us talk, and not think of talking; you must see us drink, and not think of drinking; you must see us eat, and not think of eating.

Dig. By the laws, your worship, that's perfectly impossible. Whenever Diggory sees eating going forwards, ecod! he's always wishing for a mouthful himself.

Hard. Blockhead! is not a bellyful in the kitchen as good as a bellyful in the parlour? Stay your stomach with that reflection.

Dig. Ecod! I thank your worship, I'll make a shift to stay my stomach with a slice of cold beef in the pantry.

Hard. Diggory, you're too talkative. Then if I

happen to say a good thing, or tell a good story at table, you must not all burst out a-laughing, as if you made part of the company.

Dig. Then, ecod! your worship must not tell the story of Ould Grouse in the gun-room: I can't help laughing at that, he, he, he! for the soul of me. We have laughed at that these twenty years; ha, ha, ha!

Hard. Ha, ha, ha! The story is a good one. Well, honest Diggory, you may laugh at that; but still remember to be attentive. Suppose one of the company should call for a glass of wine, how will you behave? A glass of wine, sir, if you please. [*To Diggory.*] Eh, why don't you move?

Dig. Ecod! your worship, I never have courage till I see the eatables and drinkables brought upon table, and then I'm as bauld as a lion.

Hard. A glass of wine, if you please. What, will nobody move?

1st Serv. I'm not to leave this place.

2nd Serv. I'm sure it's no place of mine.

3rd Serv. Nor mine, for sartin.

Dig. Wauns! and I'm sure it canna be mine.

Hard. You numskulls! and so, while, like your betters, you are quarrelling for places, the guests must be starved. Oh! you dunces! I find I must begin all over again. But don't I hear a coach drive into the yard? To your posts, you blockheads. I'll go in the meantime, and give my old friend's son a hearty welcome at the gate. [*Exit.*]

Dig. By the heavens! my place is quite gone out of my head.

Roger. I know that my place is to be everywhere.

1st Serv. Where the devil is mine?

2nd Serv. My place is no where at all; and so I've got about my business. [*Exeunt Servants.*]

Enter MARLOW and HASTINGS.

Hast. After the disappointments of the day, welcome once more, Charles, to the comforts of a clean room and a good fire. Upon my word, a very well looking house; antique, but creditable.

Mar. The usual fate of a large mansion. Having first ruined the master by good house-keeping, it has at last come to levy contributions as an inn.

Hast. As you say, we passengers are to be taxed to pay all these fineries. I have often seen a good sideboard, or a marble chimney-piece, though not actually put in the bill, inflame the bill confoundedly.

Mar. Travellers must pay in all places; the only difference is, that in good inns, you pay dearly for luxuries; in bad inns you are fleeced and starved.

Hast. You have lived pretty much among them. In truth, I have been often surprised that you, who have seen so much of the world, with your natural good sense, and your many opportunities, could never yet acquire a requisite share of assurance.

Mar. The Englishman's malady: but tell me, George, where could I have learned that assurance you talk of? My life has been chiefly spent in a college or an inn, in seclusion from that lovely part of the creation that chiefly teach men confidence. I don't know that I was ever familiarly acquainted with a single modest woman, except my mother; but among females of another class, you know—

Hast. Ay, among them you are impudent enough of all conscience.

Mar. They are of us, you know.

Hast. But in the company of women of reputation I never saw such an idiot, such a trembler; you look for all the world as if you wanted an opportunity of stealing out of the room.

Mar. Why, man, that's because I do want to steal out of the room. Faith! I have often formed a resolution to break the ice, and rattle away at any rate. But I don't know how, a single glance from a pair of fine eyes has totally overset my resolution. An impudent fellow may counterfeit modesty, but I'll be hanged if a modest man can ever counterfeit impudence.

Hast. If you could say but half the fine things to them that I have heard you lavish upon the barmaid of an inn, or even a college bed-maker—

Mar. Why, George, I can't say fine things to them; they freeze, they petrify me. They may talk of a comet, or a burning mountain, or some such bagatelle; but to me, a modest woman, drest out in all her finery, is the most tremendous object of the whole creation.

Hast. Ha, ha, ha! As this rate, man, how can you ever expect to marry?

Mar. Never; unless, as among kings and princes, my bride were to be courted by proxy. If, indeed, like an eastern bridegroom, one were to be introduced to a wife he never saw before, it might be endured. But to go through all the terrors of a formal courtship, together with the episode of aunts, grandmothers, cousins, and at last to blurt out the broad start-question, of "Madam, will you marry me?" No, no, that's a strain much above me, I assure you.

Hast. I pity you; but how do you intend behaving to the lady you are come down to visit at the request of your father?

Mar. As I behave to all other ladies. Bow very low;—answer yes, or no, to all her demands; but for the rest, I don't think I shall venture to look in her face till I see my father's again.

Hast. I'm surprised, that one who is so warm a friend can be so cool a lover.

Mar. To be explicit, my dear Hastings, my chief inducement to come down was to be instrumental in forwarding your happiness, not my own. Miss Neville loves you; the family don't know you; as my friend, you are sure of a reception, and let honour do the rest.

Enter HARDCASTLE.

Hard. Gentlemen, once more you are heartily welcome. Which is Mr Marlow? [*Mar. advances.*] Sir, you're heartily welcome. It's not my way, you see, to receive my friends with my back to the fire! I like to give them a hearty reception, in the old style, at my gate; I like to see their horses and trunks taken care of.

Mar. [*Aside.*] He has got our names from the servants already. [*To HARD.*] We approve your caution and hospitality, sir. [*To HAST.*] I have been thinking, George, of changing our travelling dresses in the morning; I am grown confoundedly ashamed of mine.

Hast. I beg, Mr. Marlow, you'll use no ceremony in this house.

Hast. I fancy, you're right: the first blow is half the battle. We must, however, open the campaign.

Hard. Mr. Marlow—Mr. Hastings—gentlemen—pray be under no restraint in this house. This is Liberty-hall, gentlemen; you may do just as you please here.

Mar. Yet, George, if we open the campaign too fiercely at first, we may want ammunition before it is over. We must shew our generalship by securing, if necessary, a retreat.

Hard. Your talking of a retreat, Mr. Marlow, puts me in mind of the Duke of Marlborough, when he

went to besiege Denain. He first summoned the garrison—

Mar. Ay, and we'll summon your garrison, old boy.

Hard. He first summoned the garrison, which might consist of about five thousand men—

Hast. Marlow, what's o'clock?

Hard. I say, gentlemen, as I was telling you, he summoned the garrison, which might consist of about five thousand men—

Mar. Five minutes to seven.

Hard. Which might consist of about five thousand men, well appointed with stores, ammunition, and other implements of war. Now, says the Duke of Marlborough to George Brooks, that stood next to him—You must have heard of George Brooks—I'll pawn my dukedom, says he, but I take that garrison without spilling a drop of blood. So—

Mar. What? My good friend, if you give us a glass of punch in the meantime, it would help us to carry on the siege with vigour.

Hard. Punch, sir!—This is the most unaccountable kind of modesty I ever met with. [*Aside.*]

Mar. Yes, sir, punch. A glass of warm punch after our journey will be comfortable.

Enter Servant with a tankard.

This is Liberty-hall, you know.

Hard. Here's a cup, sir.

Mar. So this fellow, in his Liberty-hall, will only let us have just what he pleases. [*Aside to HAST.*]

Hard. [*Taking the cup.*] I hope you'll find it to your mind. I have prepared it with my own hands, and I believe you'll own the ingredients are tolerable. Will you be so good as to pledge me, sir? Here, Mr. Marlow, here is to our better acquaintance. [*Drinks, and gives the cup to Marlow.*]

Mar. A very impudent fellow this; but he's a character, and I'll humour him a little [*Aside.*] Sir, my service to you.

Hast. I see this fellow wants to give us his company, and forgets that he's an innkeeper, before he has learned to be a gentleman. [*Aside.*]

Mar. From the excellence of your cup, my old friend, I suppose you have a good deal of business in this part of the country. Warm work, now and then, at elections, I suppose. [*Gives the tankard to HARDCASTLE.*]

Hard. No, sir, I have long given that work over. Since our betters have hit upon the expedient of electing each other, there's no business for us that sell ale. [*Gives the tankard to HASTINGS.*]

Hast. So, you have no turn for politics, I find.

Hard. Not in the least. There was a time, indeed, I fretted myself about the mistakes of government, like other people; but finding myself every day grow more angry, and the government growing no better, I left it to mend itself. Since that, I no more trouble my head about who's in or who's out, than I do about John Nokes or Tom Stiles. So my service to you.

Hast. So that, with eating above stairs and drinking below, with receiving your friends within, and amusing them without, you lead a good, pleasant, bustling life of it.

Hard. I do stir about a good deal, that's certain. Half the differences of the parish are adjusted in this very parlour.

Mar. [*After drinking.*] And you have an argument in your cup, old gentleman, better than any in Westminster-hall.

Hard. Ay, young gentleman, that, and a little philosophy.

Mar. Well, this is the first time I ever heard of an innkeeper's philosophy. [*Aside.*]

Hast. So, then, like an experienced general, you attack them on every quarter. If you find their reason manageable, you attack them with your philosophy; if you find that they have no reason, you attack them with this. Here's your health, my philosopher. [*Drinks.*]

Hard. Good, very good; thank you, ha! ha! Your generalship puts me in mind of Prince Eugene, when he fought the Turks at the battle of Belgrade. You shall hear.

Mar. Instead of the battle of Belgrade, I think it's almost time to talk about supper. What has your philosophy got in the house for supper?

Hard. For supper, sir? Was ever such a request to a man in his own house? [*Aside.*]

Mar. Yes, sir, supper sir; I begin to feel an appetite. I shall make devilish work to-night in the larder, I promise you.

Hard. Such a brazen dog sure never my eyes beheld. [*Aside.*] Why, really, sir, as for supper, I can't well tell. My Dorothy and the cookmaid settle these things between them I leave these kind of things entirely to them,

Mar. You do, do you?

Hard. Entirely. By-the-by, I believe they are in actual consultation upon what's for supper this moment in the kitchen.

Mar. Then I beg they'll admit me as one of their privy council. It's a way I've got. When I travel, I always choose to regulate my own supper. Let the cook be called. No offence, I hope, sir.

Hard. Oh! no, sir, none in the least; yet, I don't know how, our Bridget, the cookmaid, is not very communicative upon these occasions. Should we send for her, she might scold us all out of the house.

Hast. Let's see the list of the larder then. I always match my appetite to my bill of fare.

Mar. To HARDCASTLE, who looks at them with surprise.] Sir, he's very right, and it's my way, too.

Hard. Sir, you have a right to command here. Here, Roger, bring us the bill of fare for to-night's supper: I believe it's drawn out. Your manner, Mr. Hastings, puts me in mind of my uncle, Colonel Wallop. It was a saying of his, that no man was sure of his supper till he had eaten it. [*Servant brings in the bill of fare, and exit.*]

Hast. All upon the high ropes! His uncle a colonel. We shall soon hear of his mother being a justice of peace. [*Aside.*] But let's hear the bill of fare.

Mar. [*Perusing.*] What's here? For the first course; for the second course; for the dessert.—The devil, sir! Do you think we have brought down the whole Joiners's Company, or the Corporation of Bedford, to eat up such a supper? Two or three little things, clean and comfortable, will do.

Hast. But let's hear it.

Mar. [*Reading.*] For the first course; at the top, a pig and prune sauce.

Hast. D— your pig, say I.

Mar. And d— your prune sauce, say I.

Hard. And yet, gentlemen, to men that are hungry, pig with prune sauce, is very good eating. Their impudence confounds me. [*Aside.*] Gentlemen, you are my guests, make what alterations you please. Is there anything else you wish to retrench or alter, gentlemen?

Mar. Item: a pork pie, a boiled rabbit and sausages, a florentine, a shaking pudding, and a dish of tiff—taff—taffey cream.

Hast. Confound your made dishes! I shall be as much at a loss in this house, as at a green and yellow dinner at the French ambassador's table. I'm for plain eating.

Hard. I'm sorry, gentlemen, that I have nothing you like; but if there be anything you have a particular fancy to—

Mar. Why, really, sir, your bill of fare is so exquisite, that any one part of it is full as good as another. Send us what you please. So much for supper; and now to see that our beds are aired, and properly taken care of.

Hard. I intreat you'll leave all that to me. You shall not stir a step.

Mar. Leave that to you! I protest, sir, you must excuse me, I always look to these things myself.

Hard. I must insist, sir, you'll make yourself easy on that head.

Mar. You see I'm resolved on it. A very troublesome fellow, as ever I met with. [*Aside.*]

Hard. Well, sir, I'm resolved, at least, to attend you. This may be modern modesty, but I never saw anything look so like old-fashioned impudence.

[*Aside, and exit with MAR.*]

Hast. So, I find this fellow's civilities begin to grow troublesome. But who can be angry with those assiduities which are meant to please him? Ah! what do I see? Miss Neville, by all that's happy.

Enter Miss NEVILLE.

Miss N. My dear Hastings! To what unexpected good fortune, to what accident, am I to ascribe this happy meeting?

Hast. Rather, let me ask the same question, as I could never have hoped to meet my dearest Constance at an inn.

Miss N. An inn! you mistake: my aunt, my guardian, lives here. What could induce you to think this house an inn?

Hast. My friend, Mr. Marlow, with whom I came down, and I, have been sent here as to an inn, I assure you. A young fellow, whom we accidentally met at a house hard by, directed us hither.

Miss N. Certainly it must be one of my hopeful cousin's tricks, of whom you have heard me talk so often. Ha, ha, ha!

Hast. He whom your aunt intends for you? He of whom I have such just apprehensions?

Miss N. You have nothing to fear from him, I assure you. You'd adore him, if you knew how heartily he despises me. My aunt knows it too, and has undertaken to court me for him, and actually begins to think she has made a conquest.

Hast. Thou dear dissembler! You must know, my Constance, I have just seized this happy opportunity of my friend's visit here, to get admittance into the family. The horses that carried us down are now fatigued with the journey, but they'll soon be refreshed; and then, if my dearest girl will trust in her faithful Hastings, we shall soon be landed in France, where, even among slaves, the laws of marriage are respected.

Miss N. I have often told you, that though ready to obey you, I yet should leave my little fortune behind with reluctance. The greatest part of it was left me by my uncle, the India Director, and chiefly consists in jewels. I have been for some time persuading my aunt to let me wear them. I fancy I'm very near succeeding. The instant they are put in thy possession, you shall find me ready to make them and myself yours.

Hast. Perish the baubles! Your person is all I

desire. In the meantime, my friend Marlow must not be let into his mistake. I know the strange reserve of his temper is such, that if abruptly informed of it, he would instantly quit the house, before our plan was ripe for execution.

Miss N. But how shall we keep him in the deception? Miss Hardcastle is just returned from walking; what if we persuade him she is come to this house as to an inn? Come this way. [*They confer.*]

Enter MARLOW.

Mar. The assiduities of these good people tease me beyond bearing. My host seems to think it ill manners to leave me alone, and so he claps, not only himself, but his old-fashioned wife upon my back. They talk of coming to sup with us, too; and then, I suppose, we are to run the gauntlet through all the rest of the family. What have we got here?

Hast. My dear Charles, let me congratulate you. The most fortunate accident! Who do you think has just alighted?

Mar. Cannot guess.

Hast. Our mistresses, boy! Miss Hardcastle and Miss Neville. Give me leave to introduce Miss Constance Neville to your acquaintance. Happening to dine in the neighbourhood, they called on their return to take fresh horses here. Miss Hardcastle has just stepped into the next room, and will be back in an instant. Wasn't it lucky? eh!

Mar. I have just been mortified enough of all conscience, and here comes something to complete my embarrassment. [*Aside.*]

Hast. Well, but wasn't it the most fortunate thing in the world?

Mar. Oh! yes;—very fortunate;—a most joyful encounter. But our dresses, George, you know, are in disorder. What if we postpone the happiness till to-morrow? To-morrow, at her own house: it will be every bit as convenient, and rather more respectful. To-morrow let it be. [*Offering to go.*]

Miss N. By no means, sir. Your ceremony will displease her. The disorder of your dress will shew the ardour of your impatience. Besides, she knows you are in the house, and will permit you to see her.

Mar. Oh! the devil! How shall I support it? Hem, hem! Hastings, you must not go. You are to assist me, you know. I shall be confoundedly ridiculous. Yet, hang it! I'll take courage. Hem! [*Aside to HAST.*]

Hast. Psha, man! 'tis put the first plunge, and all's over. She's but a woman, you know. [*Aside to MAR.*]

Mar. And of all women, she that I dread most to encounter!

Enter Miss HARDCASTLE, as returned from walking.

Hast. [*Introducing them.*] Miss Hardcastle, Mr. Marlow. I'm proud of bringing two persons together, who only want to know, to esteem each other.

Miss H. [*Aside.*] Now, for meeting my modest gentleman with a demure face, and quite in his own manner. [*After a pause, in which he appears very uneasy and disconcerted.*] I'm glad of your safe arrival, sir. I'm told you had some accidents by the way.

Mar. Only a few, madam. Yes, we had some. Yes, madam, a good many accidents, but should be sorry, madam—or, rather, glad of any accidents—that are so agreeably concluded. Hem!

Hast. [*Aside to MAR.*] You never spoke better in your whole life. Keep it up, and I'll insure you the victory.

Miss H. I'm afraid you flatter sir. You that

have seen so much of the finest company, can find little entertainment in an obscure corner of the country.

Mar. [*Gathering courage.*] I have lived, indeed, in the world, madam; but I have kept very little company. I have been but an observer upon life, madam, while others were enjoying it.

Miss H. An observer, like you, upon life, was, I fear, disagreeably employed, since you must have had much more to censure than to approve.

Mar. Pardon me, madam: I was always willing to be amused. The folly of most people is rather an object of my mirth than uneasiness.

Hast. [*Aside to MAR.*] Bravo, bravo! Never spoke so well in your whole life. Well, Miss Hardcastle, I see that you and Mr. Marlow are going to be very good company. I believe our being here will but embarrass the interview.

Mar. Not in the least, Mr. Hastings. We like your company of all things. [*Aside to HAST.*] Zounds! George, sure you won't go. How can you leave us?

Hast. Our presence will but spoil conversation, so we'll retire to the next room. [*Aside to MAR.*] You don't consider, man, that we are to manage a little *tête-à-tête* of our own. [*Exit with Miss N.*]

Miss H. [*After a pause.*] But you have not been wholly an observer, I presume, sir. The ladies, I hope, have employed some part of your addresses.

Mar. [*Relapsing into timidity.*] Pardon me, madam, I—I—I—as yet have studied—only—to—deserve them.

Miss H. And that, some say, is the very worst way to obtain them.

Mar. Perhaps so, madam: but I love to converse only with the more grave and sensible part of the sex. But I'm afraid I grow tiresome.

Miss H. Not at all, sir; there is nothing I like so much as grave conversation myself: I could hear it for ever. Indeed, I have often been surprised how a man of sentiment could ever admire those light, airy pleasures, where nothing reaches the heart.

Mar. It's—a disease of the mind, madam. In variety of tastes, there must be some who wanting a relish for—um—a—um.

Miss H. I understand you, sir. There must be some who, wanting a relish for refined pleasures, pretend to despise what they are incapable of tasting.

Mar. My meaning, madam; but infinitely better expressed. And I can't help observing, that in this age of hypocrisy—a—

Miss H. Who could ever suppose this fellow impudent on some occasions? [*Aside.*] You were going to observe, sir—

Mar. I was observing, madam—I protest, madam, I forget what I was going to observe.

Miss H. I vow, and so do I. [*Aside.*] You were observing, sir, that in this age of hypocrisy,—something about hypocrisy, sir.

Mar. Yes, madam; in this age of hypocrisy, there are few who, upon strict inquiry, do not—a—a—

Miss H. I understand you perfectly, sir.

Mar. [*Aside.*] Egad! and that's more than I do myself.

Miss H. You mean that, in this hypocritical age, there are few that do not condemn in public, what they practise in private, and think they pay every debt to virtue when they praise it.

Mar. True, madam; those who have most virtue in their mouths, have least of it in their bosoms. But I see Miss Neville expecting us in the next room. I would not intrude for the world.

Miss H. I protest, sir, I never was more agreeably entertained in all my life. Pray, go on.

Mar. Yes, madam. I was—but she beckons us to join her. Madam, shall I do myself the honour to attend you.

Miss H. Well, then, I'll follow.

Mar. [*Aside.*] This pretty smooth dialogue has done for me. [*Exit.*]

Miss H. Ha, ha, ha! Was there ever such a sober, sentimental interview? I'm certain he scarce looked me in my face the whole time. Yet the fellow, but for his unaccountable bashfulness, is pretty well too. He has good sense, but then so buried in his fears, that it fatigues one more than ignorance. If I could teach him a little confidence, it would be doing somebody that I know of, a piece of service. But who is that somebody?—that, faith, is a question I can scarcely answer. [*Exit.*]

Enter TONY and MISS NEVILLE, followed by Mrs. HARDCASTLE and HASTINGS.

Tony. What do you follow me for, cousin Con? I wonder you're not ashamed to be so very engaging.

Miss N. I hope, cousin, one may speak to one's own relations, and not be to blame.

Tony. Ay, but I know what sort of a relation you want to make me, though; but it won't do. I tell you, cousin Con, it won't do; so I beg you'll keep your distance; I want no nearer relationship. [*She follows, coquetting him to the back scene.*]

Mrs. H. Well, I vow, Mr. Hastings, you are very entertaining. There's nothing in the world I love to talk of so much as London, and the fashions, though I was never there myself.

Hast. Never there! you amaze me! from your air and manner, I concluded you had been bred all your life either at Ranelagh, St. James's, or Tower-wharf.

Mrs. H. Oh! sir, you're only pleased to say so. We country persons can have no manner at all. I'm in love with the town, and that serves to raise me above some of our neighbouring rustics; but who can have a manner that has never seen the Pantheon, the Grotto Gardens, the Borough, and such places where the nobility chiefly resort; all I can do, is to enjoy London at second-hand. I take care to know every *tête-à-tête* from the Scandalous Magazine, and have all the fashions as they come out, in a letter from the two Miss Ricketts, of Crooked-lane. Pray, how do you like this head?

Hast. Extremely elegant and *degagée*, upon my word. Your friseur is a Frenchman, I suppose.

Mrs. H. I protest I dressed it myself from a print in the Ladies' Memorandum-book for the last year.

Hast. Indeed! such a head in a side-box at the play-house, would draw as many gazers as my lady mayoress at a city-ball.

Mrs. H. One must dress a little particular, or one may escape in the crowd.

Hast. But that can never be your case, madam, in any dress. [*Bowing.*]

Mrs. H. Yet, what signifies my dressing, when I have such a piece of antiquity by my side as Mr. Hardcastle? All I can say will not argue down a single button from his clothes. I have often wanted him to throw off his great flaxen wig, and where he was bald, to plaster it over, like my Lord Pately, with powder.

Hast. You are right, madam; for, as among the ladies there are none ugly, so among the men there are none old.

Mrs. H. But what do you think his answer was? Why, with his usual gothic vivacity, he said, I only

wanted him to throw off his wig, to convert it into a *tête* for my own wearing.

Hast. Intolerable!—at your age you may wear what you please, and it must become you.

Mrs. H. Pray, Mr. Hastings, what do you take to be the most fashionable age about town?

Hast. Some time ago, forty was all the mode; but I'm told, the ladies intend to bring up fifty for the ensuing winter.

Mrs. H. Seriously? Then I shall be too young for the fashion.

Hast. No lady begins now to put on jewels till she's past forty. For instance, miss there, in a polite circle, would be considered as a child, a mere maker of samplers.

Mrs. H. And yet, Mrs. Niece thinks herself as much a woman, and is as fond of jewels, as the oldest of us all.

Hast. Your niece, is she? And that young gentleman, a brother of your's, I should presume?

Mrs. H. My son, sir. They are contracted to each other. Observe their little sports. They fall in and out ten times a day, as if they were man and wife already. [To them.] Well, Tony, child, what soft things are you saying to your cousin Constance, this evening?

Tony. I have been saying no soft things; but, that it's very hard to be followed about so. Ecod! I've not a place in the house that's left to myself but the stable.

Mrs. H. Never mind him, Con., my dear. He's in another story behind your back.

Miss N. There's something generous in my cousin's manner. He falls out before faces, to be forgiven in private.

Tony. That's a d—d confounded—crack.

Mrs. H. Ah! he's a sly one. Don't you think they're like each other about the mouth, Mr. Hastings? The Blenkinsop mouth to a T. They're of a size, too. Back to back, my pretties, that Mr. Hastings may see you.

Tony. You had as good not make me, I tell you.

Miss N. Oh, lud! he has almost cracked my head.

Mrs. H. Oh! the monster! for shame, Tony! You a man, and behave so!

Tony. If I'm a man, let me have my fortin. Ecod! I'll not be made a fool of any longer.

Mrs. H. Is this, ungrateful boy! all that I'm to get for the pains I have taken in your education? I, that have rocked you in your cradle, and fed that pretty mouth with a spoon! Did not I work that waistcoat to make you look genteel?

Tony. But, ecod! I tell you I'll not be made a fool of no longer.

Mrs. H. Wasn't it all for your good, viper? Wasn't it all for your good?

Tony. I wish you'd let me and my good alone, then. Snubbing this way, when I'm in spirits. If I'm to have any good, let it come of itself; not to keep dinging it, dinging it into one so.

Mrs. H. That's false; I never see you when you're in spirits. No, Tony, you then go to the alehouse or kennel, I'm never to be delighted with your agreeable wild notes, unfeeling monster!

Tony. Ecod? mamma, your own notes are the wildest of the two.

Mrs. H. Was ever the like? But I see he wants to break my heart, I see he does.

Hast. Dear madam, permit me to lecture the young gentleman a little. I'm certain I can persuade him to his duty.

Mrs. H. Well, I must retire. Come, Constance;

my love. You see, Mr. Hastings, the wretchedness of my situation: was ever poor woman so plagued with a dear, sweet, pretty, provoking, undutiful boy! [Exit with Miss N.]

Tony. [Singing.]

"There was a young man riding by,
And fain would have his will.

Rang do dillo dee."

Don't mind her. Let her cry. It's the comfort of her heart. I have seen her and sister cry over a book for an hour together, and they said they liked the book the better, the more it made them cry.

Hast. Then you're no friend to the ladies, I find, my pretty young gentleman?

Tony. That's as I find 'em.

Hast. Not to her of your mother's choosing, I dare answer. And yet, she appears to me a pretty, well-tempered girl.

Tony. That's because you don't know her as well as I. Ecod! I know every inch about her; and there's not a more bitter, cantankerous toad in all Christendoom.

Hast. Pretty encouragement for a lover! [Aside.]

Tony. I have seen her since the height of that. She has as many tricks as a hare in a thicket, or a colt the first day's breaking.

Hast. To me she appears sensible and silent.

Tony. Ay, before company. But when she's with her playmates, she's as loud as a hog in a gate.

Hast. But there is a meek modesty about her that charms me.

Tony. Yes, but curb her never so little, she kicks up, and you're flung in the ditch.

Hast. Well, but you must allow her a little beauty—yes, you must allow her some beauty.

Tony. Bandbox! she's all a made-up thing, mum. Ah! could you but see Bet Bouncer of these parts, you might then talk of beauty. Ecod! she has two eyes as black as sloes, and cheeks as broad and red as a pulpit cushion. She'd make two of she.

Hast. Well, what say you to a friend that would take this bitter bargain off your hands?

Tony. Anan?

Hast. Would you thank him that would take Miss Neville, and leave you to happiness and your dear Betsy?

Tony. Ay; but where is there such a friend? for who would take her?

Hast. I am he. If you but assist me, I'll engage to whip her off to France, and you shall never hear more of her.

Tony. Assist you! Ecod! I will to the last drop of my blood. I'll clap a pair of horses to your chaise, that shall trundle you off in a twinkling; and, may be, get you a part of her fortin beside, in jewels, that you little dream of.

Hast. My dear squire, this looks like a lad of spirit.

Tony. Come along, then, and you shall see more of my spirit before you have done with me. [Singing.] "We are the boys that fear no noise," &c. [Exeunt.]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The same.*

Enter *HARDCASTLE*.

Hard. What could my old friend, Sir Charles, mean, by recommending his son as the modestest young man in town. To me he appears the most

impudent piece of brass that ever spoke with a tongue. He has taken possession of the easy chair by the fireside already. He took off his boots in the parlour, and desired me to see them taken care of. I'm desirous to know how his impudence affects my daughter: she will certainly be shocked at it,

Enter Miss HARDCASTLE, plainly dressed.

Well, Kate, I see you have changed your dress as I bid you; and yet, I think, there was no great occasion.

Miss H. I find such a pleasure, sir, in obeying your commands, that I take care to observe them, without ever debating their propriety,

Hard. And yet, Kate, I sometimes give you some cause, particularly when I recommended my modest gentleman to you as a lover to-day.

Miss H. You taught me to expect something extraordinary, and I find the original exceeds the description.

Hard. I was never so surprised in my life. He has quite confounded all my faculties.

Miss H. I never saw anything like it; and a man of the world, too!

Hard. Ay, he learned it all abroad.

Miss H. It seems all natural to him.

Hard. A good deal assisted by bad company, and a French dancing-master.

Miss H. Sure, you mistake, papa! A French dancing-master could never have taught him that timid look, that awkward address, that bashful manner—

Hard. Whose look? whose manner, child?

Miss H. Mr. Marlow's. His *mauvaise honte*, his timidity, struck me at first sight.

Hard. Then your first sight deceived you; for I think him one of the most brazen first sights that ever astonished my senses.

Miss H. Sure, sir, you rally! I never saw any one so modest.

Hard. And can you be serious? I never saw such a bouncing, swaggering puppy since I was born. Bully Dawson was but a fool to him.

Miss H. Surprising! He met me with a respectful bow, a stammering voice, and a look fixed on the ground.

Hard. He met me with a loud voice, a lordly air, and a familiarity that made my blood freeze again.

Miss H. He treated me with diffidence and respect; censured the manners of the age; admired the prudence of girls that never laughed; tired me with apologies for being tiresome; and then left the room with a bow, and, "Madam, I would not for the world detain you."

Hard. He spoke to me as if he knew me all his life before;—asked twenty questions, and never waited for an answer;—interrupted my best remarks with some silly pun; and when I was in my best story of the Duke of Marlborough and Prince Eugene, he asked if I was not a good hand at making punch. Yes, Kate, he asked your father if he was a maker of punch!

Miss H. One of us must certainly be mistaken.

Hard. If he be what he has shewn himself, I'm determined he shall never have my consent.

Miss H. And if he be the sullen thing I take him, he shall never have mine.

Hard. In one thing, then, we are agreed—to reject him.

Miss H. Yes, but upon conditions; for if you should find him less impudent, and I more presuming; if you find him more respectful, and I more importunate—I don't know—the fellow is well enough

for a man. Certainly, we don't meet many such at a horse-race in the country.

Hard. If we should find him so—but that's impossible. The first appearance has done my business. I'm seldom deceived in that.

Miss H. And yet, there may be many good qualities under that first appearance. But as one of us must be mistaken, what if we go to make further discoveries?

Hard. Agreed. But depend on't, I'm in the right.

Miss H. And depend on't, I'm not much in the wrong. *[Exeunt.]*

Enter TONY, running in with a casket.

Tony. Ecod, I have got them. Here they are. My cousin Con's necklaces, bobs and all. My mother sha'n't cheat the poor souls out of their fortin, neither. O! my genius, is that you?

Enter HASTINGS.

Hast. My dear friend, how have you managed with your mother! I hope you have amused her with pretending love for your cousin, and that you are willing to be reconciled at last. Our horses will be refreshed in a short time, and we shall soon be ready to set off.

Tony. And here's something to bear your charges by the way. *[Giving the casket.]* Your sweetheart's jewels. Keep them, and hang those, I say, that would rob you of one of them.

Hast. But how have you procured them from your mother?

Tony. Ask me no questions, and I'll tell you no fibs. I procured them by the rule of thumb. If I had not a key to every drawer in mother's bureau, how could I go to the alehouse so often as I do? An honest man may rob himself of his own at any time.

Hast. Thousands do it every day. But, to be plain with you, Miss Neville is endeavouring to procure them from her aunt this very instant. If she succeeds, it will be the most delicate way, at least, of obtaining them.

Tony. Well, keep them till you know how it will be. But I know how it will be well enough; she'd as soon part with the only sound tooth in her head.

Hast. But I dread the effects of her resentment, when she finds she has lost them.

Tony. Never you mind her resentment; leave me to manage that. I don't value her resentment the bounce of a cracker. Zounds! here they are. Morrice;—prance. *[Exit HASTINGS.]*

Enter Mrs. HARDCASTLE and Miss NEVILLE.

Mrs. H. Indeed, Constance, you amaze me. Such a girl as you want jewels! It will be time enough for jewels, my dear, twenty years hence, when your beauty begins to want repairs.

Miss N. But what will repair beauty at forty, will certainly improve it at twenty, madam.

Mrs. H. Your's, my dear, can admit of none. That natural blush is beyond a thousand ornaments. Besides, child, jewels are quite out at present. Don't you see half the ladies of our acquaintance, my Lady Kill-day-light, and Mrs. Crump, and the rest of them, carry their jewels to town, and bring nothing but paste and marcasites back?

Miss N. But who knows, madam, but somebody that shall be nameless, would like me best with all my finery about me?

Mrs. H. Consult your glass, my dear, and then see if, with such a pair of eyes, you want any better sparklers. What do you think, Tony, my dear, do you set off her beauty?

Tony. That's as hereafter may be.

Miss N. My dear aunt, if you knew how it would oblige me.

Mrs. H. A parcel of old-fashioned rose and table-cut things. They would make you look like the court of King Solomon at a puppet-show. Besides, I believe I can't readily come at them. They may be missing, for aught I know to the contrary.

Tony. [Apart to Mrs. H.] Then why don't you tell her so at once, as she's so longing for them? Tell her they're lost. It's the only way to quiet her. Say they're lost, and call me to bear witness.

Mrs. H. [Apart to Tony.] You know, my dear, I'm only keeping them for you. So, if I say they're gone, you'll bear me witness, will you? He! he! he!

Tony. Never fear me. Ecod! I'll say I saw them taken out with my own eyes. [Aside to Mrs. H.]

Miss N. I desire them but for one day, madam. Just to be permitted to shew them as relics, and then they may be locked up again.

Mrs. H. To be plain with you, my dear Constance, if I could find them, you should have them. They're missing, I assure you. Lost, for aught I know; but we must have patience wherever they are.

Miss N. I'll not believe it; it is but a shallow pretence to deny me. I know they're too valuable to be so slightly kept. As you are to answer for the loss—

Mrs. H. Don't be alarm'd, Constance. If they be lost, I must restore an equivalent. But my son knows they are missing and not to be found.

Tony. That I can bear witness to. They are missing and not to be found, I'll take my oath on't.

Mrs. H. You must learn resignation, my dear; for though we lose our fortune, yet we should not lose our patience. See me, how calm I am.

Miss N. Ay, people are generally calm at the misfortunes of others.

Mrs. H. Now I wonder a girl of your good sense should waste a thought upon such trumpery. We shall soon find them; and, in the meantime, you shall make use of my garnets till your jewels be found.

Miss N. I detest garnets!

Mrs. H. The most becoming things in the world, to set off a clear complexion. You have often seen how well they look upon me. You shall have them.

[Exit.]

Miss N. Was ever anything so provoking, to mislay my own jewels, and force me to wear trumpery.

Tony. Don't be a fool. If she gives you the garnets, take what you can get. The jewels are your own already. I have stolen them out of her bureau, and she does not know it. Fly to your spark, he'll tell you more of the matter. Leave me to manage her.

Miss N. My dear cousin!

[Exit.]

Tony. Vanish! She's here; and has missed them already. Zounds! how she fidgets and spits about like a Catherine wheel!

Enter Mrs. HARDCASTLE.

Mrs. H. Confusion! thieves! robbers! We are cheated, plundered, broke open, undone.

Tony. What's the matter, what's the matter, mamma? I hope nothing has happened to any of the good family.

Mrs. H. We are robbed. My bureau has been broken open, the jewels taken out, and I'm undone.

Tony. O! is that all? ha! ha! ha! By the laws, I never saw it better acted in my life. Ecod! I thought you was ruined in earnest, ha! ha! ha!

Mrs. H. Why, boy, I am ruined in earnest. My bureau has been broken open, and all taken away.

Tony. Stick to that. Ha! ha! ha! stick to that; call me to bear witness.

Mrs. H. I tell you, Tony, by all that's precious the jewels are gone, and I shall be ruined for ever.

Tony. Sure I know they're gone, and I am to say so.

Mrs. H. My dearest Tony, but hear me. They're gone, I say.

Tony. By the laws, mamma, you make me for to laugh, ha! ha! ha! I know who took them well enough, ha! ha! ha!

Mrs. H. Was there ever such a blockhead, that can't tell the difference between jest and earnest. I tell you I'm not in jest booby.

Tony. That's right, that's right: you must be in a bitter passion, and then nobody will suspect either of us. I'll bear witness that they are gone.

Mrs. H. Can you bear witness that you're no better than a fool? Was ever poor woman so beset with fools on one hand, and thieves on the other?

Tony. I can bear witness to that.

Mrs. H. Bear witness again, you blockhead you, and I'll turn you out of the room directly. My poor niece, what will become of her? Do you laugh, you unfeeling brute, as if you enjoy'd my distress?

Tony. I can bear witness to that.

Mrs. H. Do you insult me, monster? I'll teach you to vex your mother, I will.

Tony. I can bear witness to that.

[Exeunt.]

Enter Miss HARDCASTLE and Maid.

Miss H. What an unaccountable creature is that brother of mine, to send them to the house as an inn: ha! ha! ha! I don't wonder at his impudence.

Maid. But what is more, madam, the young gentleman, as you pass'd by in your present dress, ask'd me if you were the bar-maid. He mistook you for the bar-maid, madam.

Miss H. Did he? Then, as I live, I'm resolv'd to keep up the delusion. Tell me, how do you like my present dress? Don't you think I look something like Cherry, in the Beaux' Stratagem?

Maid. It's the dress, madam, that every lady wears in the country, but when she visits or receives company.

Miss H. And are you sure he don't remember my face or person?

Maid. Certain of it.

Miss H. I vow I thought so; for though we spoke for some time together, yet his fears were such, that he never once looked up during the interview. Indeed, if he had, my bonnet would have kept him from seeing me.

Maid. But what do you hope from keeping him in his mistake.

Miss H. In the first place, I shall be seen; and that is no small advantage to a girl who brings her face to market. Then I shall perhaps make an acquaintance; and that is no small victory gained over one who never addresses any but the vilest of her sex. But my chief aim is to take my gentleman off his guard; and like an invisible champion of romance, examine the giant's force before I offer to combat.

Maid. But are you sure you can act your part, and disguise your voice, so that he may mistake that, as he has already mistaken your person?

Miss H. Never fear me; I think I have got the true bar cant. Did your honour call? Attend the Lion there: pipes and tobacco for the Angel: the Lamb has been outrageous this half hour.

Maid. It will do, madam; but he's here. [Exit]

Enter MARLOW.

Mar. What a bawling in every part of the house!

I have scarce a moment's repose. If I go to the best room, there I find my host and his story. If I fly to the gallery, there we have my hostess with her curtsy down to the ground. I have at last got a moment to myself, and now for recollection.

Miss H. Did you call, sir? Did your honour call?

Mar. [*Musing.*] As for Miss Hardcastle, she's too grave and sentimental for me.

Miss H. Did your honour call?

Mar. No, child. [*Musing.*] Besides, from the glimpse I had of her, I think she squints.

Miss H. I'm sure, sir, I heard the bell ring.

Mar. No, no. [*Musing.*] I have pleased my father, however, by coming down, and I'll to-morrow please myself by returning. [*Taking out his tablets and perusing*]

Miss H. Perhaps the other gentleman, called, sir.

Mar. I tell you no.

Miss H. I should be glad to know, sir. We have such a parcel of servants.

Mar. No, no, I tell you. [*Looks full in her face.*]

Yes, child, I think I did call. I wanted—I wanted—I vow, child, you are vastly handsome.

Miss H. O la, sir, you'll make one ashamed.

Mar. Never saw a more sprightly, malicious eye. Yes, yes, my dear, I did call. Have you got any of your—a—what d'ye call it, in the house?

Miss H. No, sir, we have been out of that these ten days.

Mar. One may call in this house, I find, to very little purpose. Suppose I should call for a taste, just by the way of trial, of the nectar of your lips, perhaps I might be disappointed in that too.

Miss H. Nectar! nectar! that's a liquor there's no call for in these parts. French, I suppose. We keep no French wines her, sir.

Mar. Of true English growth, I assure you.

Miss H. Then it's odd I should not know it. We brew all sorts of wines in this house, and I have lived here these eighteen years.

Mar. Eighteen years! Why, one would think, child, you kept the bar before you were born. How old are you?

Miss H. O! sir! I must not tell my age. They say women and music should never be dated.

Mar. To guess at this distance, you can't be much above forty. [*Approaching.*] Yet nearer I don't think so much. [*Approaching.*] By coming close to some women they look younger still: but when we come very close indeed—[*Attempting to kiss her.*]

Miss H. Pray, sir, keep your distance. One would think you wanted to know one's age, as they do horses, by mark of mouth.

Mar. I protest, child, you use me extremely ill. If you keep me at this distance, how is it possible you and I can ever be acquainted?

Miss H. And who wants to be acquainted with you? I want no such acquaintance, not I. I'm sure you did not treat Miss Hardcastle that was here awhile ago in this obstrepulous manner. I'll warrant me, before her you look dash'd, and kept bowing to the ground, and talk'd, for all the world, as if you was before a justice of the peace.

Mar. Egad! she has hit it sure enough. [*Aside.*] In awe of her, child? ha, ha, ha! A mere awkward, squinting thing. No, no; I find you don't know me. I laughed and rallied her a little; but I was unwilling to be too severe. No, I could not be too severe, curse me!

Miss H. O! then, sir, you are a favourite, I find, among the ladies?

ACT. DRAMA. No. 32.

Mar. Yes, my dear, a great favourite. And yet hang me, I don't see what they see in me to follow. At the ladies' club in town, I'm called their agreeable Rattle. Rattle, child, is not my real name, but one I'm known by. My name is Solomons. Mr. Solomons, my dear, at your service. [*Offering to salute her.*]

Miss H. Hold, sir! you were introducing me to your club, not to yourself. And you're so great a favourite there, you say?

Mar. Yes, my dear. There's Mrs. Mantrap, Lady Betty Blackleg, the Countess of Sligo, Mrs. Longhorns, old Miss Biddy Buckskin, and your humble servant, keep up the spirit of the place.

Miss H. Then it's a very merry place, I suppose?

Mar. Yes; as merry as cards, supper, wine, and old women can make us.

Miss H. And their agreeable Rattle! ha, ha, ha!

Mar. Egad! I don't quite like this chit. She looks knowing, methinks. [*Aside.*] You laugh, child.

Miss H. I can't but laugh to think what time they all have for minding their work or their family.

Mar. All's well; she don't laugh at me. [*Aside.*] Do you ever work, child?

Miss H. Ay, sure. There's not a screen or a quilt in the whole house but can bear witness to that.

Mar. Odso! then you must shew me your embroidery. I embroider and draw patterns myself a little. If you want a judge of your work, you must apply to me. [*Seizing her hand.*]

Miss H. Ay, but the colours don't look well by candle-light. You shall see all in the morning.

Mar. And why not now, my angel? Such beauty fires beyond the power of resistance.—Psha! the father here! My old luck! I never kicked seven, that I did not throw aces the aces three times following. [*Erit.*]

Enter HARDCASTLE, who stands in surprise.

Hard. So, madam! so, I find this is your modest lover; this is your humble admirer, that keeps his eyes fixed on the ground, and only adored at humble distance.—Kate, Kate, art thou not ashamed to deceive your father so?

Miss H. Never trust me, my dear papa, but he's still the modest man I first took him for; you'll be convinced of it as well as I.

Hard. By the hand of my body, I believe his impudence is infectious! Didn't I see him seize your hand? Didn't I see him haul you about like a milk maid? and now you talk of his respect and his modesty, forsooth!

Miss H. But if I shortly convince you of his modesty, that he has only the faults that will pass off with time, and the virtues that will improve with age, I hope you'll forgive him.

Hard. The girl would actually make one run mad I tell you I'll not be convinced. I am convinced! He has scarcely been three hours in the house, and he has already encroached on all my prerogatives. You may like his impudence, and call it modesty; but my son-in-law, madam, must have very different qualifications.

Miss H. Sir, I ask but this night to convince you.

Hard. You shall not have half the time; for I have thoughts of turning him out this very hour.

Miss H. Give me that hour, then, and I hope to satisfy you.

Hard. Well, an hour let it be then. But I'll have no trifling with your father: all fair and open, do you mind me? [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—An old-fashioned House,

Enter MARLOW, followed by a Servant.

Mar. I wonder what Hastings could mean by sending me so valuable a thing as a casket to keep for him, when he knows the only place I have is the seat of a post-coach at an inn-door. Have you deposited the casket with the landlady, as I ordered you? Have you put it into her own hands?

Serv. Yes, your honour.

Mar. She said she'd keep it safe, did she?

Serv. Yes, she said she'd keep it safe enough; she ask'd me how I came by it; and she said she had a great mind to make me give an account of myself. *[Exit.]*

Mar. Ha! ha! ha! they're safe, however. What an unaccountable set of beings have we got amongst. This little bar-maid, though, runs in my head most strangely, and drives out the absurdities of all the rest of the family. She's mine; she must be mine, or I'm greatly mistaken.

Enter HASTINGS.

Hast. Bless me! I quite forgot to tell her that I intended to repair to the bottom of the garden. Marlow here, and in spirits too!

Mar. Give me joy, George! Crown me, shadow me with laurels! Well, George, after all, we modest fellows don't want for success among the women.

Hast. Some women, you mean. But what success has your honour's modesty been crown'd with now, that it grows so insolent upon us?

Mar. Didn't you see the tempting, brisk, lovely, little thing that runs about the house with a bunch of keys to her girdle?

Hast. Well, and what then?

Mar. She's mine, you rogue, you. Such fire, such motion, such eyes, such lips—but, egad! she would not let me kiss them though.

Hast. But are you sure, so very sure of her?

Mar. Why, man, she talk'd of shewing me her work above stairs, and I'm to improve the pattern.

Hast. But how can you, Charles, go about to rob a woman of her honour?

Mar. Psha! psha! we all know the honour of the bar-maid of an inn. I don't intend to rob her, take my word for it; there's nothing in this house I sha'n't honestly pay for.

Hast. I believe the girl has virtue.

Mar. And if she has, I should be the last man in the world that would attempt to corrupt it.

Hast. You have taken care, I hope, of the casket I sent you to lock up? 'Tis in safety?

Mar. Yes, yes, it's safe enough; I have taken care of it. But how could you think the seat of a post-coach at an inn-door a place of safety? Ah, numskull! I have taken better precautions for you than you did for yourself—I have—

Hast. What?

Mar. I have sent it to the landlady to keep for you.

Hast. To the landlady!

Mar. The landlady.

Hast. You did?

Mar. I did. She's to be answerable for its forthcoming, you know.

Hast. Yes; she'll bring it forth with a witness.

Mar. Wasn't I right? I believe you'll allow that I acted prudently upon this occasion.

Hast. He must not see my uneasiness. *[Aside.]*
Mar. You seem a little disconcerted, though, methinks. Sure, nothing has happened?

Hast. No, nothing. Never was in better spirits in all my life. And so you left it with the landlady? who, no doubt, very readily undertook the charge.

Mar. Rather too readily; for she not only kept the casket, but through her great precaution, was going to keep the messenger too. Ha, ha, ha!

Hast. He, he, he! They are safe, however.

Mar. As a guinea in a miser's purse.

Hast. So, now all hopes of fortune are at an end, and we must set off without it. *[Aside.]* Well, Charles, I'll leave you to your meditations on the pretty bar-maid; and, he, he, he! may you be as successful for yourself as you have been for me. *[Exit.]*

Mar. Thank ye, George; I ask no more. Ha, ha, ha!

Enter HARDCASTLE.

Hard. I no longer know my own house. It's turned all topsy-turvy. His servants have got drunk already. I'll bear it no longer; and yet for my respect for his father, I'll be calm. *[Aside.]* Mr. Marlow, your servant. I'm your very humble servant. *[Bowing low.]*

Mar. Sir, your humble servant.—What's to be the wonder now? *[Aside.]*

Hard. I believe, sir, you must be sensible, sir, that no man alive ought to be more welcome than your father's son, sir. I hope you think so.

Mar. I do, from my soul, sir; I don't want much entreaty. I generally make my father's son welcome wherever he goes.

Hard. I believe you do, from my soul, sir. But though I say nothing to your own conduct, that of your servants is insufferable; their manner of drinking is setting a very bad example in this house, I assure you.

Mar. I protest, my very good sir, that's no fault of mine. If they don't drink as they ought, they are to blame. I ordered them not to spare the cellar; I did, I assure you. Here, let one of my servants come up. My positive directions were, that as I did not drink myself, they should make up for my deficiencies below.

Hard. Then they had your orders for what they do?

Mar. They had, I assure you; you shall hear from one of themselves. *[Enter Servant, drunk.]* You, Jeremy! come forward, sirrah? What were my orders? Were you not told to drink freely, and call for what you thought fit, for the good of the house?

Hard. I begin to lose my patience. *[Aside.]*

Jer. Please your honour, liberty and Fleet-street for ever! Though I'm but a servant, I'm as good as another man; I'll drink for no man before supper, sir, d—e! Good liquor will sit upon a good supper, but a good supper will not sit upon—hiccup—upon my conscience, sir. *[Exit.]*

Mar. You see, my old friend, the fellow's as drunk as he possibly can be. I don't know what you'd have more, unless you'd have the poor devil soused in a beer-barrel.

Hard. Zounds! he'll drive me distracted if I contain myself any longer. *[Aside.]* Mr. Marlow, sir, I have submitted to your insolence for more than four hours, and I see no likelihood of its coming to an end. I'm now resolv'd to be master here, sir; and I desire that you and your drunken pack may leave my house directly.

Mar. Leave your house!—sure you jest, my good

friend. What, when I'm doing what I can to please you?

Hard. I tell you, sir, you don't please me; so I desire you'll leave my house.

Mar. Sure you cannot be serious. At this time o'night, and such a night? You only mean to banter me.

Hard. I tell you, sir, I'm serious; and, now that my passions are roused, I say this house is mine, sir; this house is mine, and I command you to leave it directly.

Mar. Ha, ha, ha! A puddle in a storm. I shan't stir a step, I assure you. [*In a serious tone.*] This your house, fellow; It's my house; this is my house; mine, while I choose to stay! What right have you to bid me leave this house, sir? I never heard of such impudence, curse me, never in my whole life before.

Hard. Nor I, confound me if ever I did. To come to my house, to call for what he likes, to turn me out of my own chair, to insult the family, to order his servants to get drunk, and then to tell me, this house is mine, sir. By all that's impudent, it makes me laugh. Ha! ha! ha! Pray, sir, [*bantering*] as you take the house, what think you of taking the rest of the furniture? There's a pair of silver candlesticks, and there's a fire-screen, and a pair of bellows, perhaps you may take a fancy to them?

Mar. Bring me your bill, sir, bring me your bill, and let's make no more words about it.

Mar. There's a set of prints too. What think you of the *Rake's Progress* for your own apartment?

Mar. Bring me your bill, I say; and I'll leave you and your infernal house directly.

Hard. Then there's a bright, brazen warming-pan, that you may see your own brazen face in.

Mar. My bill, sir.

Hard. I had forgot the great chair, for your own particular slumbers, after a hearty meal.

Mar. Zounds! bring me my bill, I say, and let's hear no more on't.

Hard. Young man, young man, from your father's letter to me. I was taught to expect a well-bred, modest man, as a visitor here; but now I find him no better than a coxcomb and a bully; but he will be down here presently, and shall hear more of it.

[*Exit.*]

Mar. How's this? Sure I have not mistaken the house! Everything looks like an inn: the servants cry coming! the attendance is awkward; the bar-maid too to attend us. But she's here, and will further inform me. Whither so fast, child? a word with you.

Enter Miss HARDCASTLE.

Miss H. Let it be short, then; I'm in a hurry. I believe he begins to find out his mistake, but it's too soon quite to un-leave him. [*Aside.*]

Mar. Pray, child, answer me one question. What are you, and what may your business in this house be?

Miss H. A relation of the family, sir.

Mar. What, a poor relation?

Miss H. Yes, sir; a poor relation, appointed to keep the keys, and to see that the guests want nothing in my power to give them.

Mar. That is, you act as the bar-maid of this inn.

Miss H. Inn! O la!—what brought that into your head? One of the best families in the county keep an inn! Ha! ha! ha! old Mr. Harcastle's house an inn!

Mar. Mr. Harcastle's house! Is this house Mr. Harcastle's house, child?

Miss H. Ay, sir, whose else should it be?

Mar. So then, all's out, and I have been d—v imposed on. Oh, confound my stupid head! I shall be laughed at over the whole town. I shall be stuck up in caricatura, in all the print-shops. The Dullissimo Macaroni. To mistake this house, of all others, for an inn, and my father's old friend for an inn-keeper. What a swaggering puppy must he take me for! what a silly puppy do I find myself! There again, may I be hanged, my dear, but I mistook you for the bar-maid.

Miss H. Dear me! dear me! I'm sure there's nothing in my behaviour to put me upon a level with one of that stamp.

Mar. Nothing, my dear, nothing; but I was in for a list of blunders, and could not help making you a subscriber. My stupidity saw every thing the wrong way: I mistook your assiduity for assurance, and your simplicity for allurements. But it's all over—this house I no more show my face in.

Miss H. I hope, sir, I have done nothing to disoblige you. I'm sure I should be sorry to affront any gentleman who has been so polite, and said so many civil things to me; I'm sure I should be sorry —(*pretending to cry*)—if he left the family upon my account. I'm sure I should be sorry people said any thing amiss, since I have no fortune but my character.

Mar. By heaven, she weeps! This is the first mark of tenderness I ever had from a modest woman, and it touches me. [*Aside.*]

Miss H. I'm sure my family is as good as Miss Harcastle's; and, though I'm poor, that's no great misfortune to a contented mind; and, until this moment, I never thought that it was bad to want fortune.

Mar. And why now, my pretty simplicity?

Miss H. Because it puts me at a distance from one that if I had a thousand pounds I would give it all to.

Mar. This simplicity bewitches me, so that if I stay I am undone, I must make one bold effort, and leave her. [*Aside.*] Excuse me, my lovely girl, you are the only part of the family I leave with reluctance. But, to be plain with you, the difference of our birth, fortune, and education, makes an honourable connexion impossible; and I can never harbour a thought of seducing simplicity that trusted in my honour; or of bringing ruin upon one, whose only fault was being too lovely. [*Exit.*]

Miss H. I never knew half his merit till now. He shall not go, if I have power or art to detain him. I'll still preserve the character in which I stooped to conquer, but I will undeceive my papa, who perhaps may laugh him out of his resolution. [*Exit.*]

Enter TONY and Miss NEVILLE.

Tony. Ay, you may steal for yourselves the next time; I have done my duty. She has got the jewels again, that's a sure thing; but, she believes it was all a mistake of the servants.

Miss N. But, my dear cousin, sure you won't forsake us in this distress. If she in the least suspects that I am going off, I shall certainly be locked up, or sent to my aunt Pedigree's, which is ten times worse.

Tony. To be sure, aunts of all kinds are d—d bad things. But what can I do? I have got you a pair of horses that will fly like Whistlejacket, and I'm sure you can't say but I have courted you nicely before her face. Here she comes; we must court a bit or two more, for fear she should suspect us.

[*They retire, and seem to fondle.*]

Enter Mrs. HARDCASTLE.

Mrs. H. Well, I was greatly fluttered, to be sure;

but my son tells me it was all a mistake of the servants. I sha'n't be easy, however, till they are fairly married, and then let her keep her own fortune. But what do I see? Fondling together, as I am alive. I never saw Tony so sprightly before. Ha! have I caught you, my pretty doves! What, billing, exchanging stolen glances, and broken murmurs? Ha!

Tony. As for murmurs, mother, we grumble a little now and then, to be sure; but there's no love lost between us.

Mrs. H. A mere sprinkling, Tony, upon the flame, only to make it burn brighter.

Miss N. Cousin Tony promises to give us more of his company at home; indeed, he sha'n't leave us any more. It won't leave us, cousin Tony, will it?

Tony. Oh! it's a pretty creature. No, I'd sooner leave my horse in a pond, than leave you when you smile upon one so. Your laugh makes you so becoming.

Miss N. Agreeable cousin! who can help admiring that natural humour, that pleasant, broad, red, thoughtless—[Patting his cheek.]—Ha! it's a bold face.

Mrs. H. Pretty innocence!

Tony. I'm sure I always lov'd cousin Con's hazel eyes, and her pretty long fingers, that she twists this way and that over the harpsicholls, like a parcel of bobbins.

Mrs. H. Ah! he would charm the bird from the tree. I never was so happy before. My boy takes after his father, poor Mr. Lumpkin, exactly. The jewels, my dear Con, shall be your's incontinently. You shall have them. Isn't he a sweet boy, my dear? You shall be married to-morrow, and we'll put off the rest of his education, like Dr. Drowsy's sermons, to a fitter opportunity.

Enter DIGGORY.

Dig. Where's the 'squire? I have got a letter for your worship.

Tony. Give it to my mamma. She reads all my letters first.

Dig. I had orders to deliver it into your own hands.

Tony. Who does it come from?

Dig. Your worship mun ask that o'the letter itself.

Tony. I could wish to know, though. [Turning the letter, and gazing on it.]

Miss N. [Aside.] Undone, undone! A letter to him from Hastings. I know the hand. If my aunt sees it, we are ruined for ever. I'll keep her employed a little, if I can.—[To Mrs. HARDCASTLE.]—But I have not told you, madam, of my cousin's smart answer just now to Mr. Marlow. We so laugh'd. You must know, madam—this way a little, for he must not hear us. [They confer.]

Tony. [Still gazing.] A d—d cramp piece of penmanship as ever I saw in my life. I can read your print-hand very well; but here they're such handles, and shanks, and dashes, that one can scarce tell the head from the tail. "To Anthony Lumpkin, Esq."—It's very odd, I can read the outside of my letters, where my own name is, well enough; but when I come to open it, it is all—buzz. That's hard, very hard; for the inside of the letter is always the cream of the correspondence.

Mrs. H. Ha, ha, ha! Very well, very well. And so my son was too hard for the philosopher?

Miss N. Yes, madam; but you must hear the rest, madam. A little more this way, or he may hear us. You'll hear how he puzzled him again.

Mrs. H. He seems strangely puzzled now himself, methinks.

Tony. [Still gazing.] A d—d up and down hand, as if disguised in liquor.—[Reading.] "Dear sir," Ay, that's that. Then there's an M, and a T, and an S; but whether the next be an izzard or an R, confound me! I cannot tell.

Mrs. H. What's that, my dear? Can I give you any assistance?

Miss N. Pray, aunt, let me read it. Nobody reads a cramp hand better than I. [Twisting the letter from her.] Do you know who it is from?

Tony. Can't tell, except from Dick Ginger, the feeder.

Miss N. Ay, so it is. [Pretending to read.] "Dear 'squire, hoping that you're in health, as I am at present. The gentlemen of the Shake-bag club has cut the gentlemen of the Goose-green quite out of feather. The odds—um—odd battle—um—long fighting—um"—here, here; it's all about cocks, and fighting; it's of no consequence; here, put it up, put it up. [Thrusting the crumpled letter upon him.]

Tony. But I tell you, miss, it's of all the consequence in the world; I would not lose the rest of it for a guinea. Here, mother, do you make it out. Of no consequence! [Giving Mrs. H. the letter.]

Mrs. H. How's this? [Reads.] "Dear 'squire,—I am now waiting for Miss Neville, with a post-chaise and pair, at the bottom of the garden; but I find my horses yet unable to perform the journey. I expect you'll assist us with a pair of fresh horses, as you promised. Despatch is necessary, as the hag, (ay, the hag), your mother, will otherwise suspect us.—Yours, Hastings."—Grant me patience! I shall run distracted! My rage chokes me.

Miss N. I hope you'll suspend your resentment for a few moments, and not impute to me any impertinence, or sinister design that belongs to another.

Mrs. H. [Curtseying very low.] Fine spoken madam, you are most miraculously polite and engaging, and quite the very pink of courtesy and circumspection, madam. [Changing her tone.] And you, your great ill-fashioned oaf, with scarce sense enough to keep your mouth shut, were you, too, joined against me? But I'll defeat all your plots in a moment. As for you, madam, since you have got a pair of fresh horses ready, it would be cruel to disappoint them. So, if you please, instead of running away with your spark, prepare, this very moment, to run off with me. Your old aunt Pedigree, will keep you secure, I'll warrant me. You too, sir, may mount your horse, and guard us upon the way. Here, Thomas, Roger, Diggory! I'll show you, that I wish you better than you do yourselves. [Exit.]

Miss N. So, now I'm completely ruined.

Tony. Ay, that's a sure thing.

Miss N. What better could be expected from being connected with such a stupid fool, and after all the nods and signs I made him?

Tony. By the laws! miss, it was your own cleverness, and not my stupidity, that did your business. You were so nice and so busy with your Shakebags and Goose-greens, that I thought you could never be making believe.

Enter HASTINGS.

Hast. So, sir, I find, by my servant, that you have shewn my letter, and betrayed us. Was this well done, young gentleman?

Tony. Here's another! Ask miss there who betrayed you. Ecod! it was her own doing, not mine.

Enter MARLOW.

Mar. So, I have been finely used here among you.

Rendered contemptible, driven into ill-manners, despised, insulted, laughed at.

Tony. Here's another! We shall have old Bedlam broke loose presently.

Miss N. And there, sir, is the gentleman to whom we all owe every obligation.

Mar. What can I say to him, a mere boy, an idiot, whose ignorance and youth are a protection?

Hast. A poor contemptible booby, that would but disgrace correction.

Miss N. Yet, with cunning and malice enough to make himself merry with all our embarrassments.

Hast. An insensible cub!

Mar. Replete with tricks and mischief.

Tony. Baw! [*Starts up.*] D—e! but I'll fight you both, one after the other—with baskets.

Mar. As for him, he's below resentment. But your conduct, Mr. Hastings, requires an explanation. You knew of my mistakes, yet would not undeceive me.

Hast. Tortured as I am with my own disappointments, is this a time for explanations? It is not friendly, Mr. Marlow.

Mar. But, sir—

Miss N. Mr. Marlow, we never kept on your mistake till it was too late to undeceive you. Be pacified.

Enter DIGGORY.

Dig. My mistress desires you'll get ready immediately, madam. The horses are putting to; your hat and things are in the next room. We are to go thirty miles before morning. [*Exit.*]

Miss N. I come. Oh! Mr. Marlow, if you knew what a scene of constraint and ill-nature lies before me, I'm sure it would convert your resentment into pity.

Mrs. H. [*Within.*] Miss Neville! Constance! why, Constance, I say!

Miss N. I'm coming. Well, constancy; remember, constancy is the word. [*Exit.*]

Hast. My heart, how can I support this? To be so near happiness, and such happiness!

Mar. [*To TONY.*] You see now, young gentleman, the effects of your folly. What might be amusement to you, is here disappointment, and even distress.

Tony. [*From a reverie.*] Ecod! I have hit it; it's here. Your hands; your's, and your's, my poor Sulky. Meet me, two hours hence, at the bottom of the garden; and if you don't find Tony Lumpkin, a more good-natured fellow than you thought for, I'll give you leave to take my best horse, and Bet Bouncer into the bargain. Come along. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—An old-fashioned House.

Enter Sir CHARLES MARLOW and HARDCASTLE.

Hard. Ha, ha, ha! The peremptory tone in which he sent forth his sublime commands.

Sir C. And the reserve with which, I suppose, he treated all your advances.

Hard. And yet, he might have seen something in me above a common innkeeper, too.

Sir C. Yes, Dick, but he mistook you for an uncommon innkeeper. Ha, ha, ha!

Hard. Well, I'm in too good spirits to think of anything but joy. Yes, my dear friend, this union

of our families will make our personal friendships hereditary; and though my daughter's fortune is but small—

Sir C. Why, Dick, will you talk of fortune to me? My son is possessed of more than a competence already, and can want nothing but a good and virtuous girl to share his happiness, and increase it. If they like each other, as you say they do—

Hard. If, man! I tell you they do like each other; my daughter as good as told me so.

Sir C. But girls are apt to flatter themselves, you know.

Hard. I saw him grasp her hand in the warmest manner myself; and here he comes to put you out of your ifs, I warrant him.

Enter MARLOW.

Mar. I come, sir, once more to ask pardon for my strange conduct. I can scarce reflect on my insolence without confusion.

Harn. Tut! boy, a trifle; you take it too gravely. An hour or two's laughing with my daughter will set all to rights again. She'll never like you the worse for it.

Mar. Sir, I shall be always proud of her approbation.

Hard. Approbation is but a cold word, Mr. Marlow; if I am not deceived, you have something more than approbation thereabouts. You take me?

Mar. Really, sir, I have not that happiness.

Hard. Come, boy, I'm am an old fellow and know what's what, as well as you that are younger. I know what has passed between you; but, mum!

Mar. Sure, sir, nothing has passed between us but the most profound respect on my side, and the most distant reserve on her's. You don't think, sir, that my impudence has been passed upon all the rest of the family.

Hard. Impudence! No, I don't say that—not quite impudence. Girls like to be played with, and rumbled too, sometimes. But she has told no tales, I assure you.

Mar. May I die, sir, if I ever—

Hard. I tell you, she don't dislike you; and as I'm sure you like her—

Mar. Dear sir, I protest, sir—

Hard. I see no reason why you should not be joined as fast as the parson can tie you.

Mar. But why won't you hear me? By all that's just and true, I never gave Miss Hardcastle the slightest mark of my attachment, or even the most distant hint to suspect me of affection. We had but one interview, and that was formal, modest, and uninteresting.

Hard. This fellow's formal, modest impudence is beyond bearing. [*Aside.*]

Sir C. And you never grasped her hand, or made any protestations?

Mar. As heaven is my witness, I came down in obedience to your commands. I saw the lady without emotion, and parted without reluctance. I hope you'll exact no further proofs of my duty, nor prevent me from leaving a house in which I suffer so many mortifications. [*Exit.*]

Sir C. I'm astonished at the air of sincerity with which he parted.

Hard. And I'm astonished at the deliberate intrepidity of his assurance.

Sir C. I dare pledge my life and honour upon his truth.

Hard. Here comes my daughter, and I would stake my happiness upon her veracity.

Enter Miss HARDCASTLE.

Kate, come hither, child. Answer us sincerely, and without reserve. Has Mr. Marlow made you any professions of love and affection?

Miss H. The question is very abrupt, sir; but since you require unreserved sincerity, I think he has.

Hard. [To Sir C.] You see.

Sir C. And pray, madam, have you and my son had more than one interview?

Miss H. Yes, sir; several.

Hard. [To Sir C.] You see.

Sir C. But did he profess any attachment?

Miss H. A lasting one,

Sir C. Did he talk of love?

Miss H. Much, sir.

Sir C. Amazing! and all this formally?

Miss H. Formally.

Hard. Now, my friend, I hope you are satisfied.

Sir C. And how did he behave, madam?

Miss H. As most professed admirers do. Said some civil things of my face, talked much of his want of merit, and the greatness of mine; mentioned his heart, gave a short tragedy speech, and ended with pretended rapture.

Sir C. Now I'm perfectly convinced; indeed, I know his conversation among women to be modest and submissive. This forward, conting, ranting manner, by no means describes him, and I'm confident he never sat for the picture.

Miss H. Then, what, sir, if I should convince you to your face of my sincerity? If you and my papa, in about half an hour, will place yourselves behind that screen, you shall hear him declare his passion to me in person.

Sir C. Agreed; and if I find him what you describe, all my happiness in him must have an end.

[*Exit with HARD.*]

Miss H. And if you don't find him what I describe, I fear my happiness must never have a beginning.

SCENE II.—The Back of the Garden.

Enter HASTINGS.

Hast. What an idiot am I, to wait here for a fellow, who probably takes a delight in mortifying me. He never intended to be punctual, and I'll wait no longer. What do I see? It is he, and perhaps, with news of my Constance.

Enter TONY, booted, &c.

My honest 'squire! I now find you a man of your word. This looks like friendship.

Tony. Ay, I'm your friend, and the best friend you have in the world, if you knew but all. This riding by night, by-the-by, is curiously tiresome. It has shook me worse than the basket of a stage coach.

Hast. But how? where did you leave your fellow-travellers? Are they in safety? Are they housed?

Tony. Five-and-twenty miles in two hours and a half is no such bad driving. The poor beasts have smoked for it. Rabbit me! but I'd rather ride forty miles after a fox, than ten with such varment.

Hast. Well, but where have you left the ladies? I die with impatience.

Tony. Left them! why, where should I leave them, but where I found them?

Hast. This is a riddle.

Tony. Riddle me this, then. What's that goes round the house, and round the house, and never touches the house?

Hast. I'm still astray.

Tony. Why, that's it, mun, I have led them astray. By jingo! there's not a pond or slough within five miles of the place, but they can tell the taste of.

Hast. Ha, ha, ha! I understand; you took them in a round, while they thought themselves going forward. And so you have at last brought them home again.

Tony. You shall hear. I first took them down Feather-bed-lane, where we stuck fast in the mud. I then rattled them crack over the stones, up-and-down hill. I then introduced them to the gibbet on Heavy-tree-heath; and from that, with a circum-bendibus, I fairly lodged them in the horse-pond at the bottom of the garden.

Hast. But no accident, I hope?

Tony. No, no; only mother is confoundedly frightened. She thinks herself forty miles off. She's sick of the journey, and the cattle can scarce crawl. So if your own horses be ready, you may whip off with cousin, and I'll be bound that no soul here can budge a foot to follow you.

Hast. My dear friend, how can I be grateful?

Tony. Ay, now it's a dear friend, noble 'squire. Just now it was all idiot, cub, and run me through the guts. D—n your way of fighting, I say! After we take a knock, in this part of the country, we shake hands and be friends. But if you had run me through the guts, then I should be dead, and you might go shake hands with the hangman.

Hast. The rebuke is just. But I must hasten to relieve Miss Neville; if you keep the old lady employed, I promise to take care of the young one.

[*Exit.*]

Tony. Never fear me. Here she comes. Vanish! She's got into the pond, and is dragged up to the waist like a mermaid.

Enter Mrs. HARDCASTLE.

Mrs. H. Oh! Tony, I'm kill'd! shook! battered to death! I shall never survive it. That last jolt against the quick-set hedge has done my business.

Tony. Alack! mamma, it was all your own fault. You would be for running away by night, without knowing one inch of the way.

Mrs. H. I wish we were at home again. I never met so many accidents in so short a journey. Drench'd in the mud, overturned in a ditch, stuck fast in a slough, jolted to a jelly, and at last to lose our way! Whereabouts do you think we are, Tony?

Tony. By my guess, we should be upon Crack-skull common, about forty miles from home.

Mrs. H. Oh, lud! oh, lud! the most notorious spot in all the country. We only want a robbery to make a complete night on't.

Tony. Don't be afraid, mamma, don't be afraid. Two of the five that kept here are hanged, and the other three may not find us. Don't be afraid. Is that a man galloping behind us? No; it's only a tree. Don't be afraid.

Mrs. H. The fright will certainly kill me.

Tony. Do you see any thing like a black hat moving behind the thicket?

Mrs. H. Oh, death!

Tony. No, it's only a cow. Don't be afraid, mamma; don't be afraid.

Mrs. H. As I'm alive, Tony, I see a man coming towards us. Ah! I'm sure on't. If he perceives us, we are undone.

Tony. Father-in-law, by all that's unlucky! come to take one of his night-walks. (*Aside.*) Ah! it's a highwayman with pistols as long as my arm. A d—d ill-looking fellow!

Miss H. Good heaven defend us! he approaches.

Tony. Do you hide yourself in that thicket, and leave me to manage him. If there be any danger I'll cough and cry hem. When I cough be sure to keep close. (*Miss H. hides behind a tree in the back scene.*)

Enter HARDCASTLE.

Hard. I'm mistaken, or I heard voices of people in want of help. Oh! Tony, is that you? I did not expect you so soon back. Are your mother and her charge in safety?

Tony. Very safe, sir, at my aunt Pedigree's. Hem!

Miss H. (From behind.) Ah, death! I find there's danger.

Hard. Forty miles in three hours! sure, that's too much, my youngster.

Tony. Stout horses and willing minds make short journeys as they say. Hem!

Miss H. (From behind.) Sure, he'll do the dear boy no harm.

Hard. But I heard a voice here; I should be glad to know from whence it came.

Tony. It was I, sir, talking to myself, sir. I was saying, that forty miles in three hours was very good going. Hem! As to be sure it was. Hem! I have got a sort of cold by being out in the air. We'll go in, if you please. Hem!

Hard. But if you talked to yourself, you did not answer yourself. I am certain I heard two voices, and am resolved (*raising his voice.*) to find the other out.

Miss H. [Rushing forward.] Oh, lud; he'll murder my poor boy—my darling. Hete, good gentleman, whe your rage upon me. Take my money—my life, but spare that young gentleman; spare my child, if you have any mercy.

Harn. My wife, as I'm a Christian! From whence can she come? or what does she mean?

Miss H. [Kneeling.] Take compassion on us, good Mr. Highwayman. Take our money, our watches—all we have, but spare our lives. We will never bring you to justice; indeed, we won't good Mr. Highwayman.

Hard. I believe the woman's out of her senses. What, Dorothy, don't you know me?

Miss H. Mr. Hardcastle, as I'm alive! My fears blinded me. But who, my dear, could have expected to meet you here, in this frightful place, so far from home? What has brought you to follow us?

Hard. Sure, Dorothy, you have not lost your wits. So far from home, when you are within forty yards of your own door. [*To Tony.*] This is one of your old tricks, you graceless rogue, you! [*To Miss H.*] Don't you know the gate, and the mulberry-tree? and don't you remember the horse-pond, my dear?

Miss H. Yes, I shall remember the horse-pond as long as I live; I have caught my death in it. [*To Tony.*] And is it to you, you graceless varlet, I owe all this? I'll teach you to abuse your mother, I will.

Tony. Ecod! mother, all the parish say you have spoiled me, and so you may take the fruits on't.

Miss H. I'll spoil you, I will. (*Beats him off.*)

Hard. Ha, ha, ha!

[*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—A Parlour.

Enter SIR CHARLES MARLOW, and MISS HARDCASTLE.

Sir C. What a situation am I in! If what you say appears, I shall then find a guilty son. If what he says be true, I shall then lose one that, of all others, I most wished for a daughter.

Miss H. I am proud of your approbation, and to shew I merit it, if you place yourselves as I directed, you shall hear his explicit declaration. But he comes.

Sir C. I'll to your father, and keep him to the appointment [*Exit.*]

Enter MARLOW.

Mar. Though prepared for setting out, I come once more to take leave; nor did I, till this moment, know the pain I feel in the separation.

Miss H. (In her own natural manner.) I believe these sufferings cannot be very great, sir, which you can so easily remove. A day or two longer, perhaps, might lessen your uneasiness, by shewing the little value of what you now think proper to regret.

Mar. This girl every moment improves upon me. (*Aside.*) It must not be, madam. I have already trifled too long with my heart, and nothing can restore me to myself, but this painful effort of resolution.

Miss H. Then go, sir; I'll urge nothing more to detain you. Though my family be as good as her's you came down to visit, and my education, I hope, not inferior, what are these advantages without equal affluence? I must remain contented with the slight approbation of imputed merit; I must have only the mockery of your addresses, while all your serious aims are fixed on fortune.

Enter HARDCASTLE and SIR CHARLES MARLOW from behind.

Mar. By heaven, madam, fortune was ever my smallest consideration. You beauty first caught my eye; for who could see that without emotion? But every moment that I converse with you, steals in some new grace, heightens the picture, and gives it stronger expression. What, at first, seemed rustic plainness, now appears refined simplicity. What seemed forward assurance, now strikes me as the result of courageous innocence, and conscious virtue. I'm now determined to stay, madam, and I have too good an opinion of my father's discernment, when he sees you, to deny his approbation.

Miss H. Sir, I must entreat you'll desist. As our acquaintance began, so let it end, in indifference. I might have given an hour or two to levity, but, seriously, Mr. Marlow, do you think I could ever submit to a connexion where I must appear mercenary, and you imprudent? Do you think I could ever catch at the confident address of a secure admirer?

Mar. (Kneeling.) Does this look like security? Does this look like confidence? No, madam; every moment that shews me your merit, only serves to increase my diffidence and confusion. Here let me continue—

Sir C. I can hold it no longer. (*Coming forward.*) Charles, Charles, how hast thou deceived me! Is this your indifference—your uninteresting conversation?

Hard. Your cold contempt—your formal interview? What have you to say now?

Mar. That I'm all amazement! What can it mean?

Hard. It means that you can say and unsay things at pleasure; that you can address a lady in private, and deny it in public; that you have one story for us, and another for my daughter

Mar. Daughter? this lady your daughter!

Hard. Yes, sir; my only daughter—my Kate. Whose else should she be?

Mar. Oh! the devil!

Miss H. Yes, sir; that very identical tall, squinting lady you were pleased to take me for. (*Curt-sewing.*) She that you addressed as the mild, modest, sentimental man of gravity; and the bold, forward, agreeable Rattle of the ladies' club. Ha, ha, ha!

Mar. Zounds! there's no bearing this.

Miss H. In which of your characters, sir, will you give us leave to address you? As the faltering gentleman, with looks on the ground, that speaks just to be heard, and hates hypocrisy; or the loud, confident creature, that keeps it up with Mrs Mantrap, and old Miss Biddy Buckskin, till three in the morning. Ha, ha, ha!

Mar. Oh! curse on my noisy head; I never attempted to be impudent yet, that I was not taken down. I must be gone.

Hard. By the hand of my body, but you shall not. I see it was all a mistake, and I am rejoiced to find it. You shall not, sir, I tell you. I know she'll forgive you. Won't you forgive him, Kate? We'll all forgive you. Take courage, man. (*They retire, she tormenting him, to the back scene.*)

Enter MRS. HARDCASTLE and TONY.

Mrs. H. So, so, they're gone off. Let them go, I care not.

Hard. Who's gone?

Mrs. H. My dutiful niece and her gentleman, Mr. Hastings, from town; he who came down with our modest visitor here.

Sir C. Who, my honest George Hastings; As worthy a fellow as lives, and the girl could not have made a more prudent choice.

Hard. Then, by the hand of my body, I'm proud of the connexion.

Enter HASTINGS and MISS NEVILLE.

Mrs. H. What, returned so soon! I begin not to like it. (*Aside.*)

Hast. (*To Hardcastle.*) For my late attempt to fly off with your niece, let my present confusion be my punishment. We are now come back, to appeal from your justice to your humanity. By her father's consent I first paid her my addresses, and our passions were first founded in duty.

Miss N. Since his death, I have been obliged to stoop to dissimulation to avoid oppression. In an hour of levity, I was ready to give up my fortune to secure my choice. But I'm now recovered from the

delusion, and hope from your tenderness what is denied me from a nearer connexion.

Hard. Be it what it will, I'm glad they are come back to reclaim their due. Come hither, Tony, boy. Do you refuse this lady's hand which I now offer you?

Tony. What signifies my refusing? You know I can't refuse her till I'm of age, father.

Hard. While I thought concealing your age, boy, was likely to conduce to your improvement, I concurred with your mother's desire to keep it secret. But since I find she turns it to a wrong use, I must now declare you have been of age these three months.

Tony. Of age! Am I of age father?

Hard. Above three months.

Tony. Then you'll see the first use I'll make of my liberty. (*Taking Miss Nevill's hand.*) Witness all men by these presents, that I, Anthony Lumpkin, esquire, of Blank-place, refuse you, Constantia Neville, spinster, of no place at all, for my true and lawful wife. So Constantia Neville may marry whom she pleases, and Tony Lumpkin is his own man again.

Sir C. Oh! brave 'squire!

Hast. My worthy friend!

Mrs. H. My undutiful offspring! (*Beats Tony off.*)

Mar. Joy, my dear George; I give you joy sincerely; and, could I prevail upon my little tyrant here to be less arbitrary, I should be the happiest man alive, if you would return me the favour.

Hast. (*To Miss Hardcastle.*) Come, madam, you are now driven to the very last scene of all your contrivances. I know you like him, I'm sure he loves you, and you must and shall have him.

Hard. (*Joining their hands.*) And I say so, too. And, Mr. Marlow, if she makes as good a wife as she has a daughter, I don't believe you'll ever repent your bargain. So now to supper. To-morrow we shall gather all the poor of the parish about us, and the mistakes of the night shall be crowned with a merry morning; so, boy, take her; and, as you have been mistaken in the mistress, my wish is, that you may never be mistaken in the wife. [*Exeunt.*]

THE END.

JANE SHORE.

A TRAGEDY IN FIVE ACTS.

BY NICHOLAS ROWE.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

Duke of Glo'ster.
Lord HASTINGS.
Earl of DERRY.
Sir WILLIAM CATESBY.
Sir RICHARD RATCLIFFE.
DUMONT (*Shore*).
BELMOUR.
Porter.
Servant.

JANE SHORE.
ALICIA.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in the Tower.*

Enter the DUKE of GLO'STER, SIR RICHARD RATCLIFFE, and CATESBY.

Glos. Thus far success attends upon our councils,
And each event has answered to my wish;
The queen and all her upstart race are quell'd;
Dorset is banish'd, and her brother Rivers,
Ere this, lies shorter by the head at Pomfret.
The nobles have, with joint concurrence, nam'd me
Protector of the realm: my brother's children,
Young Edward and the little York, are lodg'd
Here safe within the Tower. How say you, sirs,
Does not this business wear a lucky face?
The sceptre and the golden wreath of royalty
Seen hung within my reach.

Sir R. Then take 'em to you,
And wear them long and worthily: you are
The last remaining male of princely York;
(For Edward's boys, the state esteems not of 'em,)
And therefore on your sov'reignty and rule
The commonweal does her dependance make,
And leans upon your highness' able hand.

Cates. And yet to-morrow does the council meet
To fix a day for Edward's coronation.
Who can expound this riddle?

Glos. That can I.
Those lords are each one my approv'd good friends,
Of special trust and nearness to my bosom:
And howsoever busy they may seem,
And diligent to bustle in the state,
Their zeal goes on no further than we lead,
And at our bidding stays.

Cates. Yet there is one,
And he amongst the foremost in his power

Of whom I wish your highness were assur'd.
For me, perhaps it is my nature's fault,
I own I doubt of his inclining much.

Glos. I guess the man at whom your words would
point:

Hastings—

Cates. The same.

Glos. He bears me great good will.

Cates. 'Tis true, to you, as to the lord protector,
And Glo'ster's duke, he bows with lowly service:
But were he bid to cry, God save king Richard,
Then tell me in what terms he would reply.
Believe me, I have prov'd the man, and found him:
I know he bears a most religious reverence
To his dead master Edward's royal memory.
And whither that may lead him, is most plain.
Yet more—One of that stubborn sort he is,
Who, if they once grow fond of an opinion,
They call it honour, honesty, and faith,
And sooner part with life than let it go.

Glos. And yet this tough, impracticable heart;
Is govern'd by a dainty-finger'd girl;
Such flaws are found in the most worthy natures;
A laughing, toying, wheedling, whimpering she
Shall make him amble on a gossip's message,
And take the distaff with a hand as patient
As e'er did Hercules.

Sir R. The fair Alicia,

Of noble birth and exquisite of feature,
Has held him long a vassal to her beauty.

Cates. I fear he fails in his allegiance there;
Or my intelligence is false, or else
The dame has been too lavish of her feast,
And fed him till he loathes.

Glos. No more, he comes.

[*Sir Richard and Catesby retire back and confer*

Enter Lord HASTINGS.

Has. Health, and the happiness of many days,
Attend upon your grace.

Glos. My good Lord Chamberlain,
We're much beholden to your gentle friendship.

Has. My lord, I come an humble suitor to you.

Glos. In right good time. Speak out your pleasure
freely.

Has. I am to move your highness in behalf
Of Shore's unhappy wife.

Glos. Say you, of Shore?

[*high* :

Has. Once a bright star, that held her place on
The first and fairest of our English dames,
While Royal Edward held the sov'reign rule.
Now sunk in grief and pining with despair,
Her waning form no longer shall incite
Envy in woman, or desire in man.

She never sees the sun, but through her tears,
And wakes to sigh the live-long night away.

Glos. Marry! the times are badly chang'd with her,
From Edward's days to these Then all was jollity,
Feasting and mirth, light wantonness and laughter,
Piping and playing, minstrelsy and masking;
'Till life fled from us like an idle dream,
A show of mummery without a meaning.
My brother, rest and pardon to his soul,
Is gone to his account; for this his minion,
The revel-rout is done—But you were speaking
Concerning her—I have been told, that you
Are frequent in your visitation to her.

Has. No further, my good lord, than friendly pity,
And tender-hearted charity allow.

Glos. Go to: I did not mean to chide you for it;
For, sooth to say, I hold it noble in you
To cherish the distress'd—On with your tale.

Has. Thus it is, gracious sir, that certain officers,
Using the warrant of your mighty name,
With insolence unjust, and lawless power,
Have seiz'd upon the lands, which late she held
By grant, from her great master Edward's bounty.

Glos. Somewhat of this, but slightly, have I heard;
And though some counsellors of forward zeal,
Some of most ceremonious sanctity,
And bearded wisdom, often have provok'd
The hand of justice to fall heavy on her;
Yet still, in kind compassion of her weakness,
And tender memory of Edward's love,
I have withheld the merciless stern law
From doing outrage on her helpless beauty. [*mercy,*

Has. Good heav'n, who renders mercy back for
With open-handed bounty shall repay you:
This gentle deed shall fairly be set foremost,
To screen the wild escapes of lawless passion
And the long train of frailties flesh is heir to.

Glos. Thus far, the voice of pity pleaded only:
Our further and more full extent of grace
Is given to your request. Let her attend,
And to ourself deliver up her griefs.
She shall be heard with patience, and each wrong
At full redress'd. But I have other news,
Which much import us both; for still my fortunes
Go hand in hand with yours: our common foes,
The queen's relations, our new-fangled gentry,
Have fall'n their haughty crests—that for your
privacy. [*Exeunt Glo'ster and Hastings.*

SCENE II.—An Apartment in Jane Shore's House.

Enter BELMOUR and DUMONT

Bel. How she has lived you have heard my tale
already;

The rest your own attendance in her family,
Where I have found the means this day to place you,
And nearer observation, best will tell you.
See with what sad and sober cheer she comes.

Enter JANE SHORE, DUMONT retires up.

Sure, or I read her visage much amiss,
Or grief besets her hard. Save you, fair lady,
The blessings of the cheerful morn be on you,
And greet your beauty with its opening sweets.

Jane S. My gentle neighbour! your good wishes
still

Pursue my hapless fortunes; ah! good Belmour!
How few, like thee, inquire the wretched out,
And court the offices of soft humanity,
Like thee reserve their raiment for the naked,
Reach out their bread to feed the crying orphan,
Or mix their pitying tears with those that weep.
Thy praise deserves a better tongue than mine,

To speak and bless thy name. Is this the gentleman
Whose friendly service you commended to me?

Bel. Madam, it is!

Jane S. [*Aside.*] A venerable aspect!
Age sits with decent grace upon his visage,
And worthily becomes his silver locks;
He wears the marks of many years well spent,
Of virtue, truth well tried, and wise experience;
A friend like this would suit my sorrows well.

[*Crosses to Dumont.*

Fortune, I fear me, sir, has meant you ill,
Who pays your merit with that scanty pittance,
Which my poor hand and humble roof can give.

But to supply those golden vantages,
Which elsewhere you might find, expect to meet
A just regard and value for your worth,
The welcome of a friend, and the free partnership
Of all that little good the world allows me.

Dum. You over-rate me much; and all my answer
Must be my future truth; let that speak for me,
And make up my deserving.

Jane S. Are you of England?

Dum. No, gracious lady, Flanders claims my birth:
At Antwerp has my constant biding been,
Where sometimes I have known more plenteous days
Than these which now my failing age affords.

Jane S. Alas! at Antwerp! O forgive my tears!
[*Weeping.*

They fall for my offences—and must fall
Long, long ere they shall wash my stains away.
You knew perhaps—O grief! O shame!—my hus-
band. [*anguish.*

Dum. I knew him well—but stay this flood of
The senseless grave feels not your pious sorrows;
Three years and more are past, since I was bid,
With many of our common friends, to wait him
To his last peaceful mansion. I attended,
Sprinkled his clay-cold corse with holy drops,
According to our church's rev'rend rite,
And saw him laid in hallow'd ground, to rest.

Jane S. Oh, that my soul had known no joy but
him!

That I had liv'd within his guiltless arms,
And dying slept in innocence beside him!
But now his honest dust abhors the fellowship,
And scorns to mix with mine.

Enter a Servant.

Ser. The lady Alicia
Attends your leisure.

Jane S. Say I wish to see her. [*Exit Servant.*
Please, gentle sir, one moment to retire,
I'll wait you on the instant, and inform you
Of each unhappy circumstance, in which
Your friendly aid and counsel much may steady me.

[*Reeunt BELMOUR and DUMONT.*

Enter ALICIA.

Alic. Still, my fair friend, still shall I find you
thus?

Still shall these sighs heave after one another,
These trickling drops chase one another still,
As if the posting messengers of grief
Could overtake the hours fled far away,
And make old time come back?

Jane S. No, my Alicia,
Heaven and his saints be witness to my thoughts,
There is no hour of all my life o'er past
That I could wish should take its turn again.

Alic. And yet some of those days my friend has
known;

Some of those years, might pass for golden ones,
At least if womankind can judge of happiness.
What could we wish, we who delight in empire,

Whose beauty is our sov'reign good, and gives us,
Our reasons to rebel, and pow'r to reign,
What could we more than to behold a monarch,
Lovely, renown'd, a conqueror, and young,
Bound in our chains, and sighing at our feet!

Jane S. 'Tis true, the royal Edward was a wonder,
The goodly pride of all our English youth;
He was the very joy of all that saw him,
Form'd to delight, to love, and to persuade.
But what had I to do with kings and courts?
My humble lot had cast me far beneath him;
And that he was the first of all mankind,
The bravest, and most lovely, was my curse.

Alic. Sure something more than fortune join'd
your loves:

Nor could his greatness, and his gracious form,
Be elsewhere match'd so well, as to the sweetness
And beauty of my friend.

Jane S. Name him no more:

He was the bane and ruin of my peace.
This anguish, and these tears, these are the legacies
His fatal love has left me. Thou wilt see me,
Believe me, my Alicia, thou wilt see me,
Ere yet a few short days pass o'er my head,
Abandon'd to the very utmost wretchedness.
The hand of pow'r has seiz'd almost the whole
Of what was left for needy life's support;
Shortly thou wilt behold me poor, and kneeling
Before thy charitable door for bread.

Alic. [*Takes her hand.*] Joy of my life, my dearest
Shore, forbear

To wound my heart with thy foreboding sorrows:
Raise thy sad soul to better hopes than these,
Lift up thy eyes, and let them shine once more,
Bright as the morning sun above the mist.
Exert thy charms, seek out the stern Protector,
And sooth his savage temper with thy beauty;
Spite of his deadly, unrelenting nature,
He shall be mov'd to pity, and redress thee.

Jane S. My form, alas! has long forgot to please!
The scene of beauty and delight is chang'd;
No roses bloom upon my fading cheek,
Nor laughing graces wanton in my eyes;
But haggard grief, lean-looking, sallow care,
And pining discontent, a rueful train,
Dwell on my brow, all hideous and forlorn;
One only shadow of a hope is left me;
The noble minded Hastings, of his goodness,
Has kindly underta'en to be my advocate,
And move my humble suit to angry Glo'ster.

Alic. Does Hastings undertake to plead your cause?
But wherefore should he not? Hastings has eyes;
The gentle lord has a right tender heart,
Melting and easy, yielding to impression,
And catching the soft flame from each new beauty;
But yours shall charm him long.

Jane S. [*Turning.*] Away, you flatterer!
Nor charge his gen'rous meaning with a weakness,
Which his great soul and virtue must disdain.
Too much of love thy hapless friend has prov'd,
Too many giddy, foolish hours are gone,
And in fantastic measures dang'd away:
May the remaining few know only friendship,
So thou, my dearest, truest, best Alicia,
Vouchsafe to lodge me in thy gentle heart,
A partner there; I will give up mankind,
Forget the transports of increasing passion,
And all the pangs we feel for its decay.

Alic. Live! live and reign for ever in my bosom:

[*Embracing.*

Safe and unrivall'd there possess thy own;
And you, the brightest of the stars above, [*Kneels.*

Ye saints that once were women here below,
Be witness of the truth, the holy friendship,
Which here to this my other self I vow.
If I do not hold her nearer to my soul,
Than every other joy the world can give,
Let poverty, deformity, and shame,
Distraction, and despair seize me on earth,
Let not my faithless ghost have peace hereafter,
Nor taste the bliss of your celestial fellowship.

[*Rises.*

Jane S. Yes, thou art true, and only thou art true;
Therefore these jewels, once the lavish bounty
Of royal Edward's love, I trust to thee;

[*Gives a casket.*

Receive this, all that I can call my own.
And let it rest unknown, and safe with thee:
That if the state's injustice should oppress me,
Strip me of all, and turn me out a wanderer,
My wretchedness may find relief from thee,
And shelter from the storm.

Alic. My all is thine;
One common hazard shall attend us both,
And both be fortunate, or both be wretched.
But let thy fearful doubting heart be still;
The saints and angels have thee in their charge,
And all things shall be well. Think not, the good,
The gentle deeds of mercy thou hast done,
Shall die forgotten all; the poor, the pris'ner,
The fatherless, the friendless, and the widow,
Who daily own the bounty of thy hand,
Shall cry to heaven, and pull a blessing on thee.

Ev'n man, the merciless insulter man,
Man, who rejoices in our sex's weakness,
Shall pity thee, and with unwonted goodness,
Forget thy failings, and record thy praise. [*me,*

Jane S. Why should I think that man will do for
What yet he never did for wretches like me?
Mark by what partial justice we are judg'd;
Such is the fate unhappy women find,
And such the curse entail'd upon our kind,
That man, the lawless libertine, may rove,
Free and unquestion'd, through the wilds of love;
While woman, sense and nature's easy fool,
If poor, weak woman swerve from virtue's rule—
If strongly charm'd, she leave the thorny way,
And in the softer paths of pleasures stray;
Ruin ensues, reproach and endless shame,
And one false step entirely damns her fame;
In vain with tears the loss she may deplore,
In vain look back on what she was before:
She sets, like stars that fall, to rise no more. [*Exeunt*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in Jane Shore's House.*

Enter ALICIA

Alic. The drowsy night grows on the world, and
now

The busy craftsman and the o'er-labour'd hind
Forget the travail of the day in sleep:
Care only wakes, and moping pensiveness;
With meagre discontented looks they sit,
And watch the wasting of the midnight taper.
Such vigils must I keep, so wakes my soul,
Restless and self-tormented! O, false Hastings!
Thou hast destroy'd my peace. [*Knocking without.*
What noise is that?
What visitor is this, who with bold freedom,

Breaks in upon the peaceful night and rest,
With such a rude approach?

Enter a SERVANT.

Serv. One from the court.

Lord Hastings (as I think), demands my lady.

[*Crosses, and exit.*]

Alic. Hastings! Be still, my heart, and try to meet him,

With his own arts! with falsehood—But he comes.

[*Hastings, heard without speaking to a Servant.*]

Enter LORD HASTINGS.

Has. Dismiss my train, and wait alone without.

Alicia here! Unfortunate encounter.

But be it as it may.

Alic. When humbly, thus,
The great descend to visit the afflicted,
When thus unmindful of their rest, they come
To sooth the sorrows of the midnight mourner,
Comfort comes with them; like the golden sun,
Dispels the sullen shades with her sweet influence,
And cheers the melancholy house of care.

Has. 'Tis true I would not over-rate a courtesy,
Nor let the coldness of delay hang on it,
To nip and blast its favour like a frost;
But rather chose, at this late hour, to come,
That your fair friend may know I have prevail'd;
The lord protector has receiv'd her suit,
And means to show her grace.

Alice. My friend! my lord.

Has. Yes, lady, yours; none has a right more ample
To task my pow'r than you.

Alic. I want the words,
To pay you back a compliment so courtly;
But my heart guesses at the friendly meaning,
And wou'dn't die your debtor.

Has. 'Tis well, madam.

But I would see your friend.

Alic. O, thou false lord!
I would be mistress of my heaving heart,
Stifle this rising rage, and learn from thee
To dress my face in easy, dull indiff'rence;
But 'twou'dn't be; my wrongs will tear their way,
And rush at once upon thee.

Has. Are you wise?

Have you the use of reason? Do you wake?
What means this raving, this transporting passion?

Alic. O, thou cool traitor! thou insulting tyrant!
Dost thou behold my poor distracted heart,
Thus rent with agonizing love and rage,
And ask me what it means? Art thou not false?
Am I not scorn'd, forsaken, and abandon'd;
Left, like a common wretch, to shame and infamy;
Giv'n up to be the sport of villains' tongues,
Of laughing parasites, and lewd buffoons?
And all because my soul has doated on thee
With love, with truth, and tenderness unutterable?

Has. Are these the proofs of tenderness and love?
These endless quarrels, discontents, and jealousies,
These never-ceasing wailings and complainings,
These furious starts, these whirlwinds of the soul,
Which every other moment rise to madness?

Alic. What proof, alas! have I not giv'n of love?
What have I not abandon'd to thy arms?
Have I not set at nought my noble birth,
A spotless fame, and an unblemish'd race,
The peace of innocence, and pride of virtue?
My prodigality has given thee all;
And now I've nothing left me to bestow,
You hate the wretched bankrupt you have made.

Has. Why am I thus pursu'd from place to place,

Kept in the view, and cross'd at every turn?

In vain I fly, and, like a hunted deer,
Scud o'er the lawns, and hasten to the covert:
E'er I can reach my safety, you o'ertake me
With the swift malice of some keen reproach,
And drive the winged shaft deep in my heart.

Alic. Hither you fly, and here you seek repose;
Spite of the poor deceit, your arts are known,
Your pious, charitable, midnight visits. [*Crosses.*]

Has. If you are wise, and prize your peace of mind,
Yet take the friendly counsel of my love;
Believe me true, nor listen to your jealousy.
Let not that devil, which undoes your sex,
That cursed curiosity, seduce you
To hunt for needless secrets, which, neglected,
Shall never hurt your quiet; but once known,
Shall sit upon your heart, pinch it with pain,
And banish the sweet sleep for ever from you.
Go to—be yet advis'd—

Alic. Dost thou in scorn
Preach patience to my rage, and bid me tamely
Sit like a poor, contented idiot down, [thee,
Nor dare to think thou'st wrong'd me? Ruin seize
And swift perdition overtake thy treachery.
Have I the least remaining cause to doubt?
Hast thou endeavour'd once to hide thy falsehood?
To hide it might have spoke some little tenderness,
And shown thee half unwilling to undo me:
But thou disdain'st the weakness of humanity.
Thy words, and all thy actions, have confess'd it;
Ev'n now thy eyes avow it, now they speak,
And insolently own the glorious villainy. [*chains.*]

Has. Well then, I own my heart has broke your
Patient I bore the painful bondage long,
At length my gen'rous love disdains your tyranny;
The bitterness and stings of taunting jealousy,
Vexatious days, and jarring, joyless nights,
Have driv'n him forth to seek some safer shelter,
Where he may rest his weary wings in peace.

Alic. You triumph! do! and with gigantic pride
Defy impending vengeance. Heav'n shall wink;
No more his arm shall roll the dreadful thunder,
Nor send his lightnings forth: no more his justice
Shall visit the presuming sons of men,
But perjury, like thine, shall dwell in safety.

Has. What'er my fate decrees for me hereafter,
Be present to me now, my better angel!
Preserve me from the storm that threatens now,
And if I have beyond atonement sinn'd,
Let any other kind of plague o'ertake me,
So I escape the fury of that tongue.

Alic. Thy pray'r is heard—I go—[*Crosses.*—but
know, proud lord,

Howe'er thou scorn'st the weakness of my sex,
This feeble hand may find the means to reach thee,
Howe'er sublime in pow'r and greatness plac'd,
With royal favour guarded round and graced;
On eagle's wings my rage shall urge her flight,
And hurl thee headlong from thy topmast height;
Then, like thy fate, superior will I sit,
And view thee fall'n and grov'ling at my feet;
See thy last breath with indignation go,
And tread thee sinking to the shades below. [*Exit.*]

Has. How fierce a fiend is passion! With what
wildness,
With tyranny untam'd it reigns in woman!
Unhappy sex! whose easy, yielding temper
Gives way to ev'ry appetite alike:
And love in their weak bosom is a rage
As terrible as hate, and as destructive.
But soft ye now—for here comes one, disclaims
Strife and her wrangling train; of equal elements,

Without one jarring atom was she form'd,
And gentleness and joy make up her being.

Enter JANE SHORE.

Forgive me, fair one, if officious friendship
Intrudes on your repose, and comes thus late
To greet you with the tidings of success.
The princely Glo'ster has vouchsaf'd you hearing,
To-morrow he expects you at the court;
There plead your cause, with never-failing beauty,
Speak all your griefs and find a full redress.

Jane S. Thus humbly let your lowly servant
bend. [*Kneels.*]

Thus let me bow my grateful knee to earth,
And bless your noble nature for this goodness.

Has. Rise, gentle dame, you wrong my meaning
much, [*Raises her.*]

Think me not guilty of a thought so vain,
To sell my courtesy for thanks like these. [*ing;*]

Jane S. 'Tis true, your bounty is beyond my speak-
But though my mouth be dumb, my heart shall
thank you:

And when it melts before the throne of mercy,
Mourning and bleeding for my past offences,
My fervent soul shall breathe one pray'r for you,
That heav'n will pay you back, when most you need,
The grace and goodness you have shown to me.

Has. If there be aught of merit in my service,
Impute it there, where most 'tis due—to love;
Be kind, my gentle mistress, to my wishes,
And satisfy my panting heart with beauty.

Jane S. Alas! my lord—

Has. Why bend thy eyes to earth?

Wherefore these looks of heaviness and sorrow?

Why breathes that sigh, my love! And wherefore
falls

This trickling show'r of tears, to stain thy sweetness?

Jane S. If pity dwells within your noble breast
(As sure it does), oh, speak not to me thus.

Has. Can I behold thee, and not speak of love?

Ev'n now, thus sadly as thou stand'st before me,
Thus desolate, dejected, and forlorn,
Thy softness steals upon my yielding senses,
Till my soul faints, and sickens with desire;
How canst thou give this motion to my heart,
And bid my tongue be still?

Jane S. Cast round your eyes

Upon the high-born beauties of the court;
Behold, like opening roses, where they bloom,
Sweet to the sense, unsully'd all, and spotless;
There choose some worthy partner of your heart,
To fill your arms and bless your virtuous bed;
Nor turn your eyes this way.

Has. What means this peevish, this fantastic
change?

Where is thy wonted pleasantness of face,
Thy wonted graces, and thy dimpled smiles?
Where hast thou lost thy wit and sportive mirth?
That cheerful heart, which us'd to dance for ever,
And cast a day of gladness all around thee?

Jane S. Yes, I will own I merit the reproach;
And for those foolish days of wanton pride,
My soul is justly humbled to the dust:
All tongues like yours are licens'd to upbraid me,
Still to repeat my guilt, to urge my infamy,
And treat me like that abject thing I have been.

Has. No more of this dull stuff. 'Tis time enough
To whine and mortify thyself with penance;
The present moment claims more gen'rous use;
Thy beauty, night and solitude, reproach me,
For having talk'd thus long:—come, let me press
thee. [*Lays hold of her.*]

Jane S. Forbear, my lord!—here let me rather
die, [*Kneels*]

And end my sorrows and my shame for ever.

Has. Away with this perverseness:—'tis too
much.

Nay, if you strive—'tis monstrous affectation!

Jane S. [*Striving.*] Retire! I beg you leave me—

Has. Thus to coy it!—

With one who knows you too.—

Jane S. For mercy's sake—

Has. Ungrateful woman! Is it thus you pay

My services?—

Jane S. Abandon me to ruin—

Rather than urge me—

Has. [*Pulling her.*] This way to your chamber;

There if you struggle—

Jane S. Help, O gracious heaven!

Help! Save me! Help! [*Shrieks and rushes out.*]

Enter DUMONT.

Dum. My lord! for honour's sake—

Has. Hah! What art thou?—Be gone!

Dum. My duty calls me

To my attendance on my mistress, here.

Has. Avaunt! base groom:—

At distance wait and know thy office better.

Dum. No, my lord—

The common ties of manhood call me now,

And bid me thus stand up in the defence

Of an oppress'd, unhappy, helpless woman.

Has. And dost thou know me, slave?

Dum. Yes, thou proud lord!

I know thee well; know thee with each advantage,

Which wealth, or pow'r, or noble birth can give thee.

I know thee too for one who stains those honours,

And blots a long illustrious line of ancestry,

By poorly daring thus to wrong a woman. [*dame,*]

Has. 'Tis wondrous well; I see, my saint-like

You stand provided of your braves and ruffians,

To man your cause, and bluster in your brothel.

Dum. Take back the foul reproach, unmanner'd
railer!

Nor urge my rage too far, lest thou shouldst find

I have as daring spirit in my blood

As thou or any of thy race e'er boasted;

And though no gaudy titles grac'd my birth,

Yet heav'n that made me honest, made me more

Than ever king did, when he made a lord.

Has. Insolent villain! henceforth let this teach
thee [*Draws and strikes him*]

The distance 'twixt a peasant and a prince.

Dum. Nay then, my lord, [*Draws*] learn you by
this, how well

An arm resolv'd can guard his master's life.

[*They fight—Dumont disarms him.*]

Has. Confusion! baffled by a base-born hind!

Dum. Now, haughty sir, where is our difference
now?

Your life is in my hand, and did not honour,

The gentleness of blood, and inborn virtue

(Howe'er unworthy I may seem to you),

Plead in my bosom, I should take the forfeit.

But wear your sword again; and know, a lord,

Oppos'd against a man, is but a man.

Has. Curse on my failing hand! your better
fortune

Has giv'n you vantage o'er me; but perhaps

Your triumph may be bought with dear repentance.
[*Exit.*]

Re-enter JANE SHORE.

Jane S. Alas! what have you done? Know ye
the pow'r,

The nightiness that waits upon this lord?

Dum. Fear not, my worthiest mistress ; 'tis a cause
In which heaven's guards shall wait you. O, pursue,
Pursue the sacred counsels of your soul,
Which urge you on to virtue ;
Assisting angels shall conduct your steps,
Bring you to bliss, and crown your days with peace.

Jane S. O that my head were laid, my sad eyes
clos'd,

And my cold corse wound in my shroud to rest !

My painful heart will never cease to beat,
Will never know a moment's peace till then.

Dum. Would you be happy, leave this fatal place ;
Fly from the court's pernicious neighbourhood ;
Where innocence is sham'd, and blushing modesty
Is made the scorner's jest ; where hate, deceit,
And deadly ruin, wear the masks of beauty,
And draw deluded fools with shows of pleasure.

Jane S. Where should I fly, thus helpless and
forlorn,

Of friends and all the means of life bereft ?

Dum. Belmour, whose friendly care still wakes
to serve you,

Has found you out a little peaceful refuge,
Far from the court and the tumultuous city.
Within an ancient forest's ample verge,
There stands a lonely but a healthful dwelling,
Built for convenience and the use of life :
Around it fallows, meads, and pastures fair,
A little garden, and a limpid brook,
By nature's own contrivance seem'd dispos'd ;
No neighbours, but a few poor simple clowns,
Honest and true, with a well meaning priest ;
No faction, or domestic fury's rage,
Did'er disturb the quiet of that place,
When the contending nobles shook the land
With York and Lancaster's disputed sway.
Your virtue there may find a safe retreat
From the insulting pow'rs of wicked greatness.

Jane S. Can there be so much happiness in store ?

A cell like that is all my hopes aspire to.
Haste then, and thither let us take our flight,
Ere the clouds gather, and the wintry sky
Descends in storms to intercept our passage.

Dum. Will you then go ? You glad my very
soul.

Banish your fears, cast all your cares on me ;
Plenty and ease, and peace of mind shall wait you,
And make your latter days of life most happy.
O lady ! but I must not, cannot tell you,
How anxious I have been for all your dangers,
And how my heart rejoices at your safety.
So when the spring renews the flow'ry field,
And warns the pregnant nightingale to build,
She seeks the safest shelter of the wood,
Where she may trust her little tuneful brood ;
Where no rude swains her shady cell may know,
No serpents climb, nor blasting winds may blow ;
Fond of the chosen place, she views it o'er,
Sits there, and wanders through the grove no more :
Warbling she charms it each returning night,
And loves it with a mother's dear delight. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—The Court.

Enter ALICIA, with a Paper.

Alic. This paper to the great protector's hand
With care and secrecy must be conveyed :

His bold ambition now avows its aim,
To pluck the crown from Edward's infant brow,
And fix it on his own. I know he holds
My faithless Hastings adverse to his hopes,
And much devoted to the orphan king :
On that I build ; this paper meets his doubts,
And marks my hated rival as the cause
Of Hastings' zeal for his dead master's sons.
Oh, jealousy ! thou bane of pleasing friendship,
How does thy rancour poison all our softness,
And turn our gentle natures into bitterness !
See, where she comes ! once my heart's dearest
blessing,

Now my chang'd eyes are blasted with her beauty,
Loath that known face, and sicken to behold her.

Enter JANE SHORE.

Jane S. O, my Alicia !

Alic. What new grief is this ?

What unforeseen misfortune has surprised thee,
That racks thy tender heart thus ?

Jane S. O, Dumont !

Alic. Say, what of him !

Jane S. That friendly, honest man,
Whom Belmour brought of late to my assistance,
On whose kind care, whose diligence and faith,
My surest trust was built, this very morn
Was seiz'd on by the cruel hand of power,
Forc'd from my house, and borne away to prison.

Alic. To prison, said you ? Can you guess the
cause ?

Jane S. Too well, I fear. His bold defence of me
Has drawn the vengeance of Lord Hastings on him.

Alic. Lord Hastings ! ha !

Jane S. Some fitter time must tell thee
The tale of my hard hap. Upon the present
Hang all my poor, my last remaining hopes.
Within this paper is my suit contained ;
Here as the princely Gloster passes forth,
I wait to give it on my humble knees,
And move him for redress.

[*Gives the paper to ALICIA, who opens and reads it :*

JANE SHORE retires up the Stage.

Alic. Now for a while,

To sting my thoughtless rival to the heart ;
To blast her fatal beauties, and divide her
For ever from my perjur'd Hastings' eyes :
Their fashions are the same, it cannot fail.

[*Aside.—Pulling out the Paper.—Flourish.*

Jane S. [*Advancing.*] But see the great protector
comes this way.

Give me the paper, friend.

Alic. For love and vengeance !

[*Aside — Gives her the other Paper.*

*Enter the DUKE of GLO'STER, SIR RICHARD
RATCLIFFE, CATESBY, Courtiers, and other
Attendants.*

Jane S. [*Kneeling.*] O, noble Glo'ster, turn thy
gracious eye,
Incline thy pitying ear to my complaint ;
A poor, undone, forsaken, helpless woman,
Entreats a little bread for charity,
To feed her wants, and save her life from perishing.

Glos. Arise, fair dame, and dry your wat'ry eyes.

[*Receives the Paper, and raises her.*

Beshrew me, but 'twere pity of his' heart
That could refuse a boon to such a suitor:
You've got a noble friend to be your advocate :
A worthy and right gentle lord he is,
And to his trust most true. This present now
Some matters of the state detain our leisure ;

Those once dispatch'd, we'll call for you anon,
And give your griefs redress. Go to:—be comforted,
[this pity.]

Jane S. Good heavens repay your highness for
And show'r down blessings on your princely head!
Come, my Alicia, reach thy friendly arm,
And help me to support this feeble frame,
That nodding totters with oppressive woe,
And sinks beneath its load.

[*Exeunt JANE SHORE and ALICIA.*]

Glos. Now by my holy-dame!
Heavy at heart she seems, and sore afflicted.
But thus it is when rude calamity
Lays its strong gripe upon these mincing minions;
Their dainty gew-gaw forms dissolve at once,
And shiver at the shock. What says this paper?

[*Seeming to read.*]

Ha! What is this? Come nearer, Ratcliffe! Catesby!

[*They advance.*]

Mark the contents, and then divine the meaning.
[*Reads.*] "Wonder not, Princely Glo'ster, at the news

This paper brings you from a friend unknown;
Lord Hastings is inclined to call you master,
And kneel to Richard as to England's king;
But Shore's bewitching wife misleads his heart,
And draws his service to king Edward's sons:
Drive her away, you break the charm that holds him,
And he, and all his powers, attend on you."

Sir R. 'Tis wonderful!

Cates. The means by which it came
Yet stranger too!

Glos. You saw it giv'n, but now.

Sir R. She could not know the purport.

Glos. No, 'tis plain

She knows it not, it levels at her life;
Should she presume to prate of such high matters,
The meddling harlot, dear she should abide it.

Cates. What hand soe'er it comes from, be assur'd,
It means your highness well—

Glos. Upon the instant,

Lord Hastings will be here; this morn I mean
To probe him to the quick; then if he finch,
No more but this—away with him at once,
He must be mine or nothing.—But he comes!
Draw nearer this way, and observe me well.

[*They retire and confer.*]

Enter Lord HASTINGS.

Has. This foolish woman hangs about my heart,
Lingers and wanders in my fancy still;
This coyness is put on, 'tis art and cunning,
And worn to urge desire;—I must possess her.
The groom, who lift his saucy hand against me,
Ere this, is humbled, and repents his daring.
Perhaps, ev'n she may profit by th' example,
And teach her beauty not to scorn my pow'r.

Glos. This do, and wait me ere the council sits.

[*Exeunt RATCLIFFE and CATESBY.*]

My lord, you're well encounter'd; here has been
A fair petitioner this morning with us;
Believe me, she has won me much to pity her:
Alas! her gentle nature was not made
To buffet with adversity. I told her
How worthily her cause you had befriended;
How much for your good sake we meant to do,
That you had spoke, and all things should be well.

Has. Your highness binds me ever to your service.

Glos. You know your friendship is most potent
with us,
And shares our power. But of this enough,
For we have other matters for your ear;

The state is out of tune; distracting fears,
And jealous doubts, jar in our public councils:
Amidst the wealthy city, murmurs rise,
Lewd railings, and reproach on those that rule,
With open scorn of government; hence credit,
And public trust 'twixt man and man, are broke.
The golden streams of commerce are withheld,
Which fed the wants of needy hinds and arizans
Who therefore curse the great, and threat rebellion.

Has. The resty knaves are over-run with ease,
As plenty ever is the nurse of faction;
If in good days, like these, the headstrong herd
Grow madly wanton and repine, it is
Because the reins of power are held too slack,
And reverend authority of late
Has won a face of mercy more than justice.

Glos. Beshrew my heart! but you have well
divin'd

The source of these disorders. Who can wonder
If riot and misrule o'erturn the realm,
When the crown sits upon a baby brow!
Plainly to speak, hence comes the gen'ral cry,
And sum of all complaint: 'twill ne'er be well
With England (thus they talk) while children
govern.

Has. 'Tis true, the king is young: but what of
that?

We feel no want of Edward's riper years,
While Glo'ster's valour and most princely wisdom
So well support our infant sov'reign's place,
His youth's support, and guardian to his throne.

Glos. The council (much I'm bound to thank 'em
for't),

Have plac'd a pageant sceptre in my hand,
Barren of pow'r, and subject to control;
Scorn'd by my foes, and useless to my friends.
Oh, worthy lord! were mine the rule indeed,
I think I should not suffer rank offence

At large to lord it in the commonweal;
Nor would the realm be rent by discord thus,
Thus fear and doubt, betwixt disputed titles.

Has. Of this I am to learn; as not supposing
A doubt like this;—

Glos. Ay, marry, but there is—
And that of much concern. Have you not heard
How, on a late occasion, doctor Shaw
Has mov'd the people much about the lawfulness
Of Edward's issue! By right grave authority
Of learning and religion, plainly proving,
A bastard scion never should be grafted
Upon a royal stock; from thence at full
Discoursing on my brother's former contract
To lady Elizabeth Lucy, long before
His jolly match with that same buxom widow,
The queen he left behind him—

Has. Ill befall

Such meddling priests, who kindle up confusion,
And vex the quiet world with their vain scruples!
By heav'n 'tis done in perfect spite to peace.

Did not the king

Our royal master, Edward, in concurrence
With his estates assembled, well determine
What course the sov'reign rule should take hence-
forward?

When shall the deadly hate of faction cease?
When shall our long-divided land have rest,
If every peevish, moody malcontent,
Shall set the senseless rabble in an uproar,
Fright them with dangers, and perplex their brains,
Each day with some fantastic giddy change?

Glos. What if some patriot, for the public good,
Should vary from your scheme, new-mould the state?

Has. Curse on the innovating hand attempts it !
Remember him, the villain, righteous heaven,
In thy great day of vengeance ! blast the traitor
And his pernicious counsels ; who, for wealth,
For pow'r, the pride of greatness, or revenge,
Would plunge his native land in civil wars !

Glos. You go too far, my lord.

Has. Your highness' pardon.—

Have we so soon forgot those days of ruin,
When York and Lancaster drew forth their battles ;
When, like a matron butcher'd by her sons,
Our groaning country bled at every vein :
When murders, rapes, and massacres prevail'd ;
When churches, palaces, and cities blaz'd :
When insolence and barbarism triumph'd,
And swept away distinction : peasants trod
Upon the necks of nobles : low were laid
The reverend crosier and the holy mitre,
And desolation covered all the land ;
Who can remember this, and not, like me,
Here vow to sheath a dagger in his heart,
Whose damn'd ambition would renew those horrors,
And set once more that scene of blood before us !

Glos. How now ! so hot !

Has. So brave and so resolv'd.

Glos. Is then our friendship of so little moment,
That you could arm your hand against my life ?

Has. I hope your highness does not think I
mean it ;

No, heav'n forbid that e'er your princely person
Should come within the scope of my resentment.

Glos. O, noble Hastings ! nay, I must embrace
you ; [Embrace.]

By holy Paul, you're a right honest man !
The time is full of danger and distrust,
And warns us to be wary. Hold me not
Too apt for jealousy and light surmise,
If when I meant to lodge you next my heart,
I put your truth to trial. Keep your loyalty,
And live your king and country's best support :
For me, I ask no more than honour gives,
To think me yours, and rank me with your friends.

[Exit.]

Has. I am not read,
Nor skill'd and practis'd in the arts of greatness,
To kindle thus, and give a scope to passion.
The duke is surely noble ; but he touch'd me
Ev'n on the tend'rest point ; the master-string
That makes most harmony or discord to me.
I own the glorious subject fires my breast,
And my soul's darling passion stands confess'd ;
Beyond or love's or friendship's sacred band,
Beyond myself, I prize my native land :
On this foundation would I build my fame,
And emulate the Greek and Roman name ;
Think England's peace bought cheaply with my
blood,

And die with pleasure for my country's good. [Exit.]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—The Palace.

Duke of GLO'STER advances from a state chair.
RATCLIFFE and CATESBY.

Glos. This was the sum of all : that he would brook
No alteration in the present state.

Marry, at last, the testy gentleman

Was almost mov'd to bid us bold defiance :
But there I dropp'd the argument, and changing
The first design and purport of my speech,
I prais'd his good affection to young Edward,
And left him to believe my thoughts like his.
Proceed we then in this fore-mentioned matter,
As nothing bound or trusting to his friendship

Sir R. Ill does it thus befall. I could have wish'd
This lord had stood with us.

His name had been of vantage to your highness,
And stood our present purpose much in stead.

Glos. This wayward and perverse declining from us,
Has warrant at full the friendly notice,
Which we this morn receiv'd. I hold it certain,
This puling, whining harlot rules his reason,
And prompts his zeal for Edward's bastard brood.

Cates. If she have such dominion o'er his heart,
And turn it at her will, you rule her fate ;
And should, by inference and apt deduction,
Be arbiter of his. Is not her bread,

The very means immediate to her being,
The bounty of your hand ? Why does she live,
If not to yield obedience to your pleasure,
To speak, to act, to think as you command ?

Sir R. Let her instruct her tongue to bear your
message !

Teach every grace to smile in your behalf,
And her deluded eyes to gloat for you ;
His ductile reason will be wound about,
Be led and turn'd again, say and unsay,
Receive the yoke, and yield exact obedience.

Glos. Your counsel likes me well, it shall be
follow'd,

She waits without, attending on her suit,
Go, call her in, and leave us here alone.

[Exit RATCLIFFE and CATESBY.]

How poor a thing is he, how worthy scorn,
Who leaves the guidance of imperial manhood
To such a paltry piece of stuff as this is !
A moppet made of prettiness and pride ;
That oftener does her giddy fancies change,
Than glittering dew-drops in the sun do colours.—
Now, shame upon it ! was our reason given
For such a use. To be thus puff'd about.
Sure there is something more than witchcraft in
them,

That masters ev'n the wisest of us all.

Enter JANE SHORE.

Oh ! you are come most fitly. We have ponder'd
On this your grievance : and though some there are,
Nay, and those great ones too, who would enforce
The rigour of our power to afflict you,
And bear a heavy hand ; yet fear not you :
We've ta'en you to our favour ; our protection
Shall stand between, and shield you from mishap

Jane S. The blessings of a heart with anguish
broken

And rescu'd from despair, attend your highness.

Alas ! my gracious lord, what have I done
To kindle such relentless wrath against me ?

Glos. Marry, there are, though I believe them not,
Who say you meddle in affairs of state :

That you presume to prattle like a busy-body,
Give your advice, and teach the lords o' the council
What fits the order of the commonweal.

Jane S. O, that the busy world, at least in this,
Would take example from a wretch like me !

None then would waste their hours in foreign
thoughts,

Forget themselves, and what concerns their peace,

To search, with prying eyes, for faults abroad,
If all, like me, consider'd their own hearts,
And wept their sorrows which they found at home.

Glos. Go to; I know your pow'r; and though I trust not

To ev'ry breath of fame, I'm not to learn
That Hastings is profess'd your loving vassal.
But fair befall your beauty: use it wisely,
And it may stand your fortunes much in stead,
Give back your forfeit land with large increase,
And place you high in safety and in honour.
Nay, I could point a way, the which pursuing,
You shall not only bring yourself advantage,
But give the realm much worthy cause to thank you.

Jane S. Oh! where or how—can my unworthy hand

Become an instrument of good to any?
Instruct your lowly slave, and let me fly
To yield obedience to your dread command.

Glos. Why, that's well said;—Thus then—ob-serve me well.

The state, for many high and potent reasons,
Deeming my brother Edward's sons unfit
For the imperial weight of England's crown—

Jane S. Alas! for pity.

Glos. Therefore have resolv'd

To set aside their unavailing infancy,
And vest the sov'reign rule in abler hands.
This, though of great importance to the public,
Hastings, for very peevishness and spleen,
Does stubbornly oppose.

Jane S. Does he? Does Hastings?

Glos. Ay, Hastings.

Jane S. [Kneels and clasps her hands.] Reward him for the noble deed, just heav'ns!

For this one action guard him and distinguish him
With signal mercies, and with great deliverance,
Save him from wrong, adversity, and shame,
Let never-fading honours flourish round him,
And consecrate his name, ev'n to time's end.

Glos. How now!

[ones!]

Jane S. [Rises.] The poor, forsaken, royal little
Shall they be left a prey to savage power!
Can they lift up their harmless hands in vain,
Or cry to heaven for help, and not be heard?
Impossible! O gallant, generous Hastings,
Go on, pursue, assert the sacred cause:

Stand forth thou proxy of all-ruling Providence,
And save the friendless infants from oppression.
Saints shall assist thee with prevailing prayers,
And warring angels combat on thy side. [Crosses.]

Glos. You're passing rich in this same heavenly speech,

And spend it at your pleasure. Nay, but mark me!

[Runs to her in a threatening manner.]

My favour is not bought with words like these.
Go to:—you'll teach your tongue another tale.

[Returns.]

Jane S. No, though the royal Edward has undone me,

He was my king, my gracious master still;
He lov'd me too, though 'twas a guilty flame;
And can I?—O my heart abhors the thought!—
Stand by and see his children robb'd of right?

Glos. Dare not, ev'n for thy soul, to thwart me further!

None of your arts, your feigning, and your foolery;
Your dainty squeamish coying it to me;
Go—to your lord, your paramour, be gone!
Lisp in his ear, hang wanton on his neck,
And play your monkey gambols o'er to him.
You know my purpose, look that you pursue it,

ACT. DRAMA.—NO. XXXIV.

And make him yield obedience to my will,
Do it—or woe upon the harlot's head. [speech,
Jane S. Oh! that my tongue had every grace of
Great and commanding, as the breath of kings;
That I had art and eloquence divine,
To pay my duty to my master's ashes,
And plead, till death, the cause of injur'd innocence.

Glos. Ha! Dost thou brave me, minion? Dost thou know [theo?]

How vile, how very a wretch, my pow'r can make
That I can place thee in such abject state,
As help shall never find thee; where, repining,
Thou shalt sit down, and gnaw the earth for anguish;
Groan to the pitiless winds without return;
Howl, like the midnight wolf, amidst the desert,
And curse thy life, in bitterness and misery.

Jane S. Let me be branded for the public scorn,
Turn'd forth and driv'n to wander like a vagabond,
Be friendless and forsaken, seek my bread
Upon the barren wild and desolate waste,
Feed on my sighs, and drink my falling tears,
Ere I consent to teach my lips injustice,
Or wrong the orphan, who has none to save him.

Glos. 'Tis well:—we'll try the temper of your heart.

What, ho! Who waits without?

Enter RATCLIFFE, CATESBY, and Attendants.

Glos. Go, some of you, and turn this strumpet forth!

Spurn her into the street; there let her perish,
And rot upon a dunghill. Through the city
See it proclaim'd, that none, on pain of death,
Presume to give her comfort, food, or harbour;
Who ministers the smallest comfort, dies.
Her house, her costly furniture and wealth,
We seize on, for the profit of the state.
Away! Be gone!

[Goes back to his chair, and examines papers.]

Jane S. Oh, thou most righteous judge—

Humbly behold, I bow myself to thee, [Kneels.
And own thy justice in this hard decree;
No longer, then, my ripe offences spare,
But what I merit, let me learn to bear,
Yet, since 'tis all my wretchedness can give,
For my past crimes my forfeit life receive;

[They raise her.]

No pity for my sufferings here I crave,
And only hope forgiveness in the grave.

[Exit JANE SHORE, guarded by CATESBY.]

Glos. So much for this. Your project's at an end.
[To Sir Richard.]

This idle toy, this hilding, scorns my power,
And sets us all at nought. See that a guard
Be ready at my call—

Sir R. The council waits
Upon your highness' leisure.

Glos. I'll attend them.

[Exeunt all, except GLOSTER.]

*Enter the DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM, EARL OF DERBY,
and other Lords, who take their seats.*

Der. [Rises.] In happy times we are assembled here—

T' appoint the day, and fix the solemn pomp
For placing England's crown, with all due rights,
Upon our sovereign Edward's youthful brow. [Sits.]

Has. [Rises.] Some busy, meddling knaves, 'tis said, there are

As such will still be prating, who presume
To carp and cavil at his royal right;
Therefore, I hold it fitting, with the soonest,
To appoint the order of the coronation;

So to approve our duty to the king,
And stay the babbling of such vain gainsayers. [*Sits.*]

Der. We all attend to know your highness' pleasure. [*To Glo'ster.*]

Glos. My lords, a set of worthy men you are,
Prudent and just, and careful for the state;
Therefore, to your most grave determination
I yield myself in all things; and demand
What punishment your wisdom shall think meet
T' inflict upon those damnable contrivers,
Who shall with potions, charms, and witching drugs,
Practise against our person and our life!

Has. [*Rises.*] So much I hold the king your highness' debtor,

So precious are you to the commonweal,
That I presume, not only for myself,
But in behalf of these, my noble brothers,
To say, whoe'er they be, they merit death.

Glos. Then judge yourselves, convince your eyes
of truth:

Behold my arm, thus blasted, dry, and wither'd,
[*Pulling up his sleeve.*—*Lords all rise and close round to inspect his arm.*]

Shrunk like a foul abortion, and decay'd,
Like some untimely product of the seasons,
Robb'd of its properties of strength and office:
This is the sorcery of Edward's wife,
Who, in conjunction with that harlot Shore,
And other like confederate midnight hags,
By force of potent spells, of bloody characters,
And conjurations horrible to hear,
Call fiends and spectres from the yawning deep,
And set the ministers of hell at work
To torture and despoil me of my life.

Has. If they have done this deed—

Glos. [*Rises.*] If they have done it! [*To Hastings.*]
Talk'st thou to me of ifs, audacious traitor!
Thou art that strumpet witch's chief abettor,
The patron and plotter of her mischiefs,
And join'd in this contrivance for my death. [*sirs!*]
Nay, start not, lords.—What, ho! a guard there,

Enter Guards.

Lord Hastings, I arrest thee of high treason.
Seize him, and bear him instantly away
He sha'n't live an hour. By holy Paul,
I will not dine before his head be brought me.
Ratcliffe, stay you, and see that it be done;
The rest that love me, rise and follow me.

[*Ereunt GLO'STER, the Lords following*—*LORD HASTINGS, SIR RICHARD RATCLIFFE, and Guards remain.*]

Has. What! and no more but this!—How! to the scaffold!

O, gentle Ratcliffe! tell me, do I hold thee?
Or if I dream, what shall I do to wake,
To break, to struggle through this dread confusion?
For surely death itself is not so painful
As is this sudden horror and surprise.

Sir R. You heard the Duke's commands to me
were absolute.

Therefore, my lord, address you to your shrift,
With all good speed you may. Summon your
courage,

And be yourself; for you must die this instant.

Has. Yes, Ratcliffe, I will take thy friendly
counsel,

And die as a man should; 'tis somewhat hard
To call my scatter'd spirits home at once;
But since what must be, must be—let necessity
Supply the place of time and preparation,
And arm me for the blow. 'Tis but to die;

'Tis but to venture on the common hazard,
Which many a time in battle I have run;
'Tis but to close my eyes and shut out day-light,
To view no more the wicked ways of men,
No longer to behold the tyrant Glo'ster,
And be a weeping witness of the woes,
The desolation, slaughter, and calamities,
Which he shall bring on this unhappy land.

Enter ALICIA.

Alic. Stand off, and let me pass: I will, I must
Catch him once more in these despairing arms,
And hold him to my heart.—O, Hastings! Hastings!

Has. Alas! why com'st thou at this dreadful moment

To fill me with new terrors, new distractions;
To turn me wild with thy distemper'd rage,
And shock the peace of my departing soul?
Away; I pr'ythee leave me!

Alic. Stop a minute—

Till my full griefs find passage;—O, the tyrant!
Perdition fall on Glo'ster's head and mine.

Has. What means thy frantic grief?

Alic. I cannot speak—

But I have murdered thee;—Oh, I could tell thee!

Has. Speak, and give ease to thy conflicted passion!

Be quick nor keep me longer in suspense,
Time presses, and a thousand crowding thoughts
Break in at once! this way and that they snatch:
They tear my hurry'd soul: all claim attention,
And yet not one is heard. Oh! speak and leave me,
For I have business would employ an age,
And but a minute's time to get it done in. [*on,*]

Alic. That, that's my grief;—'tis I that urge thee
Thus hunt thee to the toil, sweep thee from earth,
And drive thee down this precipice of fate. [*band.*]

Has. Thy reason is grown wild. Could thy weak
Bring on this mighty ruin? If it could,
What have I done so grievous to thy soul,
So deadly, so beyond the reach of pardon,
That nothing but my life can make atonement!

Alic. Thy cruel scorn hath stung me to the heart,
And set my burning bosom all in flames;
Raving and mad I flew to my revenge,
And writ I knew not what;—told the protector,
That Shore's detested wife, by wiles, had won thee
To plot against his greatness.—He believ'd it,
(Oh, dire event of my pernicious counsel!)
And, while I meant destruction on her head,
He has turn'd it all on thine.

Has. O, thou inhuman! Turn thy eyes away,
And blast me not with their destructive beams:
Why should I curse thee with my dying breath?
Be gone! and let me die in peace. [*Crosses.*]

Alic. Canst thou—O, cruel Hastings, leave me
thus?

Hear me, I beg thee—I conjure thee, hear me!
While, with an agonizing heart, I swear,
By all the pangs I feel, by all the sorrows,
The terrors and despair thy loss shall give me,
My hate was on my rival bent alone.
Oh! had I once divin'd, false as thou art,
A danger to thy life, I would have died,
I would have met it for thee. [*award:*]

Has. Now mark! and tremble at heaven's just
While thy insatiate wrath and fell revenge
Pursu'd the innocence which never wrong'd thee,
Behold, the mischief falls on thee and me:
Remorse and heaviness of heart shall wait thee,
And everlasting anguish be thy portion:
For me, the snares of death are wound about me.

And now, in one poor moment, I am gone.
Oh! if thou hast one tender thought remaining,
Fly to thy closet, fall upon thy knees,
And recommend my parting soul to mercy.

Alic. Oh! yet, before I go for ever from thee,
Turn thee in gentleness and pity to me, [*Kneeling.*
And in compassion of my strong affliction,
Say, is it possible you can forgive
The fatal rashness of ungovern'd love?
For, oh! 'tis certain, if I had not lov'd thee
Beyond my peace, my reason, fame, and life,
This day of horror never would have known us.

Has. Oh, rise, and let me hush thy stormy sorrows.
[*Raising her.*

Assuage thy tears, for I will chide no more,
No more upbraid thee, thou unhappy fair one.
I see the hand of heaven is arm'd against me;
And, in mysterious providence, decrees
To punish me by thy mistaken hand.
Most righteous doom! for, oh, while I behold thee,
Thy wrongs rise up in terrible array,
And charge thy ruin on me; thy fair fame,
Thy spotless beauty, innocence, and youth,
Dishonour'd, blasted, and betray'd by me.

Alic. And does thy heart relent for my undoing?
Oh! that inhuman Glo'ster could be mov'd,
But half so easily as I can pardon!

[*CATESBY crosses, and whispers RATCLIFFE.*

Has. Here, then, exchange we mutual forgiveness:

So may the guilt of all my broken vows,
My perjuries to thee, be all forgotten,
As here my soul acquits thee of my death,
As here I part without one angry thought,
As here I leave thee with the softest tenderness,
Mourning the chance of our disastrous loves,
And begging heav'n to bless and to support thee.

Sir R. My lord, dispatch; the duke has sent to
chide me,

For loitering in my duty—

Has. I obey.

Alic. Insatiate, savage monster! Is a moment
So tedious to thy malice? Oh, repay him,
Thou great avenger! Give him blood for blood!
Guilt haunt him! fiends pursue him! lightnings
blast him!

That he may know how terrible it is
To want that moment he denies thee now.

Has. This rage is all in vain, that tears thy bosom:
Retire, I beg thee;

To see thee thus, thou know'st not how it wounds me;
Thy agonies are added to my own,
And make the burden more than I can bear.

Farewell: good angels visit thy afflictions,
And bring thee peace and comfort from above. [*Exit.*

Alic. Oh! stab me to the heart, some pitying
hand,

Now strike me dead—

Re-enter LORD HASTINGS.

Has. One thing I had forgot—

I charge thee, by our present common miseries?

By our past loves, if they have yet a name;

By all thy hopes of peace here and hereafter,

Let not the rancour of thy hate pursue

The innocence of thy unhappy friend;

Thou know'st who 'tis I mean; Oh! shouldst thou
wrong her,

Just heav'n shall double all thy woes upon thee,

And make 'em know no end;—remember this,

As the last warning of a dying man.

Farewell, for ever!

Alic. [*Embracing.*] For ever! Oh, for ever!

[*Guards carry him off.*

Oh, who can bear to be a wretch for ever!
My rival, too! His last thoughts hung on her,
And, as he parted, left a blessing for her:
Shall she be blest, and I be curst, for ever?
No; since her fatal beauty was the cause
Of all my sufferings, let her share my pains;
Let her, like me, of ev'ry joy forlorn,
Devote the hour when such a wretch was born;
Cast ev'ry good, and ev'ry hope behind;
Detest the works of nature, loathe mankind:
Like me, with cries distracted, fill the air,
Tear her poor bosom, rend her frantic hair,
And prove the torments of the last despair. [*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Street.

Enter BELMOUR and DUMONT.

Dum. You saw her, then?

Bel. I met her as returning,
In solemn penance from the public cross.
Before her, certain rascal officers,
Slaves in authority, the knaves of justice,
Proclaim'd the tyrant Gloster's cruel orders.
Around her, numberless, the rabble flow'd,
Should'ring each other, crowding for a view,
Gaping and gazing, taunting and reviling;
Some pitying—but those, alas! how few!
The most, such iron hearts we are, and such
The base barbarity of human kind,
With insolence and lewd reproach pursu'd her,
Hooting and railing, and with villainous hands
Gath'ring the filth from out the common ways,
To hurl upon her head.

Dum. Inhuman dogs!

How did she bear it?

Bel. With the gentlest patience;
Submissive, sad, and lowly was her look;
A burning taper in her hand she bore,
And on her shoulders carelessly confus'd,
With loose neglect, her lovely tresses hung;
Upon her cheek a faintish blush was spread;
Feeble she seem'd, and sorely smit with pain.
While barefoot as she trod the flinty pavement,
Her footsteps all along were mark'd with blood.
Yet silent still she pass'd, and unrepining;
Her streaming eyes bent ever on the earth,
Except when in some bitter pang of sorrow,
To heav'n she seem'd in fervent zeal to raise them,
And beg that mercy man deny'd her here.

Dum. When was this piteous sight?

Bel. These last two days.

You know my care was wholly bent on you,
To find the happy means of your deliverance,
Which but for Hastings' death I had not gain'd.
During that time, although I have not seen her,
Yet divers trusty messengers I've sent,
To wait about, and watch a fit convenience
To give her some relief, but all in vain;
A churlish guard attends upon her steps,
Who menace those with death, that bring her comfort,
And drive all succour from her.

Dum. Let 'em threaten;

Let proud oppression prove its fiercest malice;

So heav'n befriend my soul, as here I vow

To give her help, and share one fortune with her.

Bel. Mean you to see her thus, in your own form?

Dum. I do.

Bel. And have you thought upon the consequence?

Dum. What is there I should fear?

Bel. Have you examin'd

Into your inmost heart, and try'd at leisure
The sev'ral secret springs that move the passions?
Has mercy fix'd her empire there so sure,
That wrath and vengeance never may return?
Can you resume a husband's name, and bid
That wakeful dragon, fierce resentment, sleep?

Dum. O, thou hast set my busy brain at work,

And now she musters up a train of images,
Which, to preserve my peace, I had cast aside,
And sunk in deep oblivion.—Oh, that form!
That angel face on which my dotage hung!
How I have gaz'd upon her, till my soul
With very eagerness went forth towards her,
And issu'd at my eyes.—Was there a gem
Which the sun ripens in the Indian mine,
Or the rich bosom of the ocean yields?
What was there art could make, or wealth could buy,
Which I have left unsought to deck her beauty?
What could her king do more?—And yet she fled.

Bel. Away with that sad fancy—

Dum. Oh, that day!

The thought of it must live for ever with me.
I met her, Belmour, when the royal spoiler
Bore her in triumph from my widow's home!
Within his chariot, by his side she sat,
And listen'd to his talk with downward looks
'Till sudden as she chanc'd aside to glance,
Her eyes encounter'd mine;—Oh! then, my friend!
Oh! who can paint my grief and her amazement!
As at the stroke of death, twice turn'd she pale;
And twice a burning crimson blush'd all o'er her;
Then with a shriek heart-wounding, loud she cry'd,
While down her cheeks two gushing torrents ran
Fast falling on her hands, which thus she wrung:
Mov'd at her grief, the tyrant ravisher,
With courteous action woo'd her off to turn;
Earnest he seem'd to plead, but all in vain;
Ev'n to the last she bent her sight towards me,
And follow'd me—till I had lost myself. [*Crosses.*]

Bel. Alas, for pity! Oh! those speaking tears!
Could they be false? Did she not suffer with you?
For though the king by force possess'd her person,
Her unconsenting heart dwelt still with you.
If all her former woes were not enough,
Look on her now; behold her where she wanders,
Hunted to death, distress'd on every side,
With no one hand to help; and tell me then,
If ever misery were known like hers? [*frame*]

Dum. And can she bear it? Can that delicate
Endure the beating of a storm so rude?

Can she, for whom the various seasons chang'd
To court her appetite and crown her board,
For whom the foreign vintages were press'd,
For whom the merchant spread his silken stores,
Can she—

Entreat for bread, and want the needful raiment
To wrap her shiv'ring bosom from the weather?
When she was mine, no care came ever nigh her;
I thought the gentlest breeze that wakes the spring,
Too rough to breathe upon her; cheerfulness
Danc'd all the day before her, and at night
Soft slumbers waited on her downy pillow:—
Now, sad and shelterless, perhaps she lies,
Where piercing winds blow sharp, and the chill rain
Drops from some pent-house on her wretched head,
Drenches her locks, and kills her with the cold.
It is too much:—hence with her past offences,
They are aton'd at full. Why stay we then?
Oh! let us haste, my friend, and find her out.

Bel. Somewhere about this quarter of the town,
I hear the poor abandoned creature lingers;
Her guard, though set with strictest watch to keep,
All food and friendship from her, yet permit her
To wander in the streets, there choose her bed,
And rest her head on what cold stone she pleases.

Dum. Here then let us divide; each in his round
To search her sorrows out; whose hap it is
First to behold her, this way let him lead
Her fainting steps, and meet we here together.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—A Street.

Enter JANE SHORE, her hair hanging loose on her shoulders.

Jane S. Yet, yet endure, nor murmur, O my soul,
For are not thy transgressions great and numberless?
Do they not cover thee like rising floods,
And press thee like a weight of waters down?
Wait then with patience, till the circling hours
Shall bring the time of thy appointed rest,
And lay thee down in death.
And, hark! methinks the roar that late pursu'd me,
Sinks like the murmurs of a falling wind,
And softens into silence. Does revenge
And malice then grow weary, and forsake me?
My guard, too, that observ'd me still so close,
Tire in the task of their inhuman office,
And loiter far behind. Alas! I faint,
My spirits fail at once. This is the door
Of my Alicia;—blessed opportunity!
I'll steal a little succour from her goodness,
Now while no eye observes me. [*She knocks.*]

Enter SERVANT.

Is your lady,
My gentle friend, at home? Oh! bring me to her.
[*Going in.*]

Serv. Hold, mistress, whither would you;

[*Throwing her back.*]

Jane S. Do you not know me?

Serv. I know you well, and know my orders too:
You must not enter here;—

Jane S. Tell my Alicia.

'Tis I would see her.

Serv. She is ill at ease,
And will admit no visitor.

Jane S. But tell her

'Tis I, her friend, the partner of her heart,
Wait at the door and beg—

Serv. 'Tis all in vain:—
Go hence and howl to those that will regard you.

[*Shuts the door.*]

Jane S. It was not always thus: the time has been,
When this unfriendly door, that bars my passage,
Flew wide, and almost leap'd from off its hinges,
To give me entrance here; when this good house
Has pour'd forth all its dwellers to receive me;
When my approaches made a little holiday,
And every face was dress'd in smiles to meet me:
But now 'tis otherwise; and those who bless'd me,
Now curse me to my face. Why should I wander,
Stray further on, for I can die ev'n here?

[*She falls down at the door of ALICIA's house.*]

Enter ALICIA, in disorder.

Alic. What wretch art thou, whose misery and
baseness
Hangs on my door; whose hateful whine of woe
Breaks in upon my sorrows, and distracts
My jarring senses with thy beggar's cry?

Jane S. A very beggar, and a wretch, indeed;

One driv'n by strong calamity to seek
For succours here : one perishing for want,
Whose hunger has not tasted food these three days ;
And humbly asks, for charity's dear sake,
A draught of water and a little bread.

Alic. And dost thou come to me, to me for bread ?
I know thee not. Go ;—hunt for it abroad,
Where wanton hands upon the earth have scatter'd it,
Or cast it on the waters. Mark the eagle,
And hungry vulture, where they wind the prey ;
Watch where the ravens of the valley feed,
And seek thy food with them :—I know thee not.

[*Crosses*]
Jane S. [*Rises on her knees*] And yet there was
a time, when my *Alicia*
Has thought unhappy Shore her dearest blessing,
And mourn'd the live-long day she pass'd without me ;
Inclining fondly to me she has sworn,
She lov'd me more than all the world besides
Alic. Ha ! say'st thou !—Let me look upon thee
well ;—

'Tis true ;—I know thee now ;—a mischief on thee !

[*Pushes her down again.*]
Thou art that fatal fair, that cursed she, [me ;
That set my brain a madd'ning. Thou hast robb'd
Thou hast undone me.—Murder ! O, my Hastings !
See his pale bloody head shoots glaring by me !
Avant ! and come not near me.

Jane S. To thy hand
I trusted all ! gave my whole store to thee.
Nor do I ask it back : allow me but
The smallest pittance, give me but to eat,
Lest I fall down and perish here before thee.

Alic. Nay, tell not me ! Where is thy king, thy
Edward,

And all the cringing train of courtiers,
That bent the knee before thee ?

Jane S. Oh ! for mercy ! [*Rises.*]

Alic. Mercy ! I know it not ! for I am miserable.
I'll give thee misery, for here she dwells ;
This is her house, where the sun never dawns,—
The bird of night sits screaming o'er the roof,—
Grim spectres sweep along the horrid gloom,
And nought is heard but wailings and lamentings.
Hark ! something cracks above ! it shakes ! it tot-
ters !

And see the nodding ruin falls to crush me !
'Tis fall'n, 'tis here, I felt it on my brain ! [*Falls.*]
Let her take my counsel.

Why shouldst thou be a wretch ? [*Rises.*] Stab,
tear thy heart,

And rid thyself of this detested being ;
I wo' not linger long behind thee here.
A waving flood of bluish fire swells o'er me ;
And now 'tis out, and I am drown'd in blood.
Ha ! what art thou, thou horrid headless trunk ?
It is my Hastings ; see he wafts me on !

Away ! I go ! I fly ! I follow thee ! [*Rushes off.*]

Jane S. [*Still lying.*] Alas ! she raves ; her brain
I fear is turn'd ;

In mercy look upon her, gracious heav'n,
Nor visit her for any wrong to me.
Sure I am near upon my journey's end ;
My head runs round, my eyes begin to fail,
And dancing shadows swim before my sight,
I can no more ; receive me, thou cold earth ;
Thou common parent, take me to thy bosom,
And let me rest with thee.

Enter BELMOUR.

Bel. Upon the ground !
Thy miseries can never lay thee lower.

Look up, thou poor afflicted one ! thou mourner,
Whom none has comforted. Where are thy friends,
The dear companions of thy joyful days,
Whose hearts thy warm prosperity made glad,
Whose arms were taught to grow like ivy round thee,
And bind thee to their bosoms ?—[*Kneels, and takes
her head ; she raises her head.*]—Thus with
thee ;

Thus let us live, and let us die, they said ;

Now where are they ? [*aloof,*

Jane S. Ah, Belmour ! where indeed ? they stand
And view my desolation from afar ;
And yet thy goodness turns aside to pity me.
Alas ! there may be danger ; get thee gone.

Let not me pull a ruin on thy head,
Leave me to die alone, for I am fall'n
Never to rise, and all relief is vain.

Bel. Yet raise thy drooping head ; for I am come
To chase away despair. Behold, where yonder
That honest man, that faithful, brave Dumont,
Is hastening to thy aid—

Jane S. Dumont ! Ha ! where ?

[*Raising herself ; and looking about.*]

Then heav'n has heard my pray'r : his very name
Renews the springs of life, and cheers my soul.
Has he then 'scaped the snare ?

Bel. He has ; but see—

He comes unlike to that Dumont you knew,
For now he wears your better angel's form,
And comes to visit you with peace and pardon.

Enter SHORE.

Jane S. Speak—tell me ! Which is he ? and ho !
what would

This dreadful vision ? See, it comes upon me—

[*He crosses to her.*]
It is my husband—Oh ! [*She faints.*]

Shore. She faints—support her ! [*prise.*]

Bel. Her weakness could not bear the strong sur
But see, she stirs ! and the returning blood
Faintly begins to blush again, and kindle
Upon her ashy cheek.

Shore. So—gently raise her. [*Raising her.*]

Jane S. Ha ! what art thou ? Belmour.

Bel. How fare you, lady ?

Jane S. My heart is thrill'd with horror.

Bel. Be of courage ;—

Your husband lives ! 'tis he, my worthiest friend.

Jane S. Still art thou there ? still dost thou hover
round me ?

Oh, save me, Belmour, from his angry shade !

Bel. 'Tis he himself ! he lives ! look up.

Jane S. I dare not !

Oh, that my eyes could shut him out for ever.

Shore. Am I so hateful then, so deadly to thee,
To blast thy eyes with error ? Since I'm grown
A burden to the world, myself, and thee,
Would I had ne'er survived to see thee more.

Jane S. Oh ! thou most injur'd—dost thou live,
indeed ?

Fall then, ye mountains, on my guilty head :
Hide me, ye rocks, within your secret caverns ;
Cast thy black veil upon my shame, O night !
And shield me with thy sable wing for ever.

Shore. Why dost thou turn away ?—Why trem-
ble thus ?

Why thus indulge thy fears, and in despair
Abandon thy distracted soul to horror ?
Cast every black and guilty thought behind thee,
And let 'em never vex thy quiet more ;
My arms, my heart, are open to receive thee,
To bring thee back to thy forsaken home,

With tender joy, with fond forgiving love.—
Let us haste.—

Now while occasion seems to smile up us,
Forsake this place of shame, and find a shelter.

[*They raise her.*]

Jane S. What shall I say to you? But I obey.

Shore. Lean on my arm.

Jane S. Alas! I'm wondrous faint: [days.]

But that's not strange. I have not eat these three

Shore. Oh, merciless!

Jane S. Oh! I am sick at heart!

Shore. Thou murd'rous sorrow!

Wo't thou still drink her blood, pursue her still?

Must she then die? O my poor penitent!

Speak peace to thy sad heart: she hears me not:

Grief masters ev'ry sense—

Enter CATESBY, with a Guard.

Cates. Seize on 'em both, as traitors to the state?

Bel. What means this violence?

[*Guards lay hold on SHORE and BELMOUR.*]

Cates. Have we not found you.

In scorn of the protector's strict command,

Assisting this base woman, and abetting

Her infamy?

Shore. Infamy on thy head!

Thou tool of power, thou pander to authority!

I tell thee, knave, thou know'st of none so virtuous,

And shee that bore thee was an Ethiop to her.

Cates. You'll answer this at full. Away with 'em.

Shore. Is charity grown treason to your court?

What honest man would live beneath such rulers?

I am content that we should die together.

Cates. Convey the men to prison; but for her—
Leave her to hunt her fortune as she may.

Jane S. I will not part with him:—for me! for me!
Oh! must he die for me?

[*Following him as she is carried off.—She falls.*]

Shore. Inhuman villains!

[*Breaks from the Guards, and returns to her.*]

Stand off! the agonies of death are on her!

She pulls, she gripes me hard with her cold hand.

Jane S. Was this blow wanting to complete my
ruin?

Oh! let me go, ye ministers of terror.

He shall offend no more, for I will die,

And yield obedience to your cruel master.

Tarry a little, but a little longer,

And take my last breath with you.

Shore. Oh, my love,

Why dost thou fix thy dying eyes upon me,

With such an earnest, such a piteous look,

As if thy heart were full of some sad meaning

Thou couldst not speak?

Jane S. Forgive me!—but forgive me!

Shore. Be witness for me, ye celestial host,

Such mercy and such pardon as my soul

Accords to thee, and begs of heav'n to show thee;

May such befall me at my latest hour,

And make my portion blest or curst for ever.

Jane S. Then all is well, and I shall sleep in peace;

'Tis very dark, and I have lost you now: [you?]

Was there not something I would have bequeath'd

But I have nothing left me to bestow,

Nothing but one sad sigh. Oh! mercy, heav'n!

[*Dies.*]

THE END.

A NEW WAY TO PAY OLD DEBTS.

A PLAY IN FIVE ACTS.

BY PHILIP MASSINGER.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LORD LOVELL.
SIR GILES OVERREACH.
WELLBORN.
MARRALL.
ALLWORTH.
JUSTICE GREEDY.
TAPWELL.
AMBLE.
WELLDÖ.
ORDER.
FURNACE.
WATCHALL.
VINTNER.
TAILOR.

LADY ALLWORTH.
FROTH.
MARGARET.
TABITHA.
ABIGAIL.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Village.

WELLBORN *discovered, with a large rough stick, in tattered apparel, knocking at the alehouse door.*
TAPWELL and FROTH *come from the house.*

Well. No credit, nor no liquor;

Tap. Not a suck, sir:

Nor the remainder of a single can,

Left by a drunken porter. [ing's draught, sir:

Froth. Not the dropping of the tap for your morn-
'Tis verity, I assure you.

Well. Verity, you brache!

The devil turned precision? Rogue, what am I?

Tap. Troth, durst I trust you with a looking-glass,
To let you see your trim shape, you would quit me,
And take the name yourself.

Well. How? dog! [Raising his cudgel.

Tap. Advance your Plymouth cloak, [ship,
There dwells, and within call, if it please your wor-
A potent monarch, call'd the constable,
That does command a citadel, call'd the stocks;
Such as with great dexterity will hale
Your threadbare, tatter'd—

Well. Rascal! slave!

Froth. No rage, sir.

Tap. At his own peril! Do not put yourself
In too much heat, there being no water near
To quench your thirst; and other drink, I take it,
You must no more remember; not in a dream, sir.

Well. Why thou unthankful villain, dar'st thou
talk thus!

Is not thy house, and all thou hast, my gift!

Tap. I find it not in chalk: and Timothy Tapwell
Does keep no other register.

Well. Am not I he

Whose riots fed and cloth'd thee? Wert thou not
Born on my father's land, and proud to be
A drudge in his house?

Tap. What I was, sir, it skills not;

What you are is apparent: but, since you
Talk of father, in my hope it will torment you,
I'll briefly tell your story. Your dead father,
Old Sir John Wellborn,
My quondam master, was a man of worship;
Bore the whole sway of the shire, kept a great house,
Reliev'd the poor, and so forth; but he dying,
And his estate coming to you,
Late master Francis, but now forlorn Wellborn—

Well. Slave, stop! or I shall lose myself.

Froth. Very hardly;

You cannot out of your way. [gallant.

Tap. You were then a lord of acres, the prime
And I your under butler.

O you'd merry time off't? hawks and hounds.

With choice of running horses: mistresses,

And other such extravagances: which

Your uncle, Sir Giles Overreach, observing,

Resolving not to lose the opportunity,

On statutes, mortgages, and binding bonds,

Awhile supplied your folly, and, having got

Your land, then left you. [mongrel,

Well. Some curate hath penn'd this invective,
And you have studied it.

Tap. I've not done yet;

Your land gone, and your credit not worth a token,
You grew the common borrower; no man 'scap'd
you;

Where poor Tim Tapwell, with a little stock,
Some forty pounds or so, bought a small cottage;
Humbled myself to marriage with my Froth here—

Well. Hear me, ungrateful hell-hound! Did not I
Make purses for you? Then you lick'd my boots,
And thought your holiday cloak too coarse to clean
em.

'Twas I, that, when I heard thee swear if ever
Thou could'st arrive at forty pounds, thou would'st

Live like an emperor, 'twas I that gave it
In ready gold. Deny this, wretch!

Tap. I must, sir!

For, from the tavern to the taphouse, all,
On forfeiture of their licenses, stand bound
Ne'er to remember who their best guests were,
If they grew poor, like you.

Well. They're well rewarded,
That beggar themselves to make such rascals rich.
Thou viper, thankless viper!

But, since you're grown forgetful, I will help
Your memory, and beat you into remembrance:
Not leave one bone unbroken.

Tap. O! O! O!

Froth. Help, help!—

Enter ALLWORTH.

All. Hold, for my sake, hold;

[Catches WELLBORN'S arm.]

Deny me, Frank? They're not worth your anger.

Well. For once, thou hast redeem'd them from
this sceptre.

[Shaking his cudgel.]

But let 'em vanish;—

Nay, if you grumble, I revoke my pardon.

[WELLBORN and ALLWORTH talk apart.]

Froth. This comes of your prating husband.

Tap. Patience, Froth;

There's law to cure our bruises.

[Exeunt TAPWELL and FROTH into the alehouse.]

Well. Sent to your mother?

All. My lady, Frank, my patroness, my all!
She's such a mourner for my father's death,
And, in her love to him, so favours me,
I cannot pay too much observance to her:
There are few such stepdames.

Well. 'Tis a noble widow,
And keeps her reputation pure and clear.
But, 'pr'ythee, tell me,
Has she no suitors?

All. E'en the best of the shire, Frank,
My lord excepted: such as sue and send,
And send and sue again: but to no purpose.
Their frequent visits have not gain'd her presence;
Yet she's so far from sullenness and pride,
That I dare undertake, you shall meet from her
A liberal entertainment.

Well. I doubt it not. Now, Allworth, listen to me,
And mark my counsel: I am bound to give it.
Thy father was my friend; and that affection
I bore to him, in right descends to thee;
I will not have the least affront stick on thee,
If I with my danger can prevent it.

All. I thank your noble care: but, pray you, in
Do I run the hazard?

[what]

Well. Art thou not in love?

Put it not off with wonder.

All. In love? *[transparent,*

Well. You think you walk in clouds, but are
I've heard all, and the choice that you have made;
And, with my finger, can point out the north star
By which the loadstone of your folly's guided;
And to confirm this true, what think you of
Fair Margaret, the only child and heir
Of comorant Overreach? Dost blush and start
To hear her only nam'd? Blush at your want
Of wit and reason.

All. Howe'er you have discover'd my intents,
You know my aims are lawful; and, if ever
The queen of flowers, the boast of spring, the rose,
Sprang from an envious briar, I may infer
There's such disparity in their conditions,
Between the goddess of my soul, the daughter,
And the base churl, her father.

Well. Grant this true,

As I believe it, canst thou ever hope
To enjoy a quiet bed with her, whose father
Ruin'd thy state!

All. And your's too.

Well. I confess it, Allworth.

Or can'st thou think, if self-love blind thee not,
That Sir Giles Overreach, who, to make her great
In swelling titles, without touch of conscience,
Will cut his neighbour's throat, and, I hope, his
own too,

Will e'er consent to make her thine? Give o'er,
And think of some course suitable to thy rank;
And prosper in it.

All. You have well advis'd me.

But, in the mean time, you, that are so studious
Of my affairs, wholly neglected your own.
Remember yourself, and in what plight you are.

Well. No matter, no matter.

All. Yes, 'tis much material: *[thing]*
You know my fortune, and my means; yet some-
I can spare from myself to help your wants.

[Offers him money.]

Well. How's this?

All. Nay, be not angry.

Well. Money from thee?

From a boy? one that lives

At the devotion of a stepmother,

And the uncertain favour of a lord?

I'll eat my arms first. Howso'er blind Fortune.

Hath spent the utmost of her malice on me,
Though I am rudely thrust out of an alehouse,
And thus accoutred—know not where to eat,
Or drink, or sleep, but underneath this canopy—
Although I thank thee, I disdain thy offer.

No—as I, in my madness, broke my state,
Without th' assistance of another's brain,
In my right wits, I'll piece it; at the worst,
Die thus, and be forgotten.

All. Fare thee well.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—*A Hall in Lady Allworth's House.—*
Table, and four chairs.

AMBLE, ORDER, FURNACE, and WATCHALL, dis-
covered, in a line across the stage.

Ord. Set all things right; or, as my name is Order,
And by this staff of office, that commands you,
This chain and double ruff, symbols of power,
Whoever misses in his function,
For one whole week makes forfeiture of his breakfast,
And privilege in the wine-cellar.

Wat. You are merry,

Good master Steward.

Fur. Let him; I'll be angry.

[yet,

Amb. Why, fellow Furnace, 'tis not twelve o'clock
Nor dinner taken up; then, 'tis allowed,
Cooks, by their places, may be choleric. *[Ambles,*

Fur. You think you have spoken wisely, Goodman
My lady's go-before.

Ord. Nay, nay, no wrangling.

Fur. Twit me with the authority of the kitchen;
At all hours, and at all places, I'll be angry:
And, thus provok'd, when I am at my prayers,
I will be angry.

Amb. There was no hurt meant.

[Crosses to FURNACE, and shakes hands.]

Fur. I'm friends with thee; and yet I will be an-
gry.

Wat. With whom?

Fur. No matter whom; yet, now I think on't,
I'm angry with my lady.

Amb. Heaven forbid, man!

Ord. What cause has she given thee?

Fur. Cause enough, master Steward;
I was entertain'd by her to please her palate,
And till she forswore eating, I perform'd it.
Now, since our master, noble Allworth, died,
Though I crack my brain to find out tempting sauces,
When I am three parts roasted,
And the fourth part parboil'd, to prepare her viands,
She keeps her chamber, dines with a panada,
Or water-gruel, my sweat never thought on.

Ord. But your art is seen in the dining-room.

Fur. By whom?

By such as pretend love to her; but come
To feed upon her. Yet, of all the harpies
That do devour her, I am out of charity
With none so much as the thin-gutted squire
That's stolen into commission.

Ord. Justice Greedy? [him;

Fur. The same, the same. Meat's cast away upon
It never thrives. He holds this paradox:
Who eats not well, can ne'er do justice well:
His stomach's as insatiate as the grave

[*A knocking without.*

Wat. One knocks. [Exit Watchall.

Ord. Our late young master.

Enter WATCHALL and ALLWORTH, saluting them.

Wat. Welcome, sir. [Allworth crosses to Furnace.

Fur. You're welcome:

If you've a stomach, a cold bake-meat's ready.

[Allworth crosses to Order.

Ord. His father's picture in little.

[Crosses to Amble.

Amb. We are all your servants.

All. At once my thanks to all.

This is yet some comfort. Is my lady stirring?

Ord. Her presence answers for us.

Enter LADY ALLWORTH, ABIGAIL, and TABITHA.

Lady A. Sort those silks well.

I'll take the air alone. [Exeunt TAB. and ABIGAIL.

And, as I gave directions, if this morning

I'm visited by one, entertain 'em

As heretofore: but say, in my excuse,

I'm indisposed.

Ord. We shall, madam.

Lady A. Do, and leave me.

[Exeunt WATCHALL, FURNACE, ORDER,
and AMBLE.

Nay, stay you, Allworth.—Tell me, how is't with
Your noble master?

All. Ever like himself;

No scruple lessen'd in the full weight of honour.

He did command me—pardon my presumption—

As his unworthy deputy, to kiss

Your ladyship's fair hands.

Lady A. I'm honour'd in

His favour to me. Does he hold his purpose

For the low countries?

All. Constantly, good madam;

But will, in person, first present his service.

Lady A. And how approve you of his course?—
you're yet,

Like virgin parchment, capable of any

Inscription, vicious or honourable:

I will not force your will, but leave you free

To your own election.

All. Any form you please

I will put on: but—might I make my choice—

With humble emulation, I would follow

The path my lord marks to me.

Lady A. 'Tis well answer'd?

ACT. DRAMA.—NO. XXXV.

And I commend your spirit: your father, Allworth,
My ever-honour'd husband, some few hours
Before the will of heaven took him from me,
Did commend you, e'en by the dearest ties
Of perfect love between us, to my charge:
And, therefore, when I speak, you are bound to hear
With such respect, as if he liv'd in me.

All. I have found you,
Most honour'd madam, more than a mother to me;
And, with my utmost strength of care and service,
Will labour that you may never repent
Your bounties shower'd upon me.

Lady A. I much hope it.

These were your father's words:—If e'er my son!

Follow the war, tell him, it is a school

Where all the principles tending to honour

Are taught, if truly follow'd: but for such

As repair thither, as a place in which

They do presume they may with license practice

Their lawless riots, they shall never merit

The noble name of soldiers.

To obey their leaders, and shun mutinies:

To bear with patience the winter's cold,

And summer's scorching heat;

To dare boldly

In a fair cause; and, for their country's sake,

To run upon the cannon's mouth undaunted;

These are the essential parts make up a soldier;

Not swearing, dice, or drinking.

All. There's no syllable

You speak, but is to me an oracle.

Lady A. To conclude:

Beware ill company; for, often men

Are like to those with whom they do converse;

And from one man I warn you, and that's Wellborn:

Not 'cause he's poor, that rather claims your pity;

But that he's in his manners so deprav'd,

And hath in vicious courses lost himself.

'Tis true your father lov'd him, while he was

Worthy the loving; but, if he had liv'd

To've known him as he is, he had cast him off,

As you must do. [Noise without.

Somebody comes. This way:

Follow me to my chamber: you shall have gold

To furnish you like my son, and still supplied

As I hear from you.

All. I am still bound to you. [Exeunt.

Enter ORDER, WATCHALL, SIR GILES OVERREACH,

MARRALL, GREEDY, FURNACE, and AMBLE.

Gree. Not to be seen!

Sir G. Still cloister'd up! Her reason,

I hope, assures her, though she makes herself

Close prisoner ever for her husband's loss,

'Twill not recover him.

Ord. Sir, 'tis her will;

Which we, that are her servants, ought to serve,

And not dispute: how'er, you are nobly welcome;

And, if you please to stay, that you may think so;

There came, not six days since, from Hull, a pipe

Of rich Canary, which shall spend itself

For my lady's honour.

Gree. Is it of the right race?

[SIR GILES and MARRALL converse apart.

Ord. Yes, Master Greedy.

Amb. How his mouth runs o'er!

Fur. I'll make it run and run,

Save your good worship! [how I love thee!

Gree. Honest master cook, thy hand; again:

Are the good dishes still in being? speak, boy.

Fur. If you've a mind to feed, there is a chine

Of beef well season'd.

Gree. Good.

Fur. A pheasant larded.

Gree. That I might now give thanks for't!

Fur. Besides, there came last night, from the forest of Sherwood,
The fattest stag I ever cook'd.

Gree. A stag, man?

Fur. A stag, sir; part of it prepar'd for dinner,
And bak'd in puff-paste.

Gree. Puff-paste too! Sir Giles,
A ponderous chine of beef! a pheasant larded!
And red deer, too, Sir Giles, and bak'd in puff-paste!
All business set aside, let us give thanks here.

Sir G. You know, we cannot.

Mar. Your worshippers are to sit on a commission,
And, if you fail to come, you lose the cause.

Gree. Cause me no causes; I'll prove't, for such a dinner,

We may put off a commission: you shall find it
Henrici decimo quarto.

Sir G. Fie, Master Greedy!

Will you lose me a thousand pounds for a dinner?
No more, for shame! We must forget the belly,
When we think of profit.

Gree. Well, you shall o'er-rule me.
I could e'en cry now. Do you hear, master cook?
Send but a corner of that immortal pasty,
And I, in thankfulness, will, by your boy,
Send you—a brace of three-pences.

Fur. Will you be so prodigal?

[GREEDY and FURNACE converse apart.]

Sir G. [TO ORDER.] Remember me to your lady.

Enter WELLBORN.

Whom have we here?

Well. You know me.

Sir G. I did once, but now will not;
Thou art no blood of mine. [*Crosses, followed by*
MARRALL.] Avaunt, thou beggar!

If ever thou presume to cross me more,
I'll have thee cag'd and whipp'd. [*Exit SIR GILES.*

Gree. I'll grant the warrant.
Think of pyc-corner, Furnace!

[*Ereunt GREEDY and MARRALL, MARRALL*
eyeing WELLBORN contemptuously—who
takes a chair, and sits.

Wat. Will you out, sir?

[*Going towards WELLBORN.*

I wonder how you durst creep in.

Ord. This is rudeness,
And saucy impudence.

Amb. Cannot you stay
To be serv'd, among your fellows, from the basket,
But you must press into the hall?

Fur. 'Pr'ythee, vanish
Into some outhouse, though it be the pigstye;
My scullion shall come to thee.

Well. This is rare:

Enter ALLWORTH.

O, here's Tom Allworth. Tom!

All. We must be strangers;

Nor would I have you seen here for a million. [*Exit.*
Well. Better and better:—He contemns me too!

Enter ABIGAIL and TABITHA.

Abi. [Seeing WELLBORN.] Mercy preserve my
sight! What thing is this!

Tab. A wretched object, truly,
Let's hence, for heaven's sake, or I shall swoon.

Abi. I begin to faint already.

[*Ereunt ABIGAIL and TABITHA.*

Fur. Will you know your way, sir?

Amb. Or shall we teach it you,
By the head and shoulders?

Well. No; I will not stir: [the wretch
Do you mark? I will not. [*Starts up.*] Let me see
That dares attempt to force me. Why, you slaves,
Created only to make legs, and cringe;
To carry in a dish, and shift a trencher;
That have not souls only to hope a blessing
Beyond your master's leaving—who advances?
Who shews me the way! [*Threatening them.*

All the Servants. Help, fellows, help!—Within
Ord. Here comes my lady. [there!]

Enter LADY ALLWORTH.

Lady A. How now? What noise is this?

Well. [*Advancing to her.*] Madam, my designs
Bear me to you.

Lady A. To me?

Well. And, though I've met with
But ragged entertainment from your rooms here
I hope from you to receive that noble usage,
As may become the true friend of your husband,
And then I shall forget these.

Lady A. I'm amaz'd,
To see and hear this rudeness. Dar'st thou think
Though sworn, that it can ever find belief
That I, who to the best men of this country
Denied my presence since my husband's death,
Can fall so low, as to exchange words with thee?

Well. Scorn me not, good lady;
But, as in form you are angelical,
Imitate the heavenly natures, and vouchsafe
At the least awhile to hear me. You will grant
The blood that runs in this arm is as noble
As that which fills your veins: your swelling titles,
Your ample fortune, with your men's observance
And women's flattery, are in you no virtues;
Nor these rags, with my poverty, in me vices.
You have a fair fame, and, I know, deserve it;
Yet, lady, I must say, in nothing more
Than in the pious sorrow you have shewn
For your late noble husband.

Ord. There he touch'd her.

[*Aside.*

Well. That husband, madam, was once in his
fortune

Almost as low as I; want, debts, and quarrels,
Lay heavy on him: let it not be thought
A boast in me, though I say I relieved him.
'Twas I that gave him fashion; mine the sword
That did on all occasions second his;
I brought him on and off with honour, lady;
And when in all men's judgments he was sunk,
And in his own hopes not to be buoy'd up,
I stepp'd unto him, took him by the hand,
And set him upright.

Fur. Are we not base rogues,
That could forget this? [*Aside to Servants.*

Well. I confess you made him
Master of your estate; nor could your friends,
Tho' he brought no wealth with him, blame you for't.
For he'd a shape, and to that shape a mind
Made up of all parts, either great or noble;
So winning a behaviour, not to be
Resisted, madam.

Lady A. 'Tis most true, he had.

Well. For his sake, then, in that I was his friend,
Do not contemn me.

Lady A. For what's past excuse me:

I will redeem it. [*Offers him her pocket-book.*

Well. Madam, on no terms:

I will not beg nor borrow sixpence of you;
But be supplied elsewhere, or want thus ever.
One only suit I make; pray give me leave.

[*Lady ALLWORTH signs to the Servants, who retire.*
I will not tire your patience with relation

Of the bad art my uncle Overreach
Still forg'd, to strip me of my fair possessions;
Nor how he now shuts door upon my want.
Would you but vouchsafe
To your dear husband's friend—as well you may,
Your honour still let free—but such feign'd grace,
As might beget opinion in Sir Giles
Of a true passion tow'rd's me, you would see,
In the mere thought to prey on me again,
When all that's your's were mine, he'd turn my
friend;

And, that no rub might stay my course to you,
Quit all my owings, set me trimly forth,
And furnish'd well with gold :—which I should use,
I trust, to your no shame, lady; but live
Ever a grateful debtor to your gentleness.

Lady A. What! nothing else?

[Offers her pocket-book again.

Well. Nothing, unless you please to charge your
servants

To throw away a little respect upon me.

Lady A. All you demand is yours.

[She beckons the Servants, who advance a little.

Respect this gentleman,

As 'twere myself. Adieu, dear Master Wellborn—

Pray let me see you with your oftenest means :

I am ever bound to you.

[Going, WELLBORN waiting on her.

Well. Your honour's servant. [Kisses her hand.

[Exit Lady ALLWORTH.

All the Servants. [Coming up to WELLBORN with
bows and cringes.] Ah, sweet sir—

Well. Nay, all's forgiven, all forgotten, friends :

And, for a lucky omen to my project,

Shake hands, and end all quarrels in the cellar.

All the Servants. Agreed, agreed! Still merry,
Master Wellborn. [Exeunt all the Servants.

Well. Faith, a right worthy and a liberal lady,

Who can at once so kindly meet my purposes,

And brave the flouts of censure, to redeem

Her husband's friend!—When, by this honest plot,

The world believes she means to heal my wants

With her extensive wealth, each noisy creditor

Will be struck mute; and I, thus left at large

To practice on my uncle Overreach,

May work, perhaps, the measure to redeem

My mortgag'd fortune, which he stripp'd me of,

When headlong dissipation quell'd my reason.

The fancy pleases : if the plot succeed,

'Tis a new way to pay old debts, indeed [Exit.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—The Skirts of Lady Allworth's Park.

Enter MARRALL and Sir GILES.

Sir G. He's gone, I warrant thee; this commis-
sion crush'd him. [Miss

Mar. Your worship has the way on't and ne'er

To squeeze these unthrifths into air : and yet

The chap-fall'n justice did his part, returning,

For your advantage, the certificate,

Against his conscience and his knowledge too,

To the utter ruin

Of the poor farmer.

Sir G. 'Twas for these good ends

I made him a justice : he that bribes his belly,

Is certain to command his soul.

Mar. I wonder why, your worship having

The power to put this thin-gut in commission,

You are not in't yourself.

Sir G. Thou art a fool;

In being out of office, I am out of danger;

Where, if I were a justice, besides the trouble,

I might, or out of wilfulness, or error,

Run myself finely into a præmunire,

And so become a prey to the informer;

No, I'll have none on't : 'tis enough I keep

Greedy at my devotion : so he serve

My purposes, let him hang, or damn, I care not;

Friendship is but a word.

Mar. You are all wisdom. [wisdom,

Sir G. I would be worldly wise; for the other

That does prescribe us a well-govern'd life,

And to do right to others as ourselves,

I value not an atom.

Mar. What course take you,

To hedge in the manor

Of your neighbour, Mr. Frugal? As 'tis said,

He will nor sell, nor borrow, nor exchange;

And his land, lying in the midst of your many lord-

Is a foul blemish. [ships,

Sir G. I have thought o't, Marrall;

And it shall take. [Placing his hand on MARRALL'S

shoulder.] I must have all men, sellers,

And I the only purchaser.

Mar. 'Tis most fit, sir. [manor;

Sir G. I'll therefore buy some cottage near his

Which done, I'll make my men break ope his

fences,

Ride o'er his standing corn, and in the night

Set fire to his barns, or break his cattle's legs;

These trespasses draw on suits, and suits expenses,

Which I can spare, but will soon beggar him.

When I have harried him thus two or three years,

Though he sue in *forma pauperis*, in spite

Of all his thrift and care, he'll grow behind-hand.

Mar. The best I ever heard! I could adore you.

Sir G. Then with the favour of my man of law,

I will pretend some title : want will force him

To put it to arbitrement; then, if he sell

For half the value, he shall have ready money,

And I possess his land.

Mar. Wellborn was apt to sell, and needed not

These fine arts, sir, to hook him in.

Sir G. Well thought on :

That varlet, Wellborn, lives too long, to upbraid me

With my close cheat put upon him. Will nor cold

Nor hunger kill him?

Mar. I know not what to think on't;

I've us'd all means; and, the last night, I caus'd

His host the tapster turn him out of doors;

And have been since with all your friends and

tenants,

And, on the forfeit of your favour, charg'd them,

Though a crust of mouldy bread would keep him
from starving,

Yet they should not relieve him. This is done, sir.

Sir G. That was something, Marrall; but thou

And suddenly, Marrall. [must go further,

Mar. Where and when you please, sir. [canst,

Sir G. I'd have thee seek him out, and, if thou

Persuade him that 'tis better steal than beg :

Then, if I prove he has but robb'd a hen-roost,

Not all the world shall save him from the gallows.

Do any thing to work him to despair,

And 'tis thy master-piece.

Mar. I'll do my best, sir. [Lovell,

Sir G. I'm now on my main work, with the Lord

The gallant-minded, popular, Lord Lovell,

The minion of the people's love. I hear

He's come into the country; and my aims are,
To insinuate myself into his knowledge,
And then invite him to my house.

Mar. I have you;

This points at my young mistress.

Sir G. She must part with

That humble title, and be honourable, [daughter,
Right honourable, Marrall; my right honourable
If all I have, or e'er shall get, will do it!
I'll have her well attended; there are ladies
Of errant riches decay'd, and brought so low,
That, for cast clothes and meat, will gladly serve her
And 'tis my glory, tho' I come from the city,
To have their issue, whom I have undone,
To kneel to mine, as bond-slaves.

Mar. 'Tis fit state, sir.

[maid

Sir G. And therefore, I'll not have a chamber-
That ties her shoes, or any meaner office,
But such whose fathers were right worshipful.
'Tis a rich man's pride! there having ever been
More than a feud, a strange antipathy,
Between us and true gentry.

Enter WELLBORN.

Mar. See, who's here, sir.

Sir G. Hence, monster! prodigy!

Well. Call me what you will;—

I am your nephew, sir, your sister's son. [rogue!

Sir G. Avoid my sight! thy breath's infectious,
I shun thee as a leprosy, or the plague.

Come hither, Marrall.—This is the time to work him.

Mar. I warrant you, sir.

[Exit Sir GILES.

Well. By this light, I think, he's mad,

Mar. Mad! had you ta'en compassion on yourself,
You long since had been mad.

Well. You've ta'en a course,

Between you and my venerable uncle,
To make me so.

Mar. The more pale spirited you,

That would not be instructed. I swear deeply—

Well. By what?

Mar. By my religion.

Well. Thy religion!

The devil's creed!—But what would you have done?

Mar. Had there been but one tree in the whole
Or any hope to compass a single halter, [shire

Before, like you, I had outliv'd my fortunes,

A withe had serv'd my turn to hang myself.

I'm zealous in your cause: 'pray, hang yourself,
And presently, as you love your credit.

Well. I thank you.

Mar. Will you stay till you die in a ditch?

Or, if you dare not do the feat yourself,
But that you'll put the state to charge and trouble,

Is there no purse to be cut? house to be broken?

Or market-woman with eggs that you may murder,
And so despatch the business?

Well. Here's variety,

I must confess; but I'll accept of none

Of all your gentle offers, I assure you.

Mar. If you like not hanging, drown yourself;
For your reputation. [take some course

Well. 'Twill not do, dear tempter,

With all the rhetoric the fiend hath taught you,

I am as far as thou art from despair;

Nay, I have confidence, which is more than hope,

To live, and suddenly, better than ever.

Mar. Ha! ha! these castles, you build in the air,

Will not persuade me or to give or lend

A token to you

Well. I'll be more kind to thee:

Come, thou shalt dine with me.

Mar. With you!

Well. Nay, more; dine gratis! [cost?

Mar. Under what hedge, I pray you? or at whose
Are they padders, or gipsies, that are your consorts?

Well. Thou art incredulous; but thou shalt dine,
Not alone at her house, but with a gallant lady;

With me, and with a lady.

Mar. Lady! what lady?

With the lady of the lake, or queen of fairies?

For, I know, it must be an enchanted dinner.

Well. With the Lady Allworth, knave.

Mar. Nay, now there's hope

Thy brain is crack'd.

Well. Mark there with what respect

I am entertained.

Mar. With choice, no doubt, of dog-whips.

Why, dost thou ever hope to pass her porter?

Well. 'Tis not far off, go with me: trust thine
own eyes.

Mar. Troth, in my hope, or my assurance rather,
To see thee curvet and mount like a dog in a blanket,
If ever thou presume to pass her threshold,
I will endure thy company.

Well. Come along then.

[Exeunt.

SCENE II.—The Hall in Lady Allworth's House.

Enter WATCHALL, FURNACE, ORDER, AMBLE, and
ALLWORTH.

All. Your courtesies o'erwhelm me: I much grieve
To part with such true friends; and yet find comfort.
My attendance on my honourable lord,
Whose resolution holds to visit my lady,
Will speedily bring me back.

[WELLBORN and MARRALL without. WELL-
BORN knocks. Exit WATCHALL.

Mar. Dar'st thou venture further?

Well. Yes, yes, and knock again.

[Knocks.

Ord. 'Tis he; disperse.

Amb. Perform it bravely.

Fur. I know my cue, ne'er doubt me.

[Exeunt FURNACE, ORDER, and AMBLE.

Enter WATCHALL, WELLBORN, and MARRALL.

Wat. Beast that I was, to make you stay! Most
You were long since expected. [welcome;

Well. Say so much

To my friend, I pray you.

Wat. For your sake, I do, sir.

Mar. For his sake!

Well. Mum; this is nothing.

Mar. More than ever

I'd have believ'd, tho' I had found it in my primer.

All. When I have given you reasons for my late
harshness;

You'll pardon and excuse me; for, believe me,

Though now I part abruptly, in my service

I will deserve it.

Mar. Service! with a vengeance!

Well. I'm satisfied: farewell, Tom.

All. All joy stay with you;

[Exit.

Enter AMBLE.

Amb. You're happily encounter'd; I ne'er yet
Presented one so welcome as I know

You will be to my lady.

Mar. This is some vision;

Or, sure, these men are mad, to worship a dunghill:
It cannot be a truth.

Well. Be still a pagan,

An unbelieving infidel; be so, miscreant,
And meditate on blankets, and on dog-whips!

Enter FURNACE.

Fur. I'm glad you're come; until I know your pleasure,

I knew not how to serve up my lady's dinner.

Mar. His pleasure! is it possible!

Well. What's thy will?

Fur. Marry, sir, I have

[you,

Some rails and quails, and my lady will'd me ask
What kind of sauces best affect your palate,
That I may use my utmost skill to please it.

[*WELLBORN whispers FURNACE up the stage.*

Mar. [*Walking about amazed.*] The devil's enter'd
this cook: sauce for his palate,

That, on my knowledge,

[Sundays!

Durst wish but cheese-parings and brown bread on

Well. That way I like them best.

Fur. It shall be done, sir.

[*Erit FURNACE.*

Well. What think you of the hedge we shall dine
Shall we feed gratis?

[under?

Mar. I know not what to think;

'Pray you, make me not mad.

Enter ORDER.

Ord. This place becomes you not;

'Pray you, walk, sir, to the dining-room.

Well. I am well here,

Till her ladyship quits her chamber.

Mar. Well here, say you?

'Tis a rare change! but yesterday, you thought

Yourself well in a barn, wrapp'd up in pease-straw.

Enter TABITHA and ABIGAIL.

Tab. O! you're much wish'd for, sir.

Abi. Last night, my lady

Dreamt of you; and her first command this morning,
Was to have notice, sir, of your arrival.

Wat. See my lady.

Enter Lady ALLWORTH.—*ORDER bows and exit.*

Lady A. I come to meet you, and languish'd till
I saw you.

This first kiss is for form: I allow a second
To such a friend.

Mar. To such a friend! heaven bless me!

Well. I'm wholly your's; yet, madam, if you
To grace this gentleman with a salute—

[please

[*Puts MARRALL over to Lady ALLWORTH.*

Mar. Salute me at his bidding!

[*MARRALL retreats towards the door.*

Well. I shall receive it

As a most high favour.

Lady A. Your friends are ever welcome to me.

Well. [*Brings MARRALL back.*] Run backward
from a lady! and such a lady!

Mar. To kiss her foot is, to poor me, a favour
I am unworthy of—

[*Offers to kiss her foot.*

Lady A. Nay, 'pray you, rise;

And, since you are so humble, I'll exalt you:

You shall dine with me to-day at mine own table.

Mar. Your ladyship's table! I'm not good enough
To sit at your steward's board.

Lady A. You are too modest;
I will not be denied.

Enter ORDER.

Ord. Dinner is ready for your ladyship.

Lady A. Come, Master Wellborn:—

[*To MARRALL, who is retreating again.*

Nay, keep us company.

Mar. I was ne'er so grac'd.

[*Exeunt Lady ALLWORTH and WELLBORN,
taking MARRALL by the hand, he bowing
with the greatest servility, followed by ABI-
GAIL, TABITHA, AMBLE, and WATCHALL.*

Enter FURNACE.

Ord. So, we've play'd our parts, and are come off
But if I know the mystery why my lady [well:
Consented to it, may I perish!

Fur. Would I had

The roasting of his heart that cheated him,
And forces the poor gentleman to these shifts!
By fire—for cooks are Persians, and swear by it—
Of all the griping and extorting tyrants
I ever heard or read of, I ne'er met
A match to Sir Giles Overreach.

Wat. What will you take

To tell him so, fellow Furnace?

Fur. Just as much

[on't.

As my throat is worth; for that would be the price
To have a usurer that starves himself,

To grow rich, and then purchase, is too common:
But this Sir Giles feeds high; keeps many servants;
Rich in his habit; vast in his expenses;

Yet he, to admiration, still increases

In wealth and lordships.

Ord. He frights men out of their estates;

And breaks through all law-nets, made to curb ill
men,

As they were cobwebs. No man dares reprove him.
Such a spirit to dare, and power to do, were never
Lodg'd so unluckily.

Enter AMBLE.

Amb. Ha! ha! I shall burst.

Ord. Contain thyself, man.

Fur. Or make us partakers

Of your sudden mirth.

Amb. Ha! ha! my lady has got

Such a guest at her table!—this term driver, Marrall,
This snip of an attorney!

Wat. What of him, man?

Amb. The knave feeds so slovenly!

Fur. Is this all?

Amb. My lady

[Wellborn;

Drank to him for fashion's sake, or to please Master
As I live, he rises and takes up a dish
In which there were some remnants of a boild capon,
And pledges her in white broth!

Fur. Nay, 'tis like

The rest of his tribe.

Amb. And when I brought him wine,

He leaves his chair, and, after a leg or two,

Most humbly thanks my worship—my worship!

All the Servants. Ha! ha! ha!

Ord. Risen already?

Fur. My lady frowns.

Amb. I shall be chid.

[*Erit FURNACE.*

Enter Lady ALLWORTH, WELLBORN, and MARRALL.

Lady A. You attend us well!

[ing:

Let me have no more of this: I observ'd your leer—
Sir, I will have you know, whom I think worthy
To sit at my table,

When I am present, is not your companion.

Ord. [*Aside.*] Nay, she'll preserve what's due to
her.

Lady A. [*To WELLBORN.*] You are master
Of your own will. I know so much of manners,
As not to inquire your purposes; in a word,

[*Crosses, WELLBORN following her.*

To me you are ever welcome, as to a house
That is your own.

Well. [*To MARRALL.*] Mark that!

Mar. With reverence, sir,

And it like your worship.

Well. Trouble yourself no further,

Dear madam, my heart's full of zeal and service;
However in my language I am sparing.

Come, Master Marrall.

Mar. I attend your worship.

[*Exeunt WATCHALL, WELLBORN, and MARRALL.*]

Lady A. [*To the Servants.*] I see in your looks
you are sorry, and you know me

An easy mistress: be merry; I have forgot all.
Order and Amble, come with me; I must give you
Further directions.

Ord. What you please.

Amb. We are ready. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—The open Country.

Enter WELLBORN and MARRALL.

Well. I think I'm in a good way.

Mar. Good, sir! The best way;

The certain best way. [*right-worshipful.*]

You are worshipful—and I hope you will become

Well. Is't for your ease

You keep your hat off?

Mar. Ease, and it like your worship!

I hope Jack Marrall shall not live so long,
To prove himself such an unmannerly beast,
Though it hail hazel-nuts, as to be covered
When your worship's present.

Well. [*Aside.*] Is not this a true rogue,
That, out of mere hope of a future coz'nage,
Can turn thus suddenly? 'tis rank already.

Mar. I know your worship's wise and needs no
Yet if, in my desire to do you service, [*counsel;*]
I humbly offer my advice, (but still
Under correction), I hope I shall not
Incur your high displeasure.

Well. No; speak freely. [*judgment,*]

Mar. Then, in my judgment, sir, my simple
(Still with your worship's favour), I could wish you
A better habit; for this cannot be
But much distasteful to the noble lady
That loves you:

I have twenty pounds here,
Which, out of my true love, I'll presently
Lay down at your worship's feet; 'twill serve to
A riding suit. [*buy you*]

Well. But where's the horse?

Mar. My gelding

Is at your service: nay, you shall ride me,
Before your worship shall be put to the trouble
To walk afoot. Alas! when you are lord
Of this lady's manor, (as I know you will be),
You may with the lease of glebe land, call'd Knaves

Acre,

A place I would manure, requite your vassal.

Well. I thank thy love; but will make no use of it.
Did I want clothes think'st thou I could not have
For one word to my lady? [*'em*]

Mar. As I know not that—

[*thee.*]

Well. Come, I'll tell thee a secret, and so leave
I'll not give her the advantage, though she be
A gallant-minded lady, after we're married,
To hit me in the teeth and say, she was forc'd
To buy my wedding clothes.—

No, I'll be furnish'd something like myself,
And so farewell.—For thy suit touching Knaves

Acre,

When it is mine, 'tis thine. [*Erit WELLBORN.*]

Mar. I thank your worship

How was I cozen'd in the calculation
Of this man's fortune! My master's cozen'd too,
Whose pupil I am in the art of undoing men;

For that is our profession. Well, well, master

Wellborn;

You are of a sweet nature, and fit again to be cheated;
Which, if the fates please, when you are possess'd
Of the land and lady, you *sans* question shall be.
I'll presently think of the means. [*Musing.*]

Sir G. [*Without.*] Sirrah, take my horse,
I'll walk, to get me an appetite; 'tis but a mile;
And exercise will keep me from being pursy.

Enter Sir GILES.

Ha! Marrall!—Is he conjuring? Perhaps
The knave has wrought the prodigal to do
Some outrage on himself, and now he feels
Compunction in his conscience for't: no matter,
So it be done.—Marrall! Marrall!

Mar. Sir?

Sir G. How succeed we
In our plot on Wellborn?

Mar. Never better, Sir.

Sir G. Has he hang'd or drown'd himself?

Mar. No, Sir, he lives;

Lives, once more to be made a prey to you,
A greater prey than ever.

Sir G. Art thou in thy wits?

If thou art, reveal this miracle, and briefly.

Mar. A lady, sir, is fallen in love with him.

Sir G. With him! What lady?

Mar. The rich lady Allworth.

Sir G. Thou dolt! how dar'st thou speak this?

Mar. I speak truth,
And I do so but once a-year, unless
It be to you, sir. We din'd with her ladyship;
I thank his worship.

Sir G. His worship!

Mar. As I live, sir,

I din'd with him, at the great lady's table, [*him,*]
Simple as I stand here; and saw when she kiss'd
And would, at his request, have kiss'd me too.

Sir G. Why, thou rascal!

To tell me these impossibilities.

Dine at her table! and kiss him! or thee!

Impudent varlet, have not I myself,
Ten times attempted, since her husband's death,
In vain, to see her, though I came—a suitor?
And yet your good solicitorship, and rogue Wellborn,
Were brought into her presence, feasted with her!—
But that I know thee a dog that cannot blush,
This most incredible lie would call up one
On thy buttermilk cheeks.

Mar. Shall I not trust my eyes, sir,
Or taste? I feel her good cheer in my belly.

Sir G. You shall feel me, if you give not over,
sirrah:

Recover your brains again, and be no more gull'd
With a beggar's plot, assisted by the aids
Of serving-men and chambermaids;
Or I'll quit you
From my employments.

Mar. Will you credit this yet?

[*born—*]

On my confidence of their marriage, I offer'd Well-
I'd give a crown now I durst say his worship, [*Aside.*]
My nag and twenty pounds.

Sir G. Did you so, idiot?

[*Strikes him—MARRALL retreats.*]

Was this the way to work him to despair,

Or rather to cross me?

[*Beats him.*]

Mar. Will your worship kill me?

Sir G. No, no; but drive the lying spirit out of you.

Mar. He's gone.

Sir G. I've done then. Now, forgetting
Your late imaginary feast and lady,
Know, my lord Lovell dines with me to-morrow:

Be careful nought be wanting to receive him;
And bid my daughter's women trim her up,
Though they paint her, so she catch the lord, I'll
thank 'em.

There's a piece for my late blows.

Mar. [*Aside.*] I may yet cry quittance;

There may be a time—

Sir G. Do you grumble?

Mar. No, sir.

[*Ereunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Skirts of Lady Allworth's Park.*

Enter Lovell and Allworth.

Lov. [*Speaking as he enters.*] Drive the coach
round the hill: something in private
I must impart to Allworth.

All. O, my lord,

What sacrifice of reverence, duty, watching,
Although I could put off the use of sleep,
And ever wait on your command to serve 'em;
What dangers, though in ne'er so horrid shapes,
Nay death itself, though I should run to meet it,
Can I, and with a thankful willingness, suffer;
But still the retribution will fall short
Of your bounties shower'd upon me?

Lov. Nay, good youth,
Till what I purpose be put into act,
Do not o'erprize it. Since you've trusted me
With your soul's nearest, nay, her dearest secret,
Rest confident, 'tis in a cabinet lock'd
Treachery shall never open. I have found you
More zealous in your love and service to me
Than I have been in my rewards.

All. Still great ones,
Above my merit,
You have been
More like a father to me than a master:
'Pray you, pardon the comparison.

Lov. I allow it;
And to give you assurance I am pleas'd in't,
My carriage and demeanour to your mistress,
Fair Margaret, shall truly witness for me,
I can command my passions.

All. 'Tis a conquest
Few men can boast of, when they are tempted.—Oh!

Lov. Why do you sigh? Can you be doubtful of
me?

By that fair name I in the wars have purchas'd,
And all my actions, hitherto untainted,
I will not be more true to mine own honour
Than to thee, Allworth!

All. Were you to encounter with a single foe,
The victory were certain: but to stand
The charge of two such potent enemies,
At once assaulting you, as wealth and beauty,
And those too seconded with power, is odds
Too great for Hercules.

Lov. Speak your doubts and fears,
Since you will nourish 'em, in plainer language,
That I may understand 'em.

All. My much-lov'd lord, were Margaret only fair,
You might command your passion;
But, when the well-tun'd accents of her tongue
Make music to you, and with numerous sounds
Assault your hearing,
Hippolytus himself would leave Diana,
To follow such a Venus.

Lov. Love hath made you
Poetical, Allworth.

All. Grant all these beat off

(Which if it be in man to do, you'll do it),
Mammon, in Sir Giles Overreach, steps in
With heap of ill-got gold, and as much land
As would tire

A falcon's wings, in one day to fly over.

I here release your trust:

'Tis happiness enough for me, to serve you,
And sometimes with chaste eyes, to look upon her.

Lov. Why, shall I swear?

All. O, by no means, my lord!

Lov. Suspend

Your judgment to the trial. — How far is't

To Overreach's house?

All. At the most, some half hour's riding;

You'll soon be there.

Lov. And you the sooner freed

From your jealous fears.

All. Oh, that I durst but hope it! [*Ereunt.*]

SCENE II.—*The Hall in Sir Giles' House.*

*Enter Sir GILES, GREEDY, and MARRALL; Sir
GILES and MARRALL remain up stage, GREEDY
advances to front.*

Sir G. Spare for no cost; let my dresser crack
with the weight
Of curious viands.

Gree. Store indeed's no sore, sir. [*Greedy.*]

Sir G. That proverb fits your stomach, master
Gree. It does indeed, Sir Giles: I do not like to
see a table ill-spread, poor, meagre, just sprinkled
o'er with salads, slic'd beef, giblets, and pig's peti-
toes. But the substantials!—O, Sir Giles, the sub-
stantials! The state of a fat turkey now! the de-
corum, the grandeur, he marches in with! O, I de-
clare, I do much honour a chine of beef! O, I do
reverence a loin of veal!

Sir G. And let no plate be seen, but what's pure
gold,

Or such whose workmanship exceeds the matter
That it is made of: let my choicest linen
Perfume the room; and, when we wash, the water,
With precious powders mix'd, so please my lord,
That he may with envy wish to bathe so ever.

Mar. 'Twill be very chargeable.

Sir G. Avaunt, you drudge!

Now all my labour'd ends are at the stake,
I'st a time to think of thrift? Call in my daughter,
Call in my daughter. [*Exit MARRALL.*]
And, master justice, since you love choice dishes,
And plenty of 'em—

Gree. As I do indeed, sir,
Almost as much as to give thanks for 'em.

Sir G. I do confer that providence, with my power
Of absolute command to have abundance,
To your best care.

Gree. I'll punctually discharge it,
And give the best directions.—

[*Sir GILES retires up the stage*]

Now am I,

In mine own conceit, a monarch; at least,
Arch-president o' the boil'd, the roast, the bak'd;—
I'd not change my throne for the Great Mogul's;
For which I will eat often; and give thanks,
When my belly's brae'd up like a drum; and that's
pure justice. [*Exit GREEDY.*]

Sir G. [*Advancing.*] It must be so; should the
foolish girl prove modest,
She may spoil all; she had it not from me,

But from her mother : I was ever forward,
As she must be ; and therefore I'll prepare her.
Enter MARRALL, followed by MARGARET, and two female Attendants.

Alone, Margaret—
Alone—and let your women wait without.

[*Exit Women and MARRALL.*]

Marg. Your pleasure, sir ?

Sir G. Ha ! this is a neat dressing !

[*Walks round her.*]

These orient pearls and diamonds well plac'd too !
The gown affects me not, it should have been
Embroider'd o'er and o'er with flowers of gold ;
But these rich jewels and quaint fashion help it.
How like you your new woman,
The Lady Downfallen ?

Marg. Well, for a companion :

Not as a servant.

Sir G. Is she humble, Meg,
And careful too ; her ladyship forgotten ?

Marg. I pity her fortune.

Sir G. Pity her ! Trample on her.

I took her up in an old tamin gown.
E'en starv'd for very want of food, to serve thee,
And if I understand she but repines
To do thee any duty, though ne'er so servile,
I'll pack her to her knight, where I have lodg'd him,
Into the counter, and there let e'em howl together.

Marg. You know your own ways, but for me, I
blush

When I command her that was once attended
With persons not inferior to myself
In birth.

Sir G. In birth ! Why, art thou not my daughter,
The blest child of my industry and wealth ?
Part with these humble thoughts, and apt thyself
To the noble state I labour to advance thee ;
Or, by my hopes to see thee honourable,
I will adopt a stranger to my fortunes,
And throw thee from my care : Do not provoke me.

Marg. I will not, sir ; mould me which way you
please.

*Enter GREEDY, with a napkin round his neck, and a
dumpling in his hand.*

Gree. Sir Giles, Sir Giles—

Sir G. How ! interrupted ? [*Crosses to him.*]

Gree. 'Tis matter of importance.

The cook, sir, is self-willed, and will not learn [*sir*,
From my experience. There's a fawn brought in,
And, for my life, I cannot make him roast it whole,
With a Norfolk dumpling in the belly of it :
And, sir, we wise men know, that without the
dumpling

'Tis not worth three-pence.

Sir G. Would it were whole in thy belly, [*me*.
To stuff it out ! Cook it any way : Pr'ythee, leave
Gree. Without order for the dumpling ?

Sir G. Let it be dumpled

Which way thou wilt ; or tell him, I will scald him
In his own caldron.

Gree. I had lost my stomach

Had I lost my dumpling. [*Exit GREEDY.*]
Sir G. But to our business, Meg :—You've heard
who dines here ?

Marg. I have, sir.

Sir G. 'Tis an honourable man ;

A lord, Meg, and commands a regiment
Of soldiers ; and, what's rare, is one himself,
A bold and understanding one ; and to be
A lord, and a good leader, in one volume,
Is granted unto few, but such as rise up
The kingdom's glory.

Re-enter GREEDY, with a toast and fork.

Gree. I'll resign my office,

If I be not better obey'd. [*frantic ?*]

Sir G. [*Turning suddenly to him.*] Slight, art thou
Gree. Frantic ! 'twould make me frantic, and
stark mad,

Were I not a justice of peace and quorum too,
Which this rebellious cook cares not a straw for.
There are a dozen of woodcocks.—
He has found out

A new device for sauce, and will not dish 'em
With toasts and butter.

Sir G. Crosses behind.] Cook !—rogue, obey him !
I've given the word : pray, now, remove yourself
To a collar of brawn, and trouble me no further.

Gree. I will, and meditate what to eat at dinner.

[*Exit GREEDY.*]

Sir G. And as I said, Meg, when this gull dis-
turbed us,

This honourable lord, this colonel,
I would have thy husband.

Marg. There's too much disparity

Between his quality and mine, to hope it.

Sir G. I more than hope, and doubt not to affect it ;
Be thou no enemy to thyself : my wealth
Shall weigh his titles down, and make you equals.
Now for the means to assure him thine, observe me :
Remember, he's a courtier, and a soldier,
And not to be trifled with ; and therefore, when
He comes to woo you, see you do not coy it :
This mincing modesty hath spoil'd many a match
By a first refusal, in vain after hop'd for. [*that*]

Marg. You'll have me, sir, preserve the distance
Confines a virgin ?

Sir G. Virgin me no virgins !

I'll have you lose that name, or you lose me ;

I'll have you private—start not—I say, private.

If you are my true daughter,
You'll venture alone with one man, though he came
Like Jupiter to Semele, and come off too :
And therefore, when he kisses you, kiss close.

Marg. I've heard this is the wanton's fashion, sir,
Which I must never learn.

Sir G. Learn any thing,
And from any creature, that may make thee great ;
E'en from the devil himself : stand not on form ;
Words are no substances.

Marg. With your leave, sir—in worldly policy,
This is not the way to make me his wife :

My virgin scruples overcome so soon
Cannot but assure him,

I, that am light to him, will not hold weight
When tempted by others ; so, in judgment,
If, to obey you, I forget my honour,
He must and will forsake me.

Sir G. How ! forsake thee !

Do I wear a sword for fashion ? or is this arm
Shrunk up, or wither'd ? Does there live a man,
Of that large list I have encounter'd with,
Can truly say I e'er gave inch of ground
Not purchased with his blood that did oppose me ?
Forsake thee !—he dares not.

Though all his captains, echoes to his will,
Stood arm'd by his side, to justify the wrong ;
Spite of his lordship, and his colonelship,
I would make him render
A bloody and a strict account, and force him,
By marrying thee, to cure thy wounded honour.
Meg, I have said it.

Enter MARRALL, hastily.

Mar. Sir, sir, the man of honour's come,
Newly alighted.

Sir G. In, there, without reply, and wait my call:
And do as I command, or thou art lost.

[*Exit MARGARET.*]

What! is the loud music I gave orders for
Ready to receive him?

Mar. 'Tis, sir.

Sir G. Let 'em sound

A princely welcome.

[*Exit MARRALL,*

Roughness, awhile leave me;

For fawning now, a stranger to my nature,

Must make way for me.

[*Music.*]

*Enter MARRALL, LOVELL, and ALLWORTH, preceded
and followed by Servants.*

Lov. Sir, you meet your trouble.

[*nour*

Sir G. What you are pleas'd to style so, is an ho-
Above my worth and fortunes.

Allw. [*Aside.*] Strange! so humble!

Re-enter GREEDY, with a napkin under his chin.

Sir G. Faugh! [*Points to napkin, which GREEDY
instantly snatches off, and puts behind him.*]

A justice of peace, my lord.

[*Presents GREEDY to him.*]

Lov. Your hand, good sir.

Gree. [*Aside.*] This is a lord; some would think
this a favour;

But I had rather have my hand in my dumpling.

Sir G. Room for my lord.

Lov. I miss, sir, your fair daughter,

To crown my welcome.

Sir G. May it please my lord

To taste a glass of Greek wine first; and suddenly
She shall attend, my lord.

Lov. You'll be obeyed, sir.

[*Exeunt all but Sir GILES.*]

Sir G. 'Tis to my wish; as soon as come, ask for
her.

Why, Meg! Meg Overreach!

Re-enter MARGARET.

How! tears in your eyes!

Hah! dry 'em quickly, or I'll dig 'em out.

Is this a time to whimper? meet that greatness

That flies into thy bosom; think what 'tis

For me to say, my honourable daughter.

No more; but be instructed, or expect—

He comes.

*Re-enter LOVELL, ALLWORTH, GREEDY, and
MARRALL.*

A well form'd girl, my lord.

Lov. [*Crosses to MARGARET.*] As I live, a rare one!
[*Salutes her.*]

Allw. He's ta'en already: I am lost.

Sir G. That kiss

Came twanging off; I like it:—Quit the room.

[*Exeunt GREEDY, MARRALL, and ALLWORTH.*]

A little bashful, my good lord, but you,

I hope, will teach us boldness.

Lov. I am happy

In such a scholar: but—

Sir G. I am too old to learn,

And therefore leave you to yourselves. Remember!

[*Aside to MARGARET and exit.*]

Lov. You see, fair lady, your father is solicitous,
To have you change the barren name of virgin
Into a hopeful wife.

Marg. His haste, my lord,

Holds no power o'er my will.

Lov. But o'er your duty.

Marg. Which, forc'd too much, may break.

Lov. Bend rather, sweetest:

Think of your years.

Marg. Too few to match with yours.

ACT. DRAMA.—NO. XXXVI.

Lov. I can advance you.

Marg. To a hill of sorrow;

Where every hour I may expect to fall,
But never hope firm footing. You are noble,
I of a low descent, however rich;
O, my good lord, I could say more, but that
I dare not trust these walls.

Lov. Pray you, trust my ear then.

[*They whisper up the stage.*]

Re-enter Sir GILES, listening.

Sir G. Close at it! whispering!—this is excellent!
And by their postures, a consent on both parts.

Re-enter GREEDY.

Gree. Sir Giles! Sir Giles!

Sir G. The great fiend stop that clapper!

Gree. It must ring out, sir, when my belly rings
noon.

The bak'd meats are run out, the roast turn'd powder.

Sir G. Stop your insatiate jaws, or

I shall powder you.

Gree. Beat me to dust, I care not;

In such a cause as this I'll die a martyr.

Sir G. Disturb my lord

When he is in discourse?

Gree. Is't a time to talk

When we should be munching?

[*bargain*

Sir G. Mum, villain; vanish! Shall we break a
Almost made up?

[*Exit, thrusting GREEDY off before him.*]

Lov. Lady, I understand you,

And wish you happy in your choice; believe it,

I'll be a careful pilot to direct

Your yet uncertain bark to a port of safety.

Marg. So shall your honour save two lives, and
bind us

Your slaves for ever.

Lov. I'm in the act rewarded.

Since it is good; however, you must put on

An amorous carriage towards me, till our purpose

Be brought to the wish'd end.

Marg. I'm prone to that.

Lov. Now break we off our conference.—Sir Giles!

Where is Sir Giles?

[*Coming forward.*]

*Enter Sir GILES. ALLWORTH, GREEDY, and MAR-
RALL, ALLWORTH crosses behind.*

Sir G. My noble lord; and how

Does your lordship find her?

Lov. Apt, Sir Giles, and coming;

And I like her the better.

Sir G. [*Aside*] So do I too.

Lov. Yet should we take forts at the first assault,

'Twere poor in the defendant: I will confirm her

With a love-letter or two, which I shall have

Deliver'd by my page: we must, for form, give
way to't.

Sir G. With all my soul. [*Crosses to ALLWORTH.*]

A towardly gentleman!

Your hand, good master Allworth: know my house
Is ever open to you.

All. [*Aside.*] 'Twas shut till now.

Sir G. [*To MARGARET.*] Well done, well done,
my honourable daughter!

Thou'rt so already; [*Puts MARGARET over to ALL-
WORTH*] know this gentle youth,

And cherish him, my honourable daughter!

Marg. I shall, with my best care.

Servants. [*Without.*] Room, room—make way
there for my lady.

Sir G. What noise?

Gree. More stops

Before we go to dinner! O my guts!

Enter six Servants, Lady ALLWORTH, and WELLBORN.

Lady A. [To WELLBORN.] If I find welcome,
You shall share in't; if not, I'll back again;
For I come arm'd for all can be objected.

Lov. How! the Lady Allworth?

Sir G. And thus attended!

[MARRALL and Sir GILES a little up the stage.]

Mar. No, I am a dolt;

The spirit of lies hath enter'd me.

Lov. Noble lady,

This is a favour to prevent my visit,

The service of my life can never equal. [hop'd]

Lady A. My lord, I laid wait for you; and much
You would have made my poor house your first inn:
And therefore, doubting that you might forget me,
I borrow'd so much from my long restraint,
And took the air, in person to invite you.

Lov. Your bounties are so great, they rob me,
Of words to give you thanks. [madam,

Lady A. Good Sir Giles Overreach—[Bows to him.
How dost thou, Marrall?—Lik'd you my meat so ill,
You'll dine no more with me?

Gree. I will, when you please,
An' it like your ladyship.

Lady A. When you please, Master Greedy;
If meat can do't you shall be satisfied.

And now, my lord, pray take into your knowledge
This gentleman: howe'er his outside's coarse,
[Presents WELLBORN.]

His inward linings are as fine and fair
As any man's;

And howsoe'er his humour carries him
To be thus accounted, or what taint soe'er,
For his wild life, hath struck upon his fame,
He may ere long, with boldness rank himself
With some that have condemn'd him. Sir Giles
If I am welcome, bid him so. [Overreach,

Sir G. My nephew! [Crosses to WELLBORN.
He has been too long a stranger: faith you have:
Pray, let it be mended.

[All converse apart, but Sir GILES and MARRALL.]

Mar. Why, sir, what do you mean?

This is rogue Wellborn, monster, prodigy,
No man of worship,
Much less your nephew.

Sir G. Well, sirrah, we shall reckon
For this hereafter.

Mar. I'll not lose my joke,
Though I be beaten dead for't. [Retires up the stage.]

Well. [Advancing.] Let my silence plead

In my excuse, my lord, till better leisure

Offer itself, to hear a full relation

Of my poor fortunes. [Aside to LOVELL.]

Lov. I would hear, and help 'em. [Bell rings.

Gree. Ah! [Runs about.]

Sir G. Your dinner waits you.

Lov. Pray you, lead; we follow. [my guest.

Lady A. Dear Master Wellborn, come.—You are
[Takes WELLBORN's hand.—Music.—Event
all but GREEDY.]

Gree. Dear Master Wellborn! so she said:
Heaven, heaven!

If my belly would give me leave, I could ruminate
All day on this: I've granted twenty warrants
To have him committed, from all the prisons in the
shire, [Wellborn!]

To Nottingham gaol! And now, "Dear Master
And, "My good nephew!"—But I play the fool,
To stand here prating, and forget my dinner. [Going.]

Re-enter MARRALL, meeting GREEDY.

Are they set, Marrall?

Mar. Long since. [GREEDY going, MARRALL
prevents him.] Pray you a word, sir.

Gree. No wording now.

Mar. In troth, I must: my master, [you,
Knowing you are his good friend, makes bold with
And does entreat you, more guests being come in
Than he expected, especially his nephew,
The table being full too, you would excuse him,
And wait to sup with him on the cold meat.

Gree. How! no dinner,

After all my care.

Mar. 'Tis but a penance for
A meal; besides, you broke your fast—

Gree. That was

But a bit to stay my stomach. A man in commission,
Give place to a tatterdemalion?

Mar. No big words, sir!

Should his worship hear you—

Gree. Lose my dumpling too.

And butter'd toast and woodcocks?

Mar. Come, have patience.

If you will dispense a little with your justiceship,
And sit with the maids below there, you'll have
dumpling,

Woodcock, and butter'd toast too, by and by.

Gree. This revives me:

I will gorge there sufficiently.

Mar. There's your way, sir. [Exit MARRALL.]

Gree. I fear, we shall have but short commons
below. I am no cameleon, to feed on air; nor
Frenchman, to feast on a soused frog, or regale on
an ounce of beef in a Mediterranean sea of soup; I
love to see the board well spread, groaning under its
savory burden, smoking hot, from spit, furnace,
and cauldron.—Ods-me, Sir Giles! [Exit.]

Enter Sir GILES.

Sir G. She's caught? O, woman! What, neglect
my lord,

And all her compliments apply to Wellborn!

In the wine she drinks,

He being her pledge, she sends him burning kisses,
And sits on thorns till she be private with him.

But why grieve I

At this? It makes for me; if she prove his,

All that is hers is mine, as I will work him.

Enter MARRALL.

Mar. Sir, the whole board is troubled at your
rising. [rall,

Sir G. No matter, I'll excuse it: Pr'ythee, Mar-
Watch an occasion to invite my nephew

To speak with me in private.

Mar. Who! the rogue

The lady scorn'd to look on?

Sir G. Sirrah, sirrah! [Crosses to meet LOVELL.]

Enter LOVELL, MARGARET, and ALLWORTH.

Sir G. [To LOVELL.] My good lord, excuse my
Lov. There needs none, Sir Giles; [manners.

I may ere long say—father, when it please

My dearest mistress to give warrant to it.

Sir G. She shall seal to it, my lord, and make me
happy.

Lady A. [Without.] Nay, Master Wellborn—

Sir G. Grosser and grosser! [Exit.]

Enter Lady ALLWORTH, WELLBORN, and Servants.

Lady A. Provide my coach,
I'll instantly away;—my thanks, Sir Giles,
For my entertainment.

[MARRALL whispers WELLBORN.]

Sir G. 'Tis your nobleness,
To think it such.

Lady A. I must do you a further wrong,
In taking away your honourable guest. [Giles.]

Lov. I wait on you, madam; farewell, good Sir

Lady A. Nay, come, Master Wellborn.—

[Exit MARRALL.]

I must not leave you behind; in sooth, I must not.

Sir G. [Crosses to Lady ALLWORTH.] Rob me not,
madam, of all joys at once: [coach,

Let my nephew stay behind; he shall have my

And after some small conference between us,

Soon overtake your ladyship.

Lady A. Stay not so long, sir. [day

Lov. Farewell, dear Margaret! You shall every

Hear from your servant, by my faithful page.

All. 'Tis a service I am proud of.

[Exit LOVELL, Lady ALLWORTH, ALLWORTH,
and Servants.]

Sir G. Daughter, to your chamber.

[Exit MARGARET.]

You may wonder, nephew,

After so long an enmity between us,

I should desire your friendship.

Well. So I do, sir;

'Tis strange to me.

Sir G. But I make it no wonder;

And, what is more, unfold my nature to you.

We worldly men, when we see friends and kinsmen,

Past hope sunk in their fortunes, lend no hand

To lift 'em up, but rather set our feet

Upon their heads, to press 'em to the bottom;

As I must yield, with you I practis'd it;

But, now I see you in a way to rise,

I can and will assist you. 'This rich lady,

(And I am glad of't), is enamour'd of you.

Well. No such thing:

Compassion rather, sir.

Sir G. Well, in a word,

Because your stay is short, I'll have you seen

No more in this base shape; nor shall she say,

She married you like a beggar, or in debt.

Well. [Aside.] He'll run into the noose, and save

my labour. [hence,

Sir G. You have a trunk of rich clothes, not far

In pawn; I will redeem 'em; and, that no clamour

May taint your credit for your petty debts,

You shall have wherewithal to cut 'em off,

And go a freeman to the wealthy lady.

Well. This done, sir, out of love, and no ends else—

Sir G. As it is, nephew.

Well. Binds me still your servant.

Sir G. No compliments: you're staid for. Ere

you've supp'd [my nephew:]

You shall hear from me. My coach, knaves, for

To morrow I will visit you.

Well. Here's an uncle

In a man's extremes! How much they do belie you,

That say you are hard-hearted.

Sir G. My deeds, nephew,

Shall speak my love; what men report, I weigh not.

[Exit WELLBORN and Sir GILES.]

I now discharge you
From further service: mind your own affairs;
I hope they'll prove successful.
All. What is blest

With your good wish, my lord, cannot but prosper.

Let after-times report, and to your honour,

How much I stand engag'd, for I want language

To speak my debt; yet, if a tear or two

Of joy, for your much goodness, can supply

My tongue's defects, I could—

Lov. Nay, do not melt;

This ceremonial thanks, to me's superfluous.

Sir G. [Without.] Is my lord stirring?

Lov. 'Tis he! O, here's your letter.

[Takes the letter from the table, and gives it to

ALLWORTH.]

Let him in.

[ALLWORTH opens the door, and stands retired.

Enter Sir GILES, GREEDY, and MARRALL.]

Sir G. A good day to my lord!

Lov. You are an early riser,

Sir Giles.

Sir G. And reason, to attend your lordship.

Lov. And you, too, Master Greedy, up so soon!

Gree. In troth, my lord, after the sun is up

I cannot sleep: for I've a foolish stomach

That croaks for breakfast. With your lordship's

favour, [Crosses to LOVELL.]

I have a serious question to demand

Of my worthy friend, Sir Giles.

Lov. Pray you, use your pleasure. [Retires.]

Gree. How far, Sir Giles, and pray you answer

Upon your credit, hold you it to be [me

From your manor-house to this of my Lady All-

Sir G. Why, some four miles. [worth's?

Gree. How! four mile, good Sir Giles—

Upon your reputation, think better;

For four miles' riding

Could not have rais'd so huge an appetite

As I feel gnawing on me.

Mar. Whether you ride,

Or go afoot, you're that way still provided,

An't please your worship.

Sir G. How now, sirrah? prating

Before my lord! no deference! Go to my nephew,

See all his debts discharg'd, and help his worship

To fit on his rich suit.

Mar. I may fit you too. [Exit MARRALL.]

Lov. I have writ this morning

A few lines to my mistress, your fair daughter.

Sir G. 'Twill fire her; for she's wholly your's

already. [you

Sweet Master Allworth, take my ring; 'twill carry

To her presence, I dare warrant you; and there

plead

For my good lord, if you should find occasion.

That done, pray, ride to Nottingham, get a license,

Still by this token. [To LOVELL.] I will have't

despatch'd,

And suddenly, my lord, that I may say,

My honourable, nay, right honourable daughter.

Gree. [Stopping ALLWORTH, who is crossing]

Take my advice, young gentleman; get your

breakfast;

'Tis unwholesome to ride fasting; I'll eat with you,

And that abundantly.

Sir G. Some fury's in that gut:

Hungry again! did you not devour this morning

A shield of brawn, and a barrel of Colchester oysters?

Gree. Why, that was, sir, only to scour my

A kind of preparative. [stomach,

Lov. Haste your return.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Room in Lady Allworth's House.—

Table and two chairs, pens, ink, paper, war, and
lighted taper.

LOVELL discovered seated, sealing a letter, and ALL-
WORTH waiting on him.

Lov. 'Tis well.—May this succeed!

All. I will not fail, my lord.

Gree. Nor I, to line

My Christmas coffer.

Sir G. To my wish; [*They sit.*] we're private.

I come not to make offer with my daughter
A certain portion; that were poor and trivial:

In one word I pronounce, all that is mine,

In lands or leases, ready coin or goods,

With her, my lord, comes to you: nor shall you have

One motive to induce you to believe

I live too long; since every year I'll add

Something unto the heap, which shall be your's too.

Lov. You are a right kind father.

Sir G. You shall have reason

To think me such,

How do you like this seat of Lady Allworth's?

It is well wooded and well water'd, the acres

Fertile and rich; would it not serve, for change,

To entertain your friends in a summer progress?

What thinks my noble lord?

Lov. 'Tis a wholesome air,

And well-built pile: and she that's mistress of it,

Worthy the large revenue.

Sir G. She the mistress!

It may be so for a time; but, let my lord

Say, only that he but likes it, and would have it,

I say are long 'tis his.

Lov. Impossible!

Sir G. You conclude too fast, not knowing me,

Nor the engines that I work by. 'Tis not alone

The lady Allworth's lands,—for those, once Well-
born's,

As, by her doteage on him, I know they will be,

Shall soon be mine;—but point out any man's

In all the shire, and say they lie convenient

And useful for your lordship, and once more

I say aloud they're yours. [*They rise.*]

Lov. I dare not own

What's by unjust and cruel means extorted:

My fame and credit are more dear to me,

Than thus to expose 'em to be censur'd by

The public voice.

Sir G. You run, my lord, no hazard.

[*Leans on the back of the chair.*]

Your reputation shall still stand as fair

In all good men's opinions, as now:

For, though I do condemn report myself,

As a mere sound, I still will be so tender

Of what concerns you, in all points of honour,

That the immaculate whiteness of your fame,

Shall ne'er be sullied with one taint or spot.

All my ambition is, to have my daughter

Right honourable, which my lord can make her;

And, might I live to dance upon my knee

A young Lord Lovell, born by her unto you,

I write *nil ultra* to my proudest hopes.

Lov. Are you not mov'd with the sad imprecations

And curses of whole families, made wretched

By your sinister practices?

Sir G. Yes, as rocks are,

When foamy billows split themselves against

Their flinty ribs; or as the moon is mov'd,

When wolves, with hunger pin'd, howl at her bright-

I'm of a solid temper, and, like these [ness.

Steer on a constant course.

Nay, when my ears are pierc'd with widow's cries,

And undone orphans wash with tears my threshold,

I only think what 'tis to have my daughter

Right honourable; and 'tis a powerful charm

Makes me insensible of remorse, or pity,

Or the least sting of conscience.

[*Exit.*]

Lov. I admire

The toughness of your nature.

Sir G. 'Tis for you,

My lord, and for my daughter, I am marble;

Nay more, if you will have my character

In little, I enjoy more true delight

In my arrival at my wealth these dark

And crooked ways, than you shall e'er take pleasure

In spending what my industry hath compass'd.

My haste commands me hence; in one word, there-

Is it a match, my lord? [*fore,*]

Lov. I hope that is past doubt now. [*kind here,*]

Sir G. Then rest secure; not the hate of all man-

Nor fear of what can fall on me hereafter,

Shall make me study aught but your advancement

One story higher: an earl; if gold can do it.

Doubt not mine honour, nor my faith to you:

Though I am borne thus headlong by my will,

You may make choice of what belief you please.

To me 'tis equal; so, my lord, good morrow.

[*Exit Sir GILES.*]

Lov. He's gone: I wonder how the earth can

I, that have liv'd a soldier, [*bear him!*]

And stood the enemy's violent charge undaunted,

To hear this horrid monster, am all bath'd

In a cold sweat: yet, like a mountain, he

Is no more shaken, than Olympus is

When angry Boreas loads his double head

With sudden drifts of snow.

Enter Lady ALLWORTH.

Lady A. Save you, my lord!

Disturb I not your privacy?

Lov. No, good madam;

For your own sake, I'm glad you came no sooner

Since this bold, bad man, Sir Giles Overreach,

Made such a plain discovery of himself,

And read this morning such a devilish matins,

That I should think it a sin next to his

But to repeat it.

Lady A. I ne'er press'd my lord,

On others' privacy: yet, against my will,

Walking for health's sake, in the gallery here,

I was made,

So loud and vehement he was, partaker

Of his tempting offers.

But, my good lord, if I may use my freedom,

As to an honour'd friend—

Lov. You lessen else

Your favour to me.

Lady A. I dare, then, say thus:

However common men

Make sordid wealth the object and sole end

Of their industrious aims, 'twill not agree

With those of noble blood, of fame, and honour.

Lov. Madam, 'tis confess'd:

But what infer you from it?

Lady A. This, my lord:

I allow the heir of Sir Giles Overreach, Margaret,

A maid well qualified, and the richest match

Our north part can make boast of; yet she cannot,

With all that she brings with her, stop their mouths

That never will forget who was her father;

Or that my husband Allworth's lands, and Wellborn's

(How wrung from both, needs now no repetition).

Were real motives that more work'd your lordship

To join your families, than her form and virtues:

You may conceive the rest.

Lov. I do, good madam,

And long since have consider'd it.

And 'tis my resolution ne'er to wed

With the rich Margaret, Overreach's daughter.

Lady A. [Aside.] I'm glad to hear this.
Why then, my lord, pretend your marriage to her?
Dissimulation but ties false knots
On that straight line, by which you hitherto
Have measur'd all your actions.

Lov. I make answer,
And aptly, with a question. Wherefore have you,
That, since your husband's death, have liv'd a strict
And chaste nun's life, on the sudden given yourself
To visits and entertainments? Think you, madam,
'Tis not grown public conference; or the favours
Which you so prodigally have thrown on Wellborn
Incur not censure? [swear,

Lady A. I'm innocent here; and, on my life, I
My ends are good

Lov. So, on my soul, are mine
To Margaret:
And, since this friendly privacy does serve
As a fair offer'd means unto ourselves
To search each other further—you having shewn
Your care of me, I, my respect to you—
Deny me not, I dare not yet say more,
An afternoon's discourse.

Lady A. Affected coyness might deny your suit;
But, such your honour, frankness shall become me,
And bid my tongue avow my honest heart:
I shall attend your lordship.

Lov. My heart thanks you.

[*Exeunt* LOVELL and Lady ALLWORTH]

SCENE II.—A Village.

Enter FROTH and TAPWELL *from the House.*

Tap. Undone, undone! This was your counsel,
Froth. [rall—

Froth. Mine! I defy thee: did not Master Mar-
He has marr'd all, I am sure—strictly command us,
On pain of Sir Giles Overreach's displeasure,
To turn the gentleman out of doors?

Tap. 'Tis true:
But now, he's his uncle's darling; and has got
Master Justice Greedy, since he fill'd his belly,
At his commandment to do any thing.
Woe, woe to us!

Froth. He may prove merciful.

Tap. Troth, we do not deserve it at his hands.

Froth. Then, he knows all the passages of our
house;

As the receiving of stolen goods, and so forth.

When he was rogue Wellborn, no man would be-
lieve him;

And then his information could not hurt us;

But now he is right worshipful again,
Who dares but doubt his testimony?

Tap. Undone, undone! Methinks

I see thee, Froth, already in a cart;

And my hand hissing,

If I 'scape the halter, with the letter R

Printed upon it.

Froth. 'Would that were the worst!

That were but nine days' wonder. As for credit,
We've none to lose; but we shall lose his custom:
There's the devil on't. [drum;

Tap. He has summon'd all his creditors by the
'Tis said, he has found such a new way
To pay his old debts, as, 'tis very likely,
He shall be chronicled for it.

Froth. But are you sure his worship
Comes this way to my lady's?

[*Drum—and cry without of "Brave Master
Wellborn!"*

Tap. Hark, I hear him.

Froth. Be ready with your petition, and present it
To his good grace. [Drum—and cry again.]

Enter GREEDY, WELLBORN in a rich habit, MAR-
RALL.—Vintner, Tailor, with other Creditors.—
ORDER, FURNACE, and AMBLE.—TAPWELL and
FROTH, kneeling, deliver a petition.

Well. How's this? petition'd too!

But note what miracles the payment of
A little trash, and a rich suit of clothes,
Can work upon these rascals. I shall be,
I think, Prince Wellborn.

Mar. When your worship's married,
You may be—I know; what I hope to see you.

Well. Then look thou for advancement.

Mar. To be known

Your worship's bailiff, is the mark I shoot at.

Well. And thou shalt hit it

Mar. Pray you, sir, despatch

These needy followers: and for my admittance,

[TAPWELL and FROTH flatter GREEDY.]
Provided you'll defend me from Sir Giles,
Whose service I am weary of, I'll say something
You shall give thanks for.

Well. Fear not Sir Giles.

[WELLBORN and MARRALL retire, and converse
apart.]

Gree. [Bringing TAPWELL and FROTH forward.]
Who? Tapwell—I remember; thy wife brought me,
Last new year's tide, a couple of fat turkies.

Tap. And shall do, every Christmas, let your
But stand my friend now. [worship]

Gree. How! with Master Wellborn?

I can do any thing with him, on such terms.

[WELLBORN advances.]
See you this honest couple? [To WELLBORN.]

They're good souls
As ever drew out spigot. Have they not
A pair of honest faces?

Well. I o'erheard you,
And the bribe he promis'd. You are cozen'd in 'em;
For, of all the scum that grew rich by my riots,
This, for a most unthankful knave, and this,
For a base quean and thief, have worse deserv'd me;
And therefore speak not for them. By your place,
You're rather to do me justice. Lend me thine ear:
Forget his turkies, and call in his license,
And every season I will send you venison,
To feast a mayor and corporation.

[Retires, and converses with MARRALL.]

Gree. I'm chang'd o' the sudden in my opinion.

—Mum.

Come near; [To TAP. and FROTH.] nearer, rascal!
And, now I view him better, did you e'er see
One look so like an arch knave? his very counte-
nance,

Should an understanding judge but look upon him,
Would hang him, though he were innocent.

Tap. and Froth. Worshipful sir— [of turkies,

Gree. No; though the great Turk came, instead
To beg my favour, I'm inexorable.

Thou'st an ill name: I here do damn thy license,

Forbidding thee ever to tap or draw;

For instantly I will, in mine own person,

Command the constable to pull down thy sign,

And do't before I eat.

Froth. No mercy?

Gree. Vanish!—

If I show any, may my promis'd venison choke me!

Tap. Unthankful knaves are ever so rewarded.

[Exit with FROTH into the house.]
Well. On, Master Greedy. I'll be with you at
dinner.

Gree. For heaven's sake, don't stay long :
'Tis almost ready. [Exit GREEDY.]

Well. Speak : what are you ?

Vint. [Comes forward.] A decay'd vintner, sir,
That might have thriv'd but that your worship broke
With trusting you with muscadine and eggs. [me,
And five-pound suppers, with your after-drinkings,
When you lodg'd upon the Bankside.

Well. I remember. [you ;
Vint. I've not been hasty, nor e'er laid to arrest
And therefore, sir—

Well. Thou art an honest fellow :
I'll set thee up again : [Vintner retires.

[To MARRALL.] See his bill paid.

[Tailor advances.] What are you ?

Tai. A tailor once, but now mere botcher.

I long time gave you credit for rich clothes :

But, you failing in payment,
I was remov'd from the shop-board, and confin'd
Under a stall. [no more.

Well. [To MARRALL.] See him paid : and botch
Tai. I ask no interest, sir.

Well. Such tailors need not :
If their bills are paid in one-and-twenty years,
They're seldom losers. See these men discharg'd.
[MARRALL motions to the Creditors to imply he
will do so.

And, since old debts are clear'd by a new way,
A little bounty will not misbecome me :
There's something for you all.

[Throws a purse to Creditors.
All the Cred. Brave Master Wellborn !

[Drums and shouts.—Exeunt Creditors.
Well. Leave me, good friends : attend upon your
lady.

[Exeunt AMBLE, FURNACE, and ORDER
Now, Master Marrall, what's the weighty secret
You promis'd to impart ?

Mar. Sir, time nor place
Allow me to relate each circumstance ;
This only, in a word :—I know Sir Giles
Will come upon you for security
For all the money which he now has lent you ;
This you must not consent to :
As he grows in heat, as I am sure he will ;
Be you but rough, and say he's in your debt
Ten times the sum, upon sale of your land :
I'd a hand in't, I speak it to my shame,
When you were defeated of it.

Well. That's forgiven. [duce
Mar. I shall deserve it.—Then urge him to pro-

The deed in which you pass'd it over to him ;
Which, I know, he'll have about him, to deliver
To the Lord Lovell. I'll instruct you further,
As I wait on your worship : if I play not my prize
To your full content, and your uncle's much vexation,
Hang up Jack Marrall.

Well. I rely upon thee. [Exeunt.

SCENE III.—A Room in Sir Giles's House.—Table
and two chairs, pen, ink, and paper.

Enter MARGARET, with a letter in her hand, and
ALLWORTH.

Allw. Whether to yield the first praise to my lord's
Unequal'd temperance, or your constant sweetness,
I yet rest doubtful.

Marg. Give it to Lord Lovell ;
For what in him was bounty, in me's duty.
I make but payment of a debt to which
My vows, in that high office register'd,
Are faithful witnesses.

Allw. 'Tis true, my dearest ;
Yet—when I call to mind how many fair ones
Make wilful shipwreck of their faiths and oaths,
To fill the arms of greatness ;
While you, with matchless virtue, thus hold out,
Spurning at honour, when it comes to court you—
I am so tender of your good, that faintly
I wish myself that right, you're pleas'd to do me.

Marg. To me what's title, when content is want-
Or the smooth brow, and wealth, [ing ?
Of a pleas'd sire that slaves me to his will ;
And, so his vain ambition may be feasted
By my obedience, and he see me great,
Leaves to my soul nor faculties nor power
To make her own election ?

Allw. But the dangers
That follow the repulse—

Marg. To me they're nothing :
Let Allworth love, I cannot be unhappy.
Suppose the worst—that, in his rage, he kill me,
A tear or two, by you dropt on my hearse,
In sorrow for my fate, will call back life
So far as but to say, that I die your's ;
I then shall rest in peace.

Allw. Heaven avert
Such trials of your true affection to me !
Nor will it unto you, that are all mercy,
Show so much rigour. But, since we must run
Such desperate hazards, let us do our best
To steer between 'em.

Marg. Lord Lovell is our friend :
And, though but a young actor, second me
In doing to the life what he has plotted.

[Enter Sir GILES.
The end may yet prove happy.—[Aside.] Now, my
Allworth. [ing anger.

Allw. [Aside.] To your letter, and put on a seem-

Marg. I'll pay my lord all debts due to his title :
And, when with terms not taking from his honour
He does solicit me, I shall gladly hear him ;
But, in this peremptory, nay, commanding way,
To fix a time and place, without my knowledge,
A priest to tie the knot can ne'er be undone
Till death unlose it, is a confidence
In his lordship will deceive him.

Allw. I hope better, good lady.
Marg. Hope, sir, what you please ; for me,
I must take a safe and secure course : I have
A father, and without his full consent,
Though all lords of the land kneel'd for my favour,
I can grant nothing.

Sir G. [Aside.] I like this obedience ;
But whatso'er my lord writes, must and shall be
Accepted and embrac'd. Sweet Master Allworth,
You shew yourself a true and faithful servant
To your good lord : he has a jewel of you.
How ! frowning, Meg ? Are these looks to receive
A messenger from my lord ? What's this ? give me it.

Marg. A piece of arrogant paper !
Sir G. [Reads.]

" Fair mistress, from your servant learn all joys
That we can hope for, if deferr'd, prove toys :
Therefore this instant, and in private, meet
A husband that will gladly at your feet
Lay down his honours, tendering them to you
With all content, the church being paid her due."
Is this the arrogant piece of paper ? fool !
Will you still be one ? I the name of madness, what
Could his good honour write more to content you ?
Is there aught else to be wish'd, after these two
That already offered ? Marriage first,
And lawful pleasure after :—What would you more ?

Marg. Why, sir, I would be married like your daughter,

Not hurried away i'the night I know not whither,
Without all ceremony; no friends invited,
To honour the solemnity.

Allw. An't please your honour,
For so before to-morrow I must style you,
My lord desires this privacy, in respect
His honourable kinsmen are far off,
And his desires to have it done, brook not
So long delay as to expect their coming;
And yet he stands resolv'd, with all due pomp,
To have his marriage at court celebrated,
When he has brought your honour up to London.

Sir G. He tells you true; 'tis the fashion on my knowledge.

Yet the good lord, to please your peevishness,
Must put it off, forsooth!

Marg. I could be contented,
Were you but by, to do a father's part,
And give me in the church.

Sir G. So my lord have you,
What do I care who gives you? Since my lord
Does purpose to be private, I'll not cross him.
I know not, Master Allworth, how my lord
May be provided, and therefore there's a purse
Of gold: 'twill serve this night's expense; to-morrow
I'll furnish him with any sums.

Use my ring to my chaplain; he is benefic'd
At my manor at Got'am, and call'd Parson Well-do:
'Tis no matter for a license; I'll bear him out in't.

Marg. With your favour, sir—what warrant is your ring?

He may suppose I got that twenty ways,
Without your knowledge; and then, to be refus'd
Were such a stain upon me!—If you pleas'd, sir,
Your presence would do better.

Sir G. Still perverse!

I say again I will not cross my lord:

Yet I'll prevent you too.—Paper and ink there.

Allw. Sir, 'tis ready here. [*Goes up to the table.*]

Sir G. I thank you.—I can write then to my chaplain. [*Sir GILES sits down and writes.*]

Allw. [*Sits.*] Sir, sir,—[*lord,*]
You may, if you please, leave out the name of my
In respect he would be private, and only write—
Marry her to this gentleman.

Sir G. Well advis'd—

'Tis done.—Away!—

[*Gives ALLWORTH the paper—both rise.*]

My blessing? Girl, thou hast it:
Nay, no reply.—Begone, good Master Allworth:—
This shall be the best night's work you ever made.

Allw. I hope so, sir.

[*Exit MARGARET and ALLWORTH.*]

Sir G. Now all's cock-sure.—

Methinks I hear already knights and ladies
Say, Sir Giles Overreach, how is it with
Your honourable daughter?—

My ends, my ends are compass'd!—Then, for Well-
And the lands—were he once married to the widow—
I have him here.—

[*Touching his forehead with his finger.*]

I can scarce contain myself,

I am so full of joy; nay, joy all over! [*Exit.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Hall in Lady Allworth's House.*
—*Table, four chairs, and screen.*—LOVELL and
Lady ALLWORTH discovered seated at the table.

Lady A. By this you know how strong the motives
That did, my lord, induce me to dispense [were,
A little with my gravity, to advance
The plots and projects of the down-trod Wellborn.

Lov. What you intended, madam,
For the poor gentleman, hath found good success;
For, as I understand, his debts are paid,
And he once more furnish'd for fair employment:
But all the arts that I have us'd, to raise
The fortunes of your joy and mine, young Allworth,
Stand yet in supposition: though I hope well;
For the young lovers are in wit more pregnant
Than their years can promise. [*Both rise.*]

Lady A. Though my wishes
Are with yours, my lord: yet give me leave to fear
The building, though well-grounded. To deceive
Sir Giles, that's both a lion and a fox
In his proceedings, were a work beyond
The strongest undertakers; not the trial
Of two weak innocents.

Lov. Despair not, madam:
Hard things are compass'd off by easy means.
The cunning statesman, that believes he fathoms
The counsels of all kingdoms on the earth,
Is by simplicity oft over-reach'd.

Lady A. May he be so!—
The young ones have my warmest wishes with them.

Lov. O gentle lady, prove as kind to me!
You've deign'd to hear, now grant my honest suit;
And, if you may be won to make me happy,
But join your hand to mine, and that shall be
A solemn contract.

Lady A. I were blind to my own good,
Should I refuse it; yet, my lord, receive me
As such a one, the study of whose whole life
Shall know no other object but to please you.

Lov. If I return not, with all tenderness,
Equal respect to you, may I die wretched!

Lady A. There needs no protestation, my lord,
To her that cannot doubt.

Enter WELLBORN.

You're welcome, sir:

Now you look like yourself. [*Crosses to WELLBORN.*]

Well. And will continue

Such, in my free acknowledgment that I am
Your creature, madam—and will never hold
My life mine own, when you please to command it.

Lov. It is a thankfulness that well becomes you.

Lady A. For me, I am happy,
That my endeavours prosper'd.—Saw you of late
Sir Giles, your uncle?

Well. I heard of him, madam, [*passions,*]
By his minister, Marrall. He's grown into strange
About his daughter: this last night, he look'd for
Your lordship at his home; but, missing you,
And Margaret not appearing, he is coming
To seek her here at Lady Allworth's house.
His wise head is much perplex'd and troubled.

Lov. I hope my project took.

Lady A. I strongly hope it. [*lump of nothing,*]
Sir G. [*Without.*] Ha! find my daughter, thou
I'll bore thine eyes out else.

Well. May it please your lordship,

[*Crosses to LOVELL.*]

For some ends of mine own, but to withdraw
A little out of sight, though not of hearing,
You may, perhaps, have sport.

Lov. You shall direct me. *[Exit LOVELL.]*

Sir G. [Without.] Idiot! booby! booby!

Mar. [Without.] O, O, O!

Sir G. [Without.] I shall sol-fa you, rogue!

Mar. [Without.] Sir, for what cause

Do you use me thus?

Enter Sir GILES, with distracted looks, driving in MARRALL before him.

Sir G. Cause, slave! Why, I am angry,
And thou a subject only fit for beating.
And so to cool my choler. Look to the writing:
Let but the seal be broke upon the box
That has slept in my cabinet these three years,
I'll rack thy soul for't.

Mar. [Aside.] I may yet cry quittance:
Though now I suffer, and dare not resist.

Sir G. Lady, by your leave: did you see my
daughter, lady?

And the lord her husband? Are they in your house?
If they are, discover, that I may bid 'em joy;
And as an entrance to her place of honour,
See you, on her left hand, bending down low,
When she nods on you; which you must receive
As a special favour.

Lady A. When I know, Sir Giles,
Her state requires such ceremony, I shall pay it;
But, in the meantime,
I give you to understand, I neither know
Nor care where her honour is.

Sir G. When you once see her
Led and supported by the lord her husband,
You'll be taught better *[Crosses to WELLBORN.]*—
Nephew—

Well. Well?

Sir G. No more!

Well. 'Tis all I owe you.

Sir G. Have your redeem'd rags
Made you thus insolent?

Well. Insolent to you!

Why, what are you, sir, pray, unless in years,
More than myself?

Sir G. His fortune swells him:—

'Tis rank,—he's married.

Sir, in calm language, though I seldom use it.

[Crosses to Lady ALLWORTH.]
I am familiar with the cause that makes you
Bear up thus bravely; there's a certain buzz
Of a stolen marriage,—do you hear?—of a stolen
marriage; *[cozen'd;]*
In which, 'tis said, there's somebody hath been
I name no parties.

Well. Well, sir, and what follows?

[Lady ALLWORTH turns away in astonishment.]

Sir G. Marry this, since you are so peremptory;
remember,

Upon mere hope of your great match, I lent you
Some certain monies; put me in good security,
And suddenly, by mortgage or by statute,
Of some of your new possessions, or I'll have you
Dragg'd in your lavender robes to the gaol; you
And therefore do not trifle. *[know me,*

Well. Can you be

So cruel to your nephew, now he's in
The way to rise? Was this the courtesy
You did me, in pure love, and no ends else?

Sir G. End me no ends! Engage the whole estate,
And force your spouse to sign it: you shall have
Three or four thousand more, to roar and swagger,
And revel in drunken taverns.

Well. And beg after—

Mean you not so?

Sir G. My thoughts are mine and free.

Shall I have security?

Well. No, indeed, you shall not:

Nor bond, nor bill, nor bare acknowledgment.—

Your great looks fright not me.

Sir G. But my deeds shall.— *[They both draw.]*

Lady A. Help! murder! murder!

Enter AMBLE, WATCHALL, ORDER, and two Servants with drawn swords.

Well. Let him come on,
Arm'd with his cut-throat practices to guard him,
With all his wrongs and injuries about him,
The right that I bring with me will defend me,
And punish his extortion.

Sir G. That I had thee

But single in the field!

Lady A. You may; but make not

My house your quarrelling scene.

Sir G. Were't in a church,

By heaven and hell I'll do't.

[Lady ALLWORTH turns away.]

Mar. [To WELLBORN.] Now, put him to
The showing of the deed.

Well. This rage is vain, sir;
For fighting, fear not, you shall have your hands full
Upon the least incitement;—and—whereas
You charge me with a debt of monies to you—
If there be law, howe'er you have no conscience,
Either restore my land, or I'll recover
A debt, that's truly due to me from you,
In value ten times more than what you challenge.

Sir G. I in thy debt; O, impudence! did I not
purchase

The land left by thy father, that rich land
That had continued in Wellborn's name,

Enter two of Sir GILES's Servants with a box.

Twenty descents, which, like a riotous fool,
Thou did'st make sale of?—O, you're come at last.—
Is not here inclos'd *[To Servants.]*
The deed that does confirm it mine?

Mar. Now, now,— *[Lady ALLWORTH advances.]*

Well. I do acknowledge none; I ne'er pass'd o'er
Any such land; I grant, for a year or two,
You had it in trust; which if you do discharge,
Surrendering the possession, you shall ease
Yourself and me of chargeable suits in law;
Which if you prove not honest, as I doubt it,
Must of necessity follow.

Lady A. In my judgment,

He does advise you well.

Sir G. Good, good; Conspire

With your new husband, lady; second him

In his dishonest practices: but, when

This manor is extended to my use,

You'll speak in an humbler key, and sue for favour.

Lady A. Never: do not hope it.

Well. Let despair first seize me. *[give]*

Sir G. Yet, to shut up thy mouth, and make thee

Thyself the lie, the loud lie, I draw out

The precious evidence; if thou canst forswear

Thy hand and seal, and make a forfeit of

Thy ears to the pillory—

[Two Servants place the box on the table, Sir GILES unlocks it, and takes out the deed.]

See!—here's that will make

My interest clear.—Ha!

Lady A. [Looking over his shoulder.] A fair skin
of parchment!

Well. Indented, I confess, and labels too:

But neither wax, nor words.—How? thunder-struck!

Is this your precious evidence? this, that makes Your interest clear!

Sir G. I am overwhelmed with wonder!

What prodigy is this? what subtle devil Hath raz'd out the inscription? the wax Turn'd into dust!—

Do you deal with witches, rascal?

There is a statute for you, which will bring Your neck in a hempen circle; yes, there is;— And, now 'tis better thought, for, cheater, know, This juggling shall not save you.

Well. To save thee

Would beggar the stock of mercy.

[Retires with Lady ALLWORTH up the stage.]

Sir G. Marrall—Marrall—

Mar. Sir?

[mony,

Sir G. Though the witnesses are dead, your testi- Help'd with an oath or two; and for thy master, Thy liberal master, my good honest servant, I know thou wilt swear any thing, to dash This cunning sleight;

The deed being drawn too

By thee, my careful Marrall, and deliver'd

When thou wast present, will make good my title:— Wilt thou not swear this?

Mar. I!—No, I assure you: [Breaks from him.]

I have a conscience, not sear'd up like yours;

I know no deeds.

Sir G. Wilt thou betray me? [Drawing his sword.]

Mar. Keep him [WELLBORN opposes him.]

From using of his hands, I'll use my tongue

To his no little torment

Sir G. Mine own varlet

Rebel against me!

Mar. Yes, and uncase you too:

The idiot, the patch, the slave, the booby,

Your drudge can now anatomize you, and lay open

All your black plots, and level with the earth

Your hill of pride; and shake,

Nay pulverize, the walls you think defend you.

Sir G. O, that I had thee in my gripe, I'd tear thee

Joint after joint.

Mar. I know you are a tearer;

But I'll have first your fangs par'd off, and then Come nearer to you;—[Sir GILES retreats.] when

I have discover'd,

And made it good before the judge, what ways

And devilish practices, you us'd to cozen with.

Well. All will come out.

Sir G. [Advancing.] But that I will live, rogue, to torture thee,

And make thee wish, and kneel, in vain, to die;

These swords that keep thee from me, should fix

here,

Although they made my body but one wound,

But I would reach thee. I play the fool,

And make my anger but ridiculous:

There will be a time and place, there will be, coward, When you shall feel what I dare do.

Well. I think so:

You dare do any ill; yet want true valour,

To be honest, and repent.

Sir G. They're words I know not,

Nor e'er will learn. Patience, the beggars' virtue,

Shall find no harbour here.

Enter two of Sir GILES' Servants.

Lady A. Whom have we here?

Sir G. After these storms,

At length a calm appears.—My chaplain comes.—

ACT. DRAMA.—NO. XXXVII.

Enter Parson WELLD, with a letter in his hand.

Welcome, most welcome!

There's comfort in thy looks!—Is the deed done?

Is my daughter married? Say but so, my chaplain,

And I am tame.

Welldo. Married? Yes, I assure you.

Sir G. Then vanish all sad thoughts!

My doubts and fears are in the titles drown'd

Of my honourable, my right honourable daughter.

Now, you that plot against me,

And hoped to trip my heels up, that condemn'd me.

Think on't and tremble.

[Music.]

Enter LOVELL behind.

They come!—I hear the music.—

A lane there for my lord.

Well. This sudden heat

May yet be cool'd, sir.

Sir G. Make way there for my lady and my lord.

[Music.]

Enter two of Sir GILES' Servants, MARGARET and ALLWORTH.

Mar. [Kneels.] Sir, first your pardon, then your blessing, with

Your full allowance of the choice I've made.—

Not to dwell

Too long on words—this is my husband.

Sir G. How!

Allw. So, I assure you: all the rites of marriage,

With every circumstance, are past;

And for right honourable son-in-law, you may say,

Your dutiful daughter.

Sir G. [Advancing hastily upon WELLD.]

Devil!—Are they married? [em joy!]

Well. Do a father's part, and say, Heaven give

Sir G. Confusion and ruin! Speak, and speak quickly,

Or thou art dead.

[Seizes WELLD.]

Welldo. They're married.

Sir G. Thou hadst better

Have made a contract with the king of fiends,

Than these.—My brain turns!

Welldo. Why this rage to me?—

Is not this your letter, sir? and these the words—

"Marry her to this gentleman."

Sir G. It cannot:

Nor will I e'er believe it, 'sdeath! I will not,

That I, who never left a print

Where I have trod, for the most curious search

To trace my footsteps, should be gull'd by children!

Baffled and fool'd, and all my hopes and labours

Defeated and made void.

Well. As it appears,

You are so, my grave uncele.

Sir G. Village nurses

Revenge their wrongs with curses; I'll not waste

A syllable; but thus I take the life

Which, wretched, I gave to thee.

[Advances to kill MARGARET.]

Lov. [Stopping him.] Hold, for your own sake!

If charity to your daughter have quite left you,

Will you do an act, though in your hopes lost here,

Can leave no hope for peace or rest hereafter?

Consider, at the best, you're but a man;

And cannot so create your aims, but that

They may be cross'd.

Sir G. Lord! thus I spit at thee,

And at thy counsel; and again desire thee—

And as thou art a soldier—if thy valour

Dares shew itself where multitude and example

Lead not the way, let's quit the house, and change

Six words in private.

Lov. I am ready.

Lady A. Stay, sir :

Contest with one distracted ?

Well. You'll grow like him

Should you answer his vain challenge.

Sir G. Are you pale ?

Borrow their helps ; though Hercules call it odds,

I'll stand 'gainst all, as I am, hemm'd in thus.—

Say, there were a squadron

Of pikes, lin'd through with shot, when I am mounted

Upon my injuries, shall I fear to charge 'em ?

No ; I'll through the battalia, and, that routed,

I'll fall to execution. [*Attempts to draw his sword.*

Ha ! I'm feeble :

Some undone widow sits upon mine arm,

And takes away the use of 't ; and my sword,

Glued to my scabbard with wrong'd orphans' tears,
Will not be drawn.— [men

Ha ! what are these ? [*Staggers back.*] Sure, hang-

That come to bind my hands, and then to drag me

Before the judgment-seat.—Now, they are new
shapes,

And do appear like Furies, with steel whips

To scourge my ulcerous soul. Shall I then fall

Ingloriously, and yield ?—No ; spite of fate,

I will be forc'd to hell, like to myself.

Though you were legions of accursed spirits,

Thus would I fly among you.— [*He rushes madly to-
wards his daughter, and falls exhausted, two
servants raise him up—he somewhat recovers,
looks wildly round, then fixing his eyes upon
his daughter, drops his head upon his bosom, and
is borne off by the two servants.*]

Mar. Was it not a rare trick,

And please your worship, to make the deed nothing ?

Well. What arts didst use to raze out the convey-
ance ?

Mar. Certain minerals,

Incorporated in the ink and wax.

Besides he gave me nothing ; but still fed me

With hopes and blows.

If it please your worship

To call to memory, this mad beast once caus'd me

To urge you or to hang, or drown yourself :

I'll do the like to him, if you command me.

Well. You are a rascal ; and he that dares be false
To a master, though unjust, will very hardly
Be true to any other. Begone,

And look not for

Reward or favour from me, till thou'st learn'd

To mend thy wicked life. [*Exit MARRALL.*

ALLWORTH and MARGARET advance.

Marg. O, my poor father ! your piety,

Allw. Nay, weep not, dearest ; though it shows
What is decreed by heaven, we cannot alter. [us

Lov. And heaven here gives a precedent to teach

That, when men leave religion, and turn atheists,

Their own abilities leave them.—Pray you take
comfort ;— [To MARGARET.

I will endeavour—you shall be his guardians

In his distractions ;—and for your land, Wellborn,

I'll be an umpire

Between you and this the undoubted heir

Of Sir Giles Overreach :—for me, here's the anchor

That I must fix on. [To Lady ALLWORTH.

All. What you shall determine,

My lord, we will allow of.

Well. 'Tis the language

That I speak too ; but there is something else,

Beside the re-possession of my land,

And payment of my debts, that I must practice :

I had a reputation, but 'twas lost

In my loose course ; and until I redeem it

Some noble way, I am but half made up.

It is a time of action ; if your lordship

Will please to confer a company upon me

In your command, I doubt not, in my service

To my king and country, but I shall do something

That may make me right again.

Lov. Your suit is granted,

And you lov'd for the motion.

Well. Nothing then [To the Audience.

Now wants but your allowance ; and in that

Our all is comprehended : which if you

Grant willingly, as a fair favour due

To the poet's, and our labours, as you may ;

For we despair not, gentlemen, of the play :

You may expect, the grace you show to-night,

Will teach us how to act, our poets how to write.

THE STRANGER.

A DRAMA, IN FIVE ACTS,

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF KOTZEBUE.

BY BENJAMIN THOMPSON.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

THE STRANGER.
COUNT WINTERSEN.
BARON STEINFORT.
MR. SOLOMON.
PETER.
TOBIAS.
FRANCIS.
GEORGE.
COUNT'S SON (*five years old.*)
STRANGER'S SON (*five years old.*)

MRS. HALLER.
COUNTESS WINTERSEN.
CHARLOTTE.
ANNETTE.
CLAUDINE.
SUSAN.
STRANGER'S DAUGHTER (*four years old.*)

Tenants, Servants, Dancers, &c.

SCENE,—Germany.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Skirts of Count Wintensen's Park.*
—*The park gates in the centre; on one side a low lodge among the trees, a peasant's hut on the other.*

Enter PETER.

Pet. Pooh! pooh!—never tell me.—I'm a clever lad, for all father's crying out every minute, "Peter," and "stupid Peter!" But I say, Peter is not stupid, though father will always be so wise. First, I talk too much; then I talk too little; and if I talk a bit to myself, he calls me a driveller. Now I like best to talk to myself; for I never contradict myself, and I don't laugh at myself as other folks do. That laughing is often a plaguy teasing custom. To be sure, when Mrs. Haller laughs, one can bear it well enough; there is a sweetness even in her reproof, that somehow—But, lud! I had near forgot what I was sent about.—Yes, then they would have laughed at me indeed.—*[Draws a green purse from his pocket.]*—I am to carry this money to old Tobias; and Mrs. Haller said I must be sure not to blab, or say that she had sent it. Well, well, she

may be easy for that matter; not a word shall drop from my lips. Mrs. Haller is charming, but silly, if father is right; for father says, "He that spends his money, is not wise," but "he that gives it away, is stark mad."

[Going up to the hut.]

Enter the STRANGER from the Lodge, followed by FRANCIS.—*At sight of PETER, the STRANGER stops, and looks suspiciously at him. PETER stands opposite to him, with his mouth wide open. At length he takes off his hat, scrapes a bow, and goes into the hut.*

Stra. Who is that?

Fra. The steward's son.

Stra. Of the castle?

Fra. Yes.

Stra. *[After a pause.]* You were—you were speaking last night—

Fra. Of the old countryman?

Stra. Ay.

Fra. You would not hear me out.

Stra. Proceed.

Fra. He is poor.

Stra. Who told you so?

Fra. Himself.

Stra. Ay, ay; he knows how to tell his story, no doubt.

Fra. And to impose, you think?

Stra. Right!

Fra. This man does not.

Stra. Fool!

Fra. A feeling fool is better than a cold sceptic.

Stra. False!

Fra. Charity begets gratitude.

Stra. False!

Fra. And blesses the giver more than the receiver.

Stra. True.

Fra. Well, sir. This countryman—

Stra. Has he complained to you?

Fra. Yes.

Stra. He who is really unhappy never complains. *[Pauses.]* Francis, you have had means of education beyond your lot in life, and hence you are encouraged to attempt imposing on me:—but go on.

Fra. His only son has been taken from him.

Stra. Taken from him?

Fra. By the exigency of the times, for a soldier.

Stra. Ay.

Fra. The old man is poor.

Stra. 'Tis likely.

Fra. Sick and forsaken.

Stra. I cannot help him.

Fra. Yes.

Stra. How?

Fra. By money. He may buy his son's release.

Stra. I'll see him myself.

Fra. Do so.

Stra. But if he is an impostor?—

Fra. He is not.

Stra. In that hut?

Fra. In that hut. [*STRANGER goes into the hut.*]

A good master, though one almost loses the use of speech by living with him. A man kind and clear—though I cannot understand him. He rails against the whole world, and yet no beggar leaves his door unsatisfied. I have now lived three years with him, and yet I know not who he is. A hater of society, no doubt; but not by Providence intended to be so. Misanthropy in his head, not in his heart.

Enter PETER and the STRANGER from the hut.

Pet. Pray walk on.

Stra. [*To FRANCIS.*] Fool!

Fra. So soon returned!

Stra. What should I do there?

Fra. Did you find it as I said?

Stra. This lad I found.

Fra. What has he to do with your charity?

Stra. The old man and he understand each other perfectly well.

Fra. How?

Stra. What were this boy and the countryman doing?

Fra. [*Smiling, and shaking his head.*] Well, you shall hear. [*To PETER.*] Young man, what were you doing in that hut?

Pet. Doing!—Nothing.

Fra. Well, but you could not go there for nothing?

Pet. And why not, pray?—But I did go there for nothing, though.—Do you think one must be paid for every thing?—If Mrs. Haller were to give me but a smiling look, I'd jump up to my neck in the great pond for nothing.

Fra. It seems then Mrs. Haller sent you?

Pet. Yes she did—But I'm not to mention it to any body.

Fra. Why so?

Pet. How should I know? “Look you,” says Mrs. Haller, “Master Peter, be so good as not to mention it to any body.” [*With consequence.*] “Master Peter, be so good!”—Hi! hi! hi!—“Master Peter, be so!”—Hi! hi! hi!—

Fra. Oh! that is quite a different thing. Of course you must be silent then.

Pet. I know that; and so I am too. For I said to old Tobias—says I, “Now, you're not to think as how Mrs. Haller sent this money; for she told me not to say a word about that as long as I live,” says I.

Fra. There you were very right. Did you carry him much money?

Pet. I don't know; I did not count it. It was in a bit of a green purse. Mayhap it may be some little matter that she has scraped together in the last fortnight.

Fra. And why just in the last fortnight?

Pet. Because, about a fortnight since, I carried him some money before.

Fra. From Mrs. Haller?

Pet. Ay, sure; who else, think you? Father's not such a fool. He says it is our bounden duty, as Christians, to take care of our money, and not give any thing away, especially in summer; for then, says he, there's herbs and roots enough in con-

science to satisfy all the reasonable hungry poor. But I say, father's wrong, and Mrs. Haller right.

Fra. Yes, yes.—But this Mrs. Haller seems a strange woman, Peter?

Pet. Ay, at times she is plaguily odd. Why she'll sit and cry you a whole day through, without any one knowing why, or wherefore. And, somehow or other, whenever she cries I always cry too—without knowing why, or wherefore.

Fra. [*To the Stranger.*] Are you satisfied?

Stra. Rid me of that babbler.

Fra. Good day, Master Peter.

Pet. You're not going yet, are you?

Fra. Mrs. Haller will be waiting for an answer.

Pet. So she will. And I have another place or two to call at. [*Takes off his hat to the Stranger.*]

Servant, sir!

Stra. Pshaw!

Pet. Pshaw! What—he's angry? [*Peter turns to Francis in a half whisper.*] He's angry, I suppose because he can get nothing out of me.

Fra. It almost seems so.

Pet. Ay, I'd have him to know I'm no blab. [*Exit.*]

Fra. Now, sir?

Stra. What do you want?

Fra. Were you not wrong, sir?

Stra. Hem! Wrong!

Fra. Can you still doubt?

Stra. I'll hear no more! Who is this Mrs. Haller? Why do I always follow her path? Go where I will, whenever I try to do good, she has always been before me.

Fra. You should rejoice at that.

Stra. Rejoice!

Fra. Surely! That there are other good and charitable people in the world beside yourself.

Stra. Oh, yes

Fra. Why not seek to be acquainted with her? I saw her yesterday in the garden up at the Castle. Mr. Solomon, the steward, says she has been unwell, and confined to her room almost ever since we have been here. But one would not think it, to look at her; for a more beautiful creature I never saw.

Stra. So much the worse. Beauty is a mask.

Fra. In her it seems a mirror of the soul. Her charities—

Stra. Talk not to me of her charities. All women wish to be conspicuous:—in town by their wit; in the country by their heart.

Fra. 'Tis immaterial in what way good is done.

Stra. No; 'tis not immaterial.

Fra. To this poor old man, at least.

Stra. He needs no assistance of mine.

Fra. His most urgent wants, indeed, Mrs. Haller may have relieved; but whether she has or could have given as much as would purchase liberty for the son, the prop of his age—

Stra. Silence! I will not give him a do! You interest yourself very warmly in his behalf. Perhaps you are to be a sharer in the gift.

Fra. Sir, sir, that did not come from your heart.

Stra. [*Recollecting himself.*] Forgive me!

Fra. My poor master! How must the world have used you before it could have instilled this hatred of mankind, this constant doubt of honesty and virtue!

Stra. Leave me to myself!

[*Throws himself on a seat; takes from his pocket a “Zimmerman on Solitude,” and reads.*]

Fra. [*Aside, surveying him.*] Again reading! Thus it is from morn to night. To him nature has no beauty; life no charm. For three years I have never seen him smile. [*Tobias enters from the hut.*]

What will be his fate at last? Nothing diverts him. Oh, if he would but attach himself to any living thing! Were it but an animal—for something man must love.

TOBIAS advances.

Tob. Oh! how refreshing, after seven long weeks, to feel these warm sun-beams once again! Thanks! thanks! bounteous Heaven, for the joy I taste.

[Presses his cap between his hands, looks up and prays—The Stranger observes him attentively.]

Fra. *[To the Stranger.]* This old man's share of earthly happiness can be but little; yet mark how grateful he is for his portion of it.

Stra. Because, though old, he is but a child in the leading strings of Hope.

Fra. Hope is the nurse of life.

Stra. And her cradle is the grave.

[Tobias replaces his cap.—Francis crosses behind.]

Fra. I wish you joy. I am glad to see you are so much recovered.

Tob. Thank you. Heaven, and the assistance of a kind lady, have saved me for another year or two.

Fra. How old are you, pray?

Tob. Fourscore and four. To be sure, I can expect but little joy before I die. Yet, there is another and a better world.

Fra. To the unfortunate, then, death is scarce an evil?

Tob. And am I so unfortunate? Do I not enjoy this glorious morning! Am I not in health again? Believe me, sir, he, who, leaving the bed of sickness, for the first time breathes the fresh pure air, is, at that moment, the happiest of his Maker's creatures.

Fra. Yet 'tis a happiness that fails upon enjoyment.

Tob. True; but less so in old age. Some sixty years ago, my father left me this cottage. I was a strong lad; and took an honest wife. Heaven blessed my farm with rich crops, and my marriage with five children. This lasted nine or ten years. Two of my children died. I felt it sorely. The land was afflicted with a famine. My wife assisted me in supporting our family: but four years after she left our dwelling for a better place. And of my five children only one son remained. This was blow upon blow. It was long before I regained my fortitude. At length, resignation and religion had their effect. I again attached myself to life. My son grew, and helped me in my work. Now the State has called him away to bear a musket. This is to me a loss indeed. I can work no more. I am old and weak; and true it is, but for Mrs. Haller, I must have perished.

Fra. Still, then, life has its charms for you?

Tob. Why not, while the world holds any thing that's dear to me? Have not I a son?

Fra. Who knows that you will ever see him more? He may be dead.

Tob. Alas! he may. But as long as I am not sure of it, he lives to me: and, if he falls, 'tis in his country's cause. Nay, should I lose him, still I should not wish to die. Here is the hut in which I was born. Here is the tree that grew with me; and, I am almost ashamed to confess it—I have a dog which I love. *[Stranger rises and advances.]*

Fra. A dog!

Tob. Yes!—Smile, if you please: but hear me. My benefactress once came to my hut herself, some time before you fixed here. The poor animal, unused to see the form of elegance and beauty enter the door of penury, growled at her.—“I wonder you keep that surly, ugly animal, Mr. Tobias,” said

she; “you, who have hardly food enough for yourself.”—“Ah, madam,” I replied, “and if I part with him, are you sure that any thing else will love me?”—She was pleased with my answer.

Fra. *[To STRANGER.]* Excuse me, sir; but I wish you had listened.

Stra. I have listened.

Fra. Then sir, I wish you would follow this poor old man's example.

Stra. Here; take this book, and lay it on my desk. *[FRANCIS goes into the lodge with a book.]* How much has this Mrs. Haller given you?

Tob. Oh, sir, she has given me so much that I can look towards winter without fear.

Stra. No more?

Tob. What could I do with more?—Ah! true; I might—

Stra. I know it.—You might buy your son's release.—There!

[Presses a purse into his hand, and exit.]

Tob. What is all this? *[Opens the purse.]* Merciful heaven!

Enter FRANCIS from the lodge, just in time to see the STRANGER give the purse.

—Now look, sir; is confidence in heaven unrewarded?

Fra. I wish you joy! My master gave you this?

Tob. Yes, your noble master. Heaven reward him!

Fra. Just like him. He sent me with his book, that no one might be witness to his bounty.

Tob. He would not even take my thanks. He was gone before I could speak.

Fra. Just his way.

Tob. Now I'll go as quick as these old legs will bear me. What a delightful errand! I go to release my Robert! How the lad will rejoice! There is a girl, too, in the village that will rejoice with him. O, Providence, how good art thou! *[Exit.]*

SCENE II.—An Anti-chamber in Wintersen Castle.

Enter SUSAN, meeting GEORGE.

Susan. Why, George! Harry! Where have you been loitering? Put down these things. Mrs. Haller has been calling for you this half hour.

Geo. Well, here I am, then. What does she want with me?

Susan. That she will tell you herself. Here she comes.

Enter Mrs. HALLER, with a letter, HANNAH following.

Mrs. H. Very well; if those things are done, let the drawing-room be made ready immediately. *[Ereunt Maids.]* And, George, run immediately into the park, and tell Mr. Solomon I wish to speak with him. *[Exit GEORGE.]* I cannot understand this. I do not learn whether their coming to this place be but the whim of a moment, or a plan for a longer stay! If the latter, farewell, solitude! Farewell, study!—farewell!—Yes, I must make room for gaiety and mere frivolity. Yet could I willingly submit to all: but should the Countess give me new proofs of her attachment, perhaps of her respect, Oh! how will my conscience upbraid me! Or if this seat be visited by company, and chance should conduct hither any of my former acquaintance.—Alas! alas! how wretched is the being who fears the sight of any one fellow creature! But, Oh! superior misery! to dread still more the pre-

sence of a former friend!—[*PETER knocks.*] Who's there?

Enter PETER.

Pet. Nobody. It's only me.

Mrs. H. So soon returned?

Pet. Sharp lad, an't I? On the road I've had a bit of talk too, and—

Mrs. H. But you have observed my directions?

Pet. Oh, yes, yes!—I told old Tobias as how he would never know, as long as he lived, that the money came from you.

Mrs. H. You found him quite recovered, I hope?

Pet. Ay, sure, did I. He's coming out to-day, for the first time.

Mrs. H. I rejoice to hear it.

Pet. He said that he was obliged to you for all; and before dinner would crawl up to thank you.

Mrs. H. Good Peter, do me another service.

Pet. Ay, a hundred, if you'll only let me have a good long stare at you.

Mrs. H. With all my heart! Observe when old Tobias comes, send him away. Tell him I am busy, or asleep, or unwell, or what you please.

Pet. I will, I will.

Sol. [*Without.*] There, there, go to the post-office.

Mrs. H. Oh! here comes Mr. Solomon.

Pet. What! father?—Ay, so there is. Father's a main clever man: he knows what's going on all over the world.

Mrs. H. No wonder; for you know he receives as many letters as a prime minister and all his secretaries.

Enter SOLOMON.

Sol. Good morning, good morning to you, Mrs. Haller. It gives me infinite pleasure to see you look so charmingly well. You have had the goodness to send for your humble servant. Any news from the Great City? There are very weighty matters in agitation. I have my letters too.

Mrs. H. [*Smiling.*] I think, Mr. Solomon, you must correspond with the four quarters of the globe.

Sol. Beg pardon, not with the whole world, Mrs. Haller; but, [*consequently.*] to be sure, I have correspondents, on whom I can rely, in the chief cities of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America.

Mrs. H. And yet I have my doubts whether you know what is to happen this very day, at this very place.

Sol. At this very place! Nothing material. We meant to have sown a little barley to-day, but the ground is too dry: and the sheep-shearing is not to be till to-morrow.

Pet. No nor the bull-baiting till—

Sol. Hold your tongue, blockhead! Get about your business.

Pet. Blockhead! There again! I suppose I'm not to open my mouth. [*To Mrs. Haller.*] Good bye! [*Exit.*]

Mrs. H. The Count will be here to-day.

Sol. How! What.

Mrs. H. With his lady, and his brother-in-law, Baron Steinfort.

Sol. My letters say nothing of this. You are laughing at your humble servant.

Mrs. H. You know, sir, I'm not much given to jesting.

Sol. Peter!—Good lack-a-day!—His Right Honourable Excellency the Count Wintersen, and her Honourable Excellency the Countess Wintersen, and his Honourable Lordship Baron Steinfort.—And, Lord have mercy! Nothing in proper order!—Here, Peter! Peter!

Enter PETER.

Pet. Well, now; what's the matter again?

Sol. Call all the house together directly! Send to the gamekeeper; tell him to bring some venison. Tell Rebecca to uncass the furniture, and take the covering from the Venetian looking-glasses, that her Right Honourable Ladyship may look at her gracious countenance; and tell the cook to let me see him without loss of time: and tell John to catch a brace or two of carp. And tell—and tell—and tell—tell Frederick to friz my Sunday wig. Mercy on us—tell—There—Go! [*Exit PETER.*] Heavens and earth! So little of the new furnishing of this old castle is completed!—Where are we to put his Honourable Lordship the Baron?

Mrs. H. Let him have the little chamber at the head of the stairs; it is a neat room, and commands a beautiful prospect.

Sol. Very right, very right. But that room has always been occupied by the Count's private secretary. Suppose!—Hold, I have it. You know the little lodge at the end of the park: we can thrust the secretary into that.

Mrs. H. You forget, Mr. Solomon; you told me that the stranger lived there.

Sol. Pshaw! What have we to do with the stranger?—Who told him to live there?—He must turn out.

Mrs. H. That would be unjust; for you said that you let the dwelling to him, and by your own account he pays well for it.

Sol. He does, he does. But nobody knows who he is. The devil himself can't make him out. To be sure, I lately received a letter from Spain, which informed me that a spy had taken up his abode in this country, and from the description—

Mrs. H. A spy! Ridiculous! Every thing I have heard bespeaks him to be a man who may be allowed to dwell any where. His life is solitude and silence.

Sol. So it is.

Mrs. H. You tell me, too, he does much good.

Sol. That he does.

Mrs. H. He hurts nothing; not the worm in his way.

Sol. That he does not.

Mrs. H. He troubles no one.

Sol. True! true!

Mrs. H. Well, what do you want more?

Sol. I want to know who he is. If the man would only converse a little, one might have an opportunity of pumping; but if one meets him in the lime-walk, or by the river, it is nothing but—"Good morrow; and off he marches. Once or twice I have contrived to edge in a word—"Fine day."—"Yes."—"Taking a little exercise, I perceive."—"Yes; and off again like a shot. The devil take such close fellows, say I. And, like master like man; not a syllable do I know of that mumps, his servant, except that his name is Francis.

Mrs. H. You are putting yourself into a passion, and quite forget who are expected.

Sol. So I do—Mercy on us!—There now, you see what misfortunes arise from not knowing people.

Mrs. H. 'Tis near twelve o'clock! If his lordship has stolen an hour from his usual sleep, the family must soon be here. I go to my duty; you will attend to yours, Mr. Solomon. [*Exit.*]

Sol. Yes, I'll look after my duty, never fear. There goes another of the same class. Nobody knows who she is, again. However, thus much I do know of her, that her Right Honourable Lady-

ship the Countess, all at once, popped her into the house, like a blot of ink upon a sheet of paper. But why, wherefore, or for what reason, not a soul can tell.—“She is to manage the family within doors.” She to manage! Fire and faggots! Hav’n’t I managed every thing within and without, most reputably, these twenty years? I must own I grow a little old, and she does take a deal of pains: but all this she learned of me. When she first came here—Mercy on us! she didn’t know that linen was made of flax. But what was to be expected from one who has no foreign correspondence? [Exit.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Drawing-room in the Castle, with sofa and chairs.—Rural music heard without.

Enter SOLOMON.

Pet. [Without.] Stop; not yet, not yet; but make way there, make way, my good friends, tenants, and villagers.—John, George, Frederick! Good friends, make way.

Sol. It is not the Count: it’s only Baron Steinfort. Stand back, I say; and stop the music!

Enter BARON STEINFORT, ushered in by PETER, who mimicks and apes his father.

I have the honour to introduce to your lordship myself, Mr. Solomon, who blesses the hour in which fortune allows him to become acquainted with the the Honourable Baron Steinfort, [BARON passes SOLOMON and throws himself on the sofa,] brother-in-law of his Right Honourable Excellency Count Wintersen, my noble master.

Pet. Bless our noble master!

Bar. Old and young, I see they’ll allow me no peace. [Aside.] Enough, enough, good Mr. Solomon, I am a soldier. I pay but few compliments, and require as few from others.

Sol. I beg pardon, my lord.—We do live in the country to be sure, but we are acquainted with the reverence due to exalted personages.

[Sitting beside the BARON.]

Pet. Yes.—We are acquainted with exalted personages.

Bar. What is to become of me?—Well, well, I hope we shall be better acquainted. You must know, Mr. Solomon, I intend to assist, for a couple of months at least, in attacking the well-stocked cellars of Wintersen.

Sol. Why not whole years, my lord?—Inexpressible would be the satisfaction of your humble servant. And, though I say it, well stocked indeed are our cellars. I have, in every respect, here managed matters in so frugal and provident a way, that his Right Honourable Excellency the Count will be astonished. [BARON yawns.] Extremely sorry it is not in my power to entertain your lordship.

Pet. Extremely sorry.

Sol. Where can Mrs. Haller have hid herself?

Bar. Mrs. Haller! Who is she?

Sol. Why, who she is, I can’t exactly tell your lordship.

Pet. No, nor I.

Sol. None of my correspondents give any account of her. She is here in the capacity of a kind of a superior housekeeper. Methinks I hear her silver

voice upon the stairs. I will have the honour of sending her to your lordship in an instant.

Bar. Oh! don’t trouble yourself.

Sol. No trouble whatever! I remain, at all times, your honourable lordship’s most obedient, humble, and devoted servant.

[Exit, bowing.]

Pet. Devoted servant.

Bar. Now for a fresh plague. Now am I to be tormented by some chattering old ugly hag, till I am stunned with her noise and officious hospitality. Oh, patience! what a virtue art thou!

Enter Mrs. HALLER, with a courtesy; Baron rises, and returns a bow, in confusion.

[Aside.] No, old she is not. [Casts another glance at her.] No, by Jove, nor ugly.

Mrs. H. I rejoice, my lord, in thus becoming acquainted with the brother of my benefactress.

Bar. Madam, that title shall be doubly valuable to me, since it gives me an introduction equally to be rejoiced at.

Mrs. H. [Without attending to the compliment.] This lovely weather, then, has enticed the Count from the city.

Bar. Not exactly that. You know him. Sunshine or clouds are to him alike, as long as eternal summer reigns in his own heart and family.

Mrs. H. The Count possesses a most cheerful and amiable philosophy. Ever in the same happy humour; ever enjoying each minute of his life. But you must confess, my lord, that he is a favourite child of fortune, and has much to be grateful to her for. Not merely because she has given him birth and riches, but for a native sweetness of temper, never to be acquired; and a graceful suavity of manners, whose school must be the mind. And, need I enumerate among fortune’s favours, the hand and affections of your accomplished sister?

Bar. [More admiringly.] True, madam. My good easy brother, too, seems fully sensible of his happiness, and is resolved to retain it. He has quitted the service to live here. I am yet afraid he may soon grow weary of Wintersen and retirement.

Mrs. H. I should trust not. They, who bear a cheerful and unrepining conscience into solitude, surely must increase the measure of their own enjoyments. They quit the poor, precarious, the dependent pleasures, which they borrowed from the world, to draw a real bliss from that exhaustless source of true delight, the fountain of a pure unsullied heart.

Bar. Has retirement long possessed so lovely an advocate?

Mrs. H. I have lived here three years.

Bar. And never felt a secret wish for the society you left, and must have adorned?

Mrs. H. Never.

Bar. To feel thus belongs either to a very rough or a very polished soul. The first sight convinced me in which class I am to place you.

Mrs. H. [With a sigh.] There may, perhaps, be a third class.

Bar. Indeed, madam, I wish not to be thought forward; but women always seemed to me less calculated for retirement than men. We have a thousand employments, a thousand amusements, which you have not.

Mrs. H. Dare I ask what they are?

Bar. We ride—we hunt—we play—we read—we write—

Mrs. H. The noble employments of the chase, and the still more noble employment of play, I grant you.

Bar. Nay, but dare I ask what are your employments for a day?

Mrs. H. Oh, my lord! you cannot imagine how quickly time passes when a certain uniformity guides the minutes of our life. How often do I ask, "Is Saturday come again so soon?" On a bright cheerful morning my books and breakfast are carried out upon the grass plot. Then is the sweet picture of reviving industry, and eager innocence, always new to me. The birds' notes so often heard, still waken new ideas: the herds are led into the fields; the peasant bends his eye upon his plough. Every thing lives and moves; and in every creature's mind it seems as it were morning. Towards evening I begin to roam abroad, from the park into the meadows. And sometimes, returning, I pause to look at the village boys and girls as they play. Then do I bless their innocence, and pray to Heaven those laughing thoughtless hours could be their lot for ever.

Bar. This is excellent!—But these are summer amusements. The winter! the winter!

Mrs. H. Why for ever picture winter like old age, torpid, tedious, and uncheerful? Winter has its own delights: this is the time to instruct and mend the mind by reading and reflection. At this season, too, I often take my harp, and amuse myself by playing or singing the little favourite airs that remind me of the past, or solicit hope for the future.

Bar. Happy indeed are they, who can thus create and vary their own pleasures and employments.

Enter PETER.

Pet. Well—well—Pray now—I was ordered—I can keep him out no longer—'Tis old Tobias: he will come in.

Enter TOBIAS, forcing his way; Exit PETER.

Tob. I must, good Heaven, I must!

Mrs. H. [*Confused.*] I have no time at present—I—I—You see I am not alone.

Tob. Oh! this good gentleman will forgive me.

Bar. What do you want?

Tob. To return thanks. Even charity is a burden if one may not be grateful for it.

Mrs. H. To-morrow, good Tobias; to-morrow.

Bar. Nay, no false delicacy, madam. Allow him to vent the feelings of his heart; and permit me to witness a scene which convinces me, even more powerfully than your conversation, how nobly you employ your time. Speak, old man.

Tob. Oh, lady, that each word which drops from my lips, might call down a blessing on your head! I lay forsaken and dying in my hut: not even bread nor hope remained. Oh! then you came in the form of an angel; brought medicines to me; and your sweet consoling voice did more than those. I am recovered. To-day, for the first time, I have returned thanks in presence of the sun: and now I come to you, noble lady. Let me drop my tears upon your charitable hand. For your sake, Heaven has blessed my latter days. The Stranger too, who lives near me, has given me a purse of gold to buy my son's release. I am on my way to the city: I shall purchase my Robert's release. Then I shall have an honest daughter-in-law. And you, if ever after that you pass our happy cottage, oh! what must you feel when you say to yourself, "This is my work!"

Mrs. H. [*In a tone of entreaty.*] Enough, Tobias; enough!

Tob. I beg pardon! I cannot utter what is breathing in my breast. There is One who knows it, May His blessing and your own heart reward you!

[*Exit.*]

Mrs. H. I suppose, my lord, we may expect the Count and Countess every moment now?

Bar. Not just yet, madam. He travels at his leisure. I am selfish, perhaps, in not being anxious for his speed: the delay has procured me a delight which I never shall forget.

Mrs. H. [*Smiling.*] You satirise mankind, my lord.

Bar. How so?

Mrs. H. In supposing such scenes to be uncommon.

Bar. I confess I was little prepared for such an acquaintance as yourself: I am extremely surprised. When Solomon told me your name and situation, how could I suppose that—Pardon my curiosity: You have been, or are, married?

Mrs. H. [*Suddenly sinking from her cheerful railway into mournful gloom.*] I have been married, my lord.

Bar. A widow, then?

Mrs. H. I beseech you—There are strings in the human heart, which touched, will sometimes utter dreadful discord—I beseech you—

Bar. I understand you. I see you know how to conceal every thing except your perfections.

Mrs. H. My perfections, alas!—[*Rural music without.*] But I hear the happy tenantry announce the Count's arrival. Your pardon, my lord, I must attend them.

[*Exit.*]

Bar. Excellent creature!—What is she, and what can be her history? I must seek my sister instantly. How strong and how sudden is the interest I feel for her! But it is a feeling I ought to check. And yet, why so? Whatever are the emotions she has inspired, I am sure they arise from the perfections of the mind; and never shall be met by unworthiness in mine.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—The Lawn.

Enter SOLOMON and PETER, ushering in the COUNT, Countess WINTERSEN, leading a Child; Mrs. HALLER, the BARON, and Servants following.

Sol. Welcome, ten thousand welcomes, your Excellencies!

Count. Well! here we are! Heaven bless our advance and retreat! Mrs. Haller, I bring you an invalid, who in future will swear to no flag but yours,

Mrs. H. Mine flies for retreat and rural happiness.

Count. But not without retreating Graces, and retiring Cupids too.

Countess. [*Who has in the meantime kindly embraced Mrs. HALLER, and by her been welcomed to Wintersen.*] My dear Count, you forget that I am present.

Count. Why, in the name of chivalry, how can I do less than your gallant brother, the Baron, who has been so kind as nearly to kill my four greys, in order to be here five minutes before me?

Bar. If I had known all the charms of this place, you should have said so with justice.

Countess. Don't you think William much grown?

[*Puts WILLIAM over to Mrs. HALLER.*]

Mrs. H. The sweet boy!

[*Stoops to kiss him, and deep melancholy overshadows her countenance. Retires with the Child a little.*]

Count. Well, Solomon, you've provided a good dinner?

Sol. As good as haste would allow, please your Right honourable Excellency!

Pet. Yes, as good as—

[COUNT retires a little with SOLOMON and PETER.]

Bar. Tell me, I conjure you, sister, what jewel you have thus buried in the country?

Countess. Ha! ha! ha! What, brother, you caught at last?

Bar. Answer me.

Countess. Well, her name is Mrs. Haller.

Bar. That I know; but—

Countess. But!—but I know no more myself.

Bar. Jestings apart, I wish to know.

Countess. And, jestings apart, I wish you would not plague me. I have at least a hundred thousand important things to do. Heavens! the vicar may come to pay his respects to me before I have been at my toilet; of course I must consult my looking-glass on the occasion. Come, William, will you help to dress me, or stay with your father?

Count. We'll take care of him. [Goes to the child.]

Countess. Come, Mrs. Haller.

[Mrs. Haller crosses to the Countess.]

[Exit with Mrs. Haller, SUSAN and HANNAH following.]

Bar. [Aside, and going.] I am in a very singular humour.

Count. Whither so fast, good brother?

Bar. To my apartment: I have letters to—I

Count. Pshaw! Stay. Let us take a turn in the park together.

Bar. Excuse me. I am not perfectly well. I should be but bad company. I— [Exit.]

Count. [SOLOMON and PETER advance, bowing.] Well, Solomon, you are as great a fool as ever, I see.

Sol. Ha! ha! At your Right Honourable Excellency's service.

Count. [Points to PETER.] Who is that ape at your elbow?

Sol. Ape!—Oh! that is—with respect to your Excellency be it spoken—the son of my body; by name, Peter. [PETER bows.]

Count. So, so! Well, how goes all on?

Sol. Well and good; well and good. Your Excellency will see how I've improved the park. You'll not know it again. A hermitage here; serpentine walks there; an obelisk; a ruin; and all so sparingly, all done with the most economical economy.

Count. Well, I'll have a peep at your obelisk and ruins, while they prepare for dinner.

Sol. I have already ordered it, and will have the honour of attending your Right Honourable Excellency.

Count. Come, lead the way. Peter, attend your young master to the house; we must not tire him.

[Ereunt.]

Pet. We'll go round this way, your little Excellency, and then we shall see the bridge as we go by; and the new boat, with all the fine ribands and streamers. This way, your little Excellency. [Exit]

SCENE III.—The Antichamber.

Enter Mrs. Haller.

Mrs. H. What has thus alarmed and subdued me? My tears flow; my heart bleeds. Already had I apparently overcome my chagrin; already had I at least assumed that easy gaiety once so natural to me, when the sight of this child in an instant overpowered me. When the Countess called him William—Oh! she knew not that she plunged a poignard in my heart. I have a William too, who must be as tall as this, if he be still alive. Ah!

ACT. DRAMA.—NO. XXXVIII.

yes, if he be still alive. His little sister, too! Why, fancy, dost thou rack me thus? Why dost thou image my poor children, fainting in sickness, and crying to their mother? To the mother who has abandoned them? What a wretched outcast am I! And that just to-day I should be doomed to feel these horrible emotions! Just to-day, when disguise was so necessary.

Enter CHARLOTTE.

Char. Very pretty, very pretty, indeed! Better send me to the garret at once. Your servant, Mrs. Haller. I beg, madam, I may have a room fit for a respectable person.

Mrs. H. The chamber into which you have been shown is, I think, a very neat one.

Char. A very neat one, is it? Up the back stairs, and over the laundry! I should never be able to close my eyes.

Mrs. H. I slept there a whole year.

Char. Did you? Then I advise you to remove into it again, and the sooner the better. I'd have you to know, madam, there is a material difference between certain persons and certain persons. Much depends upon the manner in which one has been educated. I think, madam, it would only be proper if you resigned your room to me.

Mrs. H. If the Countess desires it, certainly.

Char. The Countess! Very pretty, indeed! Would you have me think of plaguing her ladyship with such trifles? I shall order my trunks to be carried wherever I please.

Mrs. H. Certainly; only not into my chamber.

Char. Provoking creature! But how could I expect to find breeding among creatures born of one knows not whom, and coming one knows not whence?

Mrs. H. The remark is very just.

Enter PETER.

Pet. Oh lud! Oh lud! Oh lud! Oh lud

Mrs. H. What's the matter?

Pet. The young Count has fallen into the river! His little Excellency is drowned.

Mrs. H. Who? What?

Pet. His honour, my young master!

Mrs. H. Drowned?

Pet. Yes.

Mrs. H. Dead?

Pet. No; he's not dead.

Mrs. H. Well, well, then softly;—you will alarm the Countess.

Pet. Oh lud! Oh lud!—

Enter the BARON.

Bar. What is the matter? Why all this noise?

Pet. Noise? Why—

Mrs. H. Be not alarmed, my lord. Whatever may have happened, the dear child is now at least safe. You said so, I think, master Peter.

Pet. Why, to be sure, his little Excellency is not hurt, but he's very wet though: and the Count is taking him by the garden door to the house.

Bar. Right, that the Countess may not be alarmed. But how could it happen? Pray tell us, young man?

Pet. What, from beginning to end?

Mrs. H. Never mind particulars. You attended the dear child?

Pet. True.

Mrs. H. Into the park?

Pet. True.

Mrs. H. And then you went to the river?

Pet. True.—Why, rabbit it, I believe you're a witch.

Mrs. H. Well, and what happened further?

Pet. Why, you see, his dear little Excellency would see the bridge that father built out of the old summer-house; and the streamers, and the boat, and all that.—I only turned my head round for a moment, to look after a magpie—Crush! Down went the bridge with his little Excellency; and oh, how I was scared to see him carried down the river!

Bar. And you drew him out again directly?

Pet. No, I didn't.

Mrs. H. No; your father did?

Pet. No, he didn't.

Mrs. H. Why, you did not leave him in the water?

Pet. Yes, we did!—But we bawled as loud as we could! You might have heard us down to the village.

Mrs. H. Ay—and so the people came immediately to his assistance?

Pet. No, they didn't; but the Stranger came, that lives yonder, close to old Toby, and never speaks a syllable. Odsbodikins! What a devil of a fellow it is! With a single spring bounce he slaps into the torrent; sails and dives about and about like a duck; gets me hold of the little angel's hair, and Heaven bless him! pulls him safe and sound to dry land again.—Ha! ha! ha!

Bar. Is the Stranger with them?

Pet. Oh, lud! no. He ran away. His Excellency wanted to thank him, and all that; but he was off; vanquished—like a ghost.

Enter SOLOMON.

Sol. Oh! thou careless varlet! I disown you! What an accident might have happened! And how you have terrified his Excellency! But I beg pardon, his Right Honourable Excellency, the Count requests you:—

Bar. We come.

[*Exit.*

Char. Ha! ha! ha! Why, Mr. Solomon, you seem to have a hopeful pupil.

Sol. Ah! Sirrah!

Char. But Mr. Solomon, why were you not nimble enough to have saved his young lordship?

Sol. Not in time, my sweet Miss. Besides, mercy on us! I should have sunk like a lump of lead: and I happened to have a letter of consequence in my pocket, which would have been made totally illegible, a letter from Constantinople, written by Chevalier—What's his name? [*Draws a letter from his pocket, and, putting it up again directly, drops it. PETER takes it up slyly and unobserved.*] It contains momentous matter, I assure you. The world will be astonished when it comes to light; and not a soul will suppose that old Solomon had a finger in the pye.

Char. No, that I believe.

Sol. But I must go and see to the cellar. Miss, your most obedient servant. O sirrah, O! [*Exit.*

Char. Your servant, Mr. Solomon.

Pet. Here's the letter from Constantinople. I wonder what it can be about. Now for it!

[*Opens it.*

Char. Aye, let us have it.

Pet. [*Reads.*] "If so be you say so, I'll never work for you, never no more. Considering as how your Sunday waistcoat has been turned three times, it doesn't look amiss, and I've charged as little as any tailor of 'em all. You say I must pay for the buckram; but I say, I'll be damn'd if I do. So no more from your loving nephew, TIMOTHY TWIST."

From Constantinople! Why, cousin Tim writ it!

Char. Cousin Tim! Who is he?

Pet. Good lack! Don't you know cousin Tim? Why, he's one of the best tailors in all—

Char. A tailor! No, sir, I do not know him. My father was state coachman, and wore his Highness's livery.

[*Exit.*

Pet. "My father was state coachman, and wore his Highness's livery."—Well, and cousin Tim could have made his Highness's livery, if you go to that. State coachman, indeed!

[*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Skirts of the Park and Lodge, &c. as before. The STRANGER is discovered on a seat, reading.*

Enter FRANCIS, from the Lodge.

Fra. Sir, sir, dinner is ready.

Stra. I want no dinner.

Fra. I've got something good.

Stra. Eat it yourself.

Fra. You are not hungry?

Stra. No.

Fra. Nor I. The heat does take away all appetite.

Stra. Yes.

Fra. I'll put it by; perhaps at night—

Stra. Perhaps.

Fra. Dear sir, dare I speak?

Stra. Speak.

Fra. You have done a noble action.

Stra. What?

Fra. You have saved a fellow creature's life.

Stra. Peace!

Fra. Do you know who he was?

Stra. No.

Fra. The only son of Count Wintensen.

Stra. Immaterial.

Fra. A gentleman, by report, worthy and benevolent as yourself.

Stra. Silence! Dare you flatter me?

Fra. As I look to Heaven for mercy, I speak from my heart. When I observe how you are doing good around you, how you are making every individual's wants your own, and are yet yourself unhappy, alas! my heart bleeds for you.

Stra. I thank you, Francis. I can only thank you. Yet share this consolation with me;—my sufferings are unmerited.

Fra. My poor master!

Stra. Have you forgotten what the old man said this morning? "There is another and a better world!" Oh, 'tis true. Then let us hope with fervency, and yet endure with patience:—[*CHARLOTTE singing without.*] What's here?

Enter CHARLOTTE, (singing.)

Char. I presume, sir, you are the strange gentleman that drew my young master out of the water? [*The STRANGER reads.*] Or [*To FRANCIS.*] Are you he? [*FRANCIS makes a wry face.*] Are the creatures both dumb? [*Looks at them by turns.*] Surely, old Solomon has fixed two statues here, by way of ornament; for of any use there is no sign. [*Approaches FRANCIS.*] No, this is alive, and breathes; yes, and moves its eyes. [*Bawls in his ear.*] Good friend!

Fra. I'm not deaf, I assure you.

Char. No, nor dumb, I perceive at last.—Is you lifeless thing your master?

Fra. That honest, silent gentleman, is my master.

Char. The same that drew the young Count out of the water?

Fra. The same.

Char. [To the STRANGER.] Sir, my master and mistress, the Count and Countess, present their respectful compliments, and request the honour of your company at a family supper this evening.

Str. I shall not come.

Char. But you'll scarce send such an uncivil answer as this. The Count is overpowered with gratitude. You saved his son's life.

Str. I did it willingly.

Char. And won't accept of "I thank you," in return.

Str. No.

Char. You really are cruel, sir, I must tell you. There are three of us ladies at the Castle, and we are all dying with curiosity to know who you are. [Exit STRANGER.] The master is crabbed enough, however. Let me try what I can make of the man. Pray, sir—The beginning promises little enough. Friend, why won't you look at me?

Fra. I like to look at green trees better than green eyes.

Char. Green eyes, you monster! Who told you that my eyes were green? Let me tell you, there have been sonnets made on my eyes before now. Green eyes!

Fra. Glad to hear it.

Char. To the point, then, at once. What is your master?

Fra. A man.

Char. Unsurmised as much. But what's his name?

Fra. The same as his father's.

Char. Not unlikely; and his father was—

Fra. Married.

Char. To whom?

Fra. To a woman.

Char. I'll tell you what; who your master is I see I shall not learn, and I don't care; but I know what you are.

Fra. Well, what am I?

Char. A bear!

[Exit

Fra. Thank you! Now to see how habit and example corrupt one's manners. I am naturally the civillest spoken fellow in the world to the pretty prattling rogues; yet, following my master's humour, I've rudely driven this wench away. I must have a peep at her though.

Enter STRANGER.

Str. Is that woman gone?

Fra. Yes.

Str. Francis!

Fra. Sir.

Str. We must be gone, too.

Fra. But whither?

Str. I don't care.

Fra. I'll attend you.

Str. To any place?

Fra. To death.

Str. Heaven grant it—to me, at least! There is peace.

Fra. Peace is every where. Let the storm rage without, if the heart be at rest. Yet I think we are very well where we are; the situation is inviting; and nature lavish of her beauties, and of her bounties too.

Str. But I am not a wild beast, to be starved at, and sent for as a show. Is it fit I should be?

Fra. Another of your interpretations! That a man, the life of whose only son you have saved, should invite you to his house, seems to me not very unnatural.

Str. I will not be invited to any house.

Fra. For once, methinks, you might submit. You'll not be asked a second time. [Half aside.

Str. Proud wretches! They believe the most essential service is required, if one may but have the honour of sitting at their table. Let us begone.

Fra. Yet hold, sir! This bustle will soon be over. Used to the town, the Count and his party will soon be tired of simple nature, and you will again be freed from observation.

Str. Not from your's.

Fra. This is too much. Do I deserve your doubts?

Str. Am I in the wrong?

Fra. You are, indeed!

Str. Francis, my servant, you are my only friend.

Fra. That title makes amends for all.

Str. But, look! look, Francis! There are uniforms and gay dresses in the walk again. No; I must be gone. Here I'll stay no longer.

Fra. Well, then, I'll tie up my bundle.

Str. The sooner the better! They come this way. Now must I shut myself in my hovel, and lose this fine breeze. Nay, if they be your high-bred class of all, they may have impudence enough to walk into my chamber. Francis, I shall lock the door. [Exit.

Fra. And I'll be your centinel.

Str. Very well.

[Closes the shutters.

Fra. Now, should these people be as inquisitive as their maid, I must summon my whole stock of impertinence. But their questions and my answers need little study. They can learn nothing of the Stranger from me; for the best of all possible reasons—I know nothing of him myself.

Enter BARON and COUNTESS.

Countess. There is a strange face. The servant, probably.

Bar. Friend, can we speak to your master?

Fra. No.

Bar. Only for a few minutes.

Fra. He has locked himself in his room.

Countess. Tell him a lady waits for him.

Fra. Then he's sure not to come.

Countess. Does he hate our sex?

Fra. He hates the whole human race, but women particularly.

Countess. And why?

Fra. He may have been deceived.

Countess. This is not very courteous.

Fra. My master is not over courteous; but when he sees a chance of saving a fellow-creature's life, he'll attempt it at the hazard of his own.

Bar. You are right. Now hear the reason of our visit. The wife and brother-in-law of the man, whose child your master has saved, wish to acknowledge their obligations to him.

Fra. That he dislikes. He only wishes to live unnoticed.

Countess. He appears to be unfortunate.

Fra. Appears!

Countess. An affair of honour, perhaps, or some unhappy attachment may have—

Fra. It may.

Countess. Be this as it may, I wish to know who he is.

Fra. So do I.

Count. What! Don't you know him yourself?

Fra. Oh! I know him well enough. I mean his real self—his heart—his soul—his worth—his honour!—Perhaps you think one knows a man when one is acquainted with his name and person.

Countess. 'Tis well said, friend; you please me much. And now I should like to know you. Who are you?

Fra. Your humble servant.

[*Exit.*]

Countess. This is affectation! A desire to appear singular! Every one wishes to make himself distinguished. One sails round the world; another creeps into a hovel.

Bar. And the man apes his master!

Countess. Come, brother, let us seek the Count. He and Mrs. Haller turned into the lawn—

Bar. Stay. First a word or two, sister. I am in love.

Countess. For the hundredth time.

Bar. For the first time in my life.

Countess. I wish you joy.

Bar. Till now you have evaded my inquiries. Who is she? I beseech you, sister, be serious. There is a time for all things.

Countess. Well, if I am to be serious, I obey. I do not know who Mrs. Haller is, as I have already told you; but what I do know of her, shall not be concealed from you. It may now be three years ago, when, one evening, about twilight, a lady was announced, who wished to speak to me in private. Mrs. Haller appeared with all that grace and modesty which have enchanted you. Her features, at that moment, bore keener marks of the sorrow and confusion which have since settled into gentle melancholy. She threw herself at my feet; and besought me to save a wretch who was on the brink of despair. She told me she had heard much of my benevolence, and offered herself as a servant to attend me. I endeavoured to dive into the cause of her sufferings, but in vain. She concealed her secret; yet opening to me more and more each day a heart, chosen by virtue as her temple, and an understanding improved by the most refined attainments. She no longer remained my servant, but became my friend; and, by her own desire, has ever since resided here. Brother, I have done.

Bar. Too little to satisfy my curiosity; yet enough to make me realise my project. Sister, lend me your aid—I would marry her.

Countess. You?

Bar. I.

Countess. Baron Steinfort!

Bar. For shame! If I understand you.

Countess. Not so harsh, and not so hasty! Those great sentiments of contempt of inequality in rank are very fine in a romance; but we happen not to be inhabitants of an ideal world. How could you introduce her to the circle we live in? You, surely, would not attempt to present her to—

Bar. Object as you will—my answer is—I love. Sister, you see a man before you, who—

Countess. Who wants a wife.

Bar. No; who has deliberately poised advantage against disadvantage; domestic ease and comfort against the false gaieties of fashion. I can withdraw into the country: I need no honours to make my tenants happy; and my heart will teach me to make their happiness my own. With such a wife as this, children who resemble her, and fortune enough to spread comfort around me, what would the soul of man have more?

Countess. This is all vastly fine. I admire your plan; only you seem to have forgotten one trifling circumstance.

Bar. And that is—

Countess. Whether Mrs. Haller will have you or not.

Bar. There, sister, I just want your assistance.—Good Henrietta!

Countess. Well, here's my hand. I'll do all I can for you. St!—We had near been overheard. They are coming. Be patient and obedient.

Enter COUNT, and Mrs. HALLER leaning on his arm.

Count. Upon my word, Mrs. Haller, you are a nimble walker: I should be sorry to run a race with you.

Mrs. H. Custom, my lord. You need only take the same walk every day for a month.

Count. Yes; if I wanted to resemble my greyhounds—Well, what says the Stranger?

Countess. He gave Charlotte a flat refusal, and you see his door, and even his shutters, are closed against us.

Count. What an unaccountable being! But it won't do. I must show my gratitude one way or other. Steinfort, we will take the ladies home, and then you shall try once again to see him. You can talk to these oddities better than I can.

Bar. If you wish it, with all my heart.

Count. Thank you, thank you. Come, ladies: come, Mrs. Haller. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—A Chamber in the Castle.

Enter COUNTESS and Mrs. HALLER.

Countess. Well, Mrs. Haller, how do you like the man that just now left us?

Mrs. H. Who do you mean, madam?

Countess. My brother.

Mrs. H. He deserves to be your brother.

Countess. Your most obedient! That shall be written in my pocket-book.

Mrs. H. Without flattery then, madam, he appears to be most amiable.

Countess. Good!—And a handsome man?

Mrs. H. Oh, yes.

Countess. "Oh, yes!" It sounded almost like "Oh no!" But I must tell you, that he looks upon you to be a handsome woman. You make no reply to this?

Mrs. H. What shall I reply? Derision never fell from your lips; and I am little calculated to support it.

Countess. As little as you are calculated to be the cause of it. No;—I was in earnest.—Now?

Mrs. H. You confuse me!—But why should I play the prude? I will own there was a time when I thought myself handsome. 'Tis past. Alas! The enchanting beauties of a female countenance arise from peace of mind—the look, which captivates an honourable man, must be reflected from a noble soul.

Countess. Then heaven grant my bosom may ever hold as pure a heart, as now those eyes bear witness lives in yours.

Mrs. H. Oh! Heaven forbid!

Countess. How!

Mrs. H. Spare me! I am a wretch. The sufferings of three years can give me no claim to your friendship—No, not even to your compassion. Oh! Spare me!

Countess. Stay, Mrs. Haller. For the first time, I beg your confidence.—My brother loves you.

Mrs. H. For mirth, too much—for earnest, too mournful!

Countess. I revere that modest blush. Discover to me who you are. You risk nothing. Pour all your griefs into a sister's bosom. Am I not kind? And can I not be silent?

Mrs. H. Alas! But a frank reliance on a generous mind is the greatest sacrifice to be offered by true repentance. This sacrifice I will offer. Did you never hear—Pardon me—Did you never hear—Oh! how shocking is it to unmask a deception, which alone has recommended me to your regard! But it must be so.—Madam—Fie, Adelaide! Does pride become you? Did you ever hear of the Countess Waldbourg?

Countess. I think I did hear, at the neighbouring court, of such a creature. She plunged an honourable husband into misery. She ran away with a villain.

Mrs. H. She did indeed. Do not cast me from you.

Countess. For Heaven's sake! You are—

Mrs. H. I am that wretch.

Countess. Ha!—Begone! Yet, she is unfortunate: she is unfriended! Her image is repentance—Her life the proof. Be still awhile, remorseless prejudice, and let the genuine feelings of my soul avow, they do not truly honour virtue, who can insult the erring heart that would return to her sanctuary. Rise, I beseech you, rise! My husband and my brother may surprise us. I promise to be silent.

Mrs. H. Yes, you will be silent—But oh! Conscience! conscience! thou never wilt be silent. Do not cast me from you.

Countess. Never! Your lonely life, your silent anguish and contrition, may at length atone your crime. And never shall you want an asylum, where your penitence may lament your loss. Your fault was youth and inexperience; your heart never was, never could be concerned in it.

Mrs. H. Oh! spare me! My conscience never reproaches me so bitterly, as when I catch my base thoughts in search of an excuse! No, nothing can palliate my guilt; and the only just consolation left me, is to acquit the man I wronged, and own I erred without a cause of fair complaint.

Countess. And this is the mark of true repentance. Alas! my friend, when superior sense, recommended too by superior charms of person, assail a young, though wedded—

Mrs. H. Ah! not even that mean excuse is left me. In all that merits admiration, respect, and love, he was far, far beneath my husband. But to attempt to account for my strange infatuation—I cannot bear it. I thought my husband's manner grew colder to me. 'Tis true I knew, that his expenses, and his confidence in deceitful friends, had embarrassed his means, and clouded his spirits; yet I thought he denied me pleasures and amusements still within our reach. My vanity was mortified! My confidence not courted. The serpent tongue of my seducer promised every thing. But never could such arguments avail, till, assisted by forged letters, and the treachery of a servant, whom I most confided in, he fixed my belief that my lord was false, and that all the coldness I complained of was disgust to me, and love for another; all his home retrenchments but the means of satisfying a rival's luxury. Maddened with this conviction, (conviction it was, for artifice was most ingenious in its proof.) I left my children—father—husband, to follow—a villain.

Countess. But, with such a heart, my friend could not remain long in her delusion?

Mrs. H. Long enough to make a sufficient penitence impossible. Oh, what were my sensations when the mist dispersed before my eyes! I called for my husband, but in vain!—I listened for the prattle of my children, but in vain!

Countess. [Embracing her.] Here, here, on this bosom only shall your future tears be shed; and may I, dear sufferer, make you again familiar with hope!

Mrs. H. Oh! impossible!

Countess. Have you never heard of your children?

Mrs. H. Never.

Countess. We must endeavour to gain some account of them. We must—Hold! My husband and my brother! Oh, my poor brother! I had quite forgotten him. Quick, dear Mrs. Haller, wipe your eyes. Let us meet them.

Mrs. H. Madam, I'll follow. Allow me a moment to compose myself.—[Exit Countess.]—I pause!—Oh! yes—to compose myself! [Ironically.] She little thinks it is but to gain one solitary moment to vent my soul's remorse. Once, the purpose of my unsettled mind was self-destruction. Heaven knows how I have sued for hope and resignation. I did trust my prayers were heard.—Oh! spare me further trial! I feel, I feel my heart and brain can bear no more. [Exit.]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The Shirts of the Park, Lodge, &c. as before.—A table spread with fruits, &c.*

FRANCIS discovered placing the supper.

Fra. I know he loves to have his early supper in the fresh air; and, while he sups, not that I believe any thing can amuse him, yet I will try my little Savoyard's pretty voices. I have heard him speak as if he had loved music. [Music without.] Oh, here they are.

Enter ANNETTE and CLAUDINE, playing on their guitars.

Ann. To welcome mirth and harmless glee,
We rambling minstrels, blithe and free,
With song the laughing hours beguile,
And wear a never-fading smile:

Where'er we roam,

We find a home,

And greeting, to reward our toil.

Claud. No anxious griefs disturb our rest,
Nor busy cares annoy our breast;
Fearless we sink in soft repose,
While night her sable mantle throws.

With grateful lay,

Hail, rising day,

That rosy health and peace bestows!

During the duet, the STRANGER looks from the lodge window, and at the conclusion he comes out.

Str. a. What mummery is this?

Fra. I hoped it might amuse you, sir.

Str. a. Amuse me—fool!

Fra. Well then, I wish to amuse myself a little. I don't think my recreations are so very numerous.

Str. a. That's true, my poor fellow; indeed they are not. Let them go on.—I'll listen.

[Retires and sits down.]

Fra. But to please you, my poor master, I fear it

must be a sadder strain.—Annette, have you none but these cheerful songs?

Ann. O, plenty. If you are dolefully given, we can be as sad as night. I'll sing you an air Mrs. Haller taught me, the first year she came to the castle.

Fra. Mrs. Haller! I should like to hear that.

Ann. I have a silent sorrow here,
A grief I'll ne'er impart;
It breathes no sigh, it sheds no tear,
But it consumes my heart.
This cherish'd woe, this loved despair
My lot for ever be,
So, my soul's lord, the pangs I bear
Be never known by thee!

And when pale characters of death
Shall mark this alter'd cheek,
When my poor wasted trembling breath
My life's last hope would speak,
I shall not raise my eyes to heaven,
Nor mercy ask for me;
My soul despairs to be forgiven,
Unpardn'd, love, by thee.

Stra. [Surprised and moved.] Oh! I have heard that air before, but 'twas with other words. [Rises.] Francis, share our supper with your friends—I need none. [Enters the lodge.]

Fra. So I feared. Well, my pretty favourites, here are refreshments. [Leads them to the table.]—So, disturbed again! Now will this gentleman call for more music, and make my master mad. Go, go, and return when you observe this man is gone.—[Exeunt, ANNETTE and CLAUDINE, singing.—FRANCIS sits and eats.]—I was in hopes that I might at least eat my supper peaceably in the open air; but they follow at our heels like blood-hounds.

Enter BARON from gates.

Bar. My good friend, I must speak to your master.

Fra. Can't serve you.

Bar. Why not?

Fra. It's forbidden.

Bar. [Offers money.] There! Announce me.

Fra. Want no money.

Bar. Well, only announce me then.

Fra. [Rising.] I will announce you, sir; but it won't avail! I shall be abused, and you rejected. However, we can but try. [Going.]

Bar. I only ask half a minute. [FRANCIS goes into the lodge.] But when he comes, how am I to treat him? I never encountered a misanthrope before. I have heard of instructions as to conduct in society; but how I am to behave towards a being who loathes the whole world, and his own existence, I have never learned.

Enter the STRANGER from lodge.

Stra. Now; what's your will?

Bar. I beg pardon, sir, for—[Suddenly recognizing him.]—Charles!

Stra. Steinfort! [They embrace.]

Bar. Is it really you, my dear friend?

Stra. It is.

Bar. Merciful heavens! How you are alter'd!

Stra. The hand of misery lies heavy on me.—But how came you here? What want you?

Bar. Strange! Here was I ruminating how to address this mysterious recluse: he appears, and proves to be my old and dearest friend.

Stra. Then you were not in search of me, nor knew that I lived here?

Bar. As little as I know who lives on the summit of Caucasus. You this morning saved the life of my brother-in-law's only son: a grateful family wishes to behold you in its circle. You refused my sister's messenger; therefore, to give more weight to the invitation, I was deputed to be the bearer of it. And thus has fortune restored to me a friend, whom my heart has so long missed, and whom my heart just now so much requires.

Stra. Yes, I am your friend; your sincere friend. You are a true man: an uncommon man. Towards you my heart is still the same. But if this assurance be of any value to you—go—leave me—and return no more.

Bar. Stay! All that I see and hear of you is inexplicable. 'Tis you; but these, alas! are not the features which once enchanted every female bosom, beamed gaiety through all society, and won your friends before your lips were opened! Why do you avert your face? Is the sight of a friend become hateful? Or, do you fear that I should read in your eye what passes in your soul? Where is that open look of fire, which at once penetrated into every heart, and revealed your own?

Stra. [With asperity.] My look penetrate into every heart!—Ha! ha! ha!

Bar. Oh, heavens! Rather may I never hear you laugh, than in such a tone!—For heaven's sake, tell me, Charles! tell me, I conjure you, what has happened to you?

Stra. Things that happen every day; occurrences heard of in every street. Steinfort, if I am not to hate you, ask me not another question. If I am to love you, leave me.

Bar. Oh, Charles! awake the faded ideas of past joys. Feel, that a friend is near. Recollect the days we passed in Hungary, when we wandered arm-in-arm upon the banks of the Danube, while nature opened our hearts, and made us enamoured of benevolence and friendship. In those blessed moments you gave me this seal as a pledge of your regard. Do you remember it?

Stra. Yes.

Bar. Am I since that time become less worthy of your confidence?

Stra. No?

Bar. Charles! it grieves me that I am thus compelled to enforce my rights upon you. Do you know this scar?

Stra. Comrade! Friend! It received and resisted the stroke aimed at my life. I have not forgotten it. You knew not what a present you then made me.

Bar. Speak then, I beseech you.

Stra. You cannot help me.

Bar. Then I can mourn with you.

Stra. That I hate. Besides, I cannot weep.

Bar. Then give me words instead of tears. Both relieve the heart.

Stra. Relieve the heart! My heart is like a close-shut sepulchre. Let what is within it moulder and decay. Why, why open the wretched charnel-house to spread a pestilence around?

Bar. How horrid are your looks; For shame! A man like you thus to crouch beneath the chance of fortune!

Stra. Steinfort! I did think, that the opinion of all mankind was alike indifferent to me; but I feel that it is not so. My friend, you shall not quit me without learning how I have been robbed of every joy which life afforded. Listen: much misery may be contained in a few words. Attracted by my

native country, I quitted you and the service. What pleasing pictures did I form of a life employed in improving society, and diffusing happiness! I fixed on Cassel to be my abode. All went on admirably. I found friends. At length, too, I found a wife; a lovely, innocent creature, scarce sixteen years of age. Oh! how I loved her! She bore me a son and a daughter. Both were endowed by nature with the beauty of their mother. Ask me not how I loved my wife and children! Yes; then, then I was really happy. [*Wiping his eyes.*] Ha! a tear! I could not have believed it. Welcome, old friends! 'Twas long since we have known each other. Well; my story is nearly ended. One of my friends, for whom I had become engaged, treacherously lost me more than half my fortune. This hurt me. I was obliged to retrench my expenses. Contentment needs but little. I forgave him. Another friend—a villain! to whom I was attached heart and soul; whom I had assisted with my means, and promoted by my interest; this fiend! seduced my wife, and bore her from me. Tell me, sir, is this enough to justify my hatred of mankind, and palliate my seclusion from the world?—Kings, laws, tyranny, or guilt, can but imprison me, or kill me. But, O God! O God! Oh! what are chains or death compared to the tortures of a deceived yet doting husband!

Bar. To lament the loss of a faithless wife is madness.

Stra. Call it what you please—say what you please—I love her still.

Bar. And where is she?

Stra. I know not, nor do I wish to know.

Bar. And your children?

Stra. I left them at a small town hard by.

Bar. But why did you not keep your children with you? They would have amused you in many a dreary hour.

Stra. Amused me! Oh, yes! while their likeness to their mother should every hour remind me of my past happiness! No. For three years I have never seen them. I hate that any human creature should be near me, young or old! Had not ridiculous habit made a servant necessary, I should never have engaged him, though he is not the worst among the bad.

Bar. Such too often are the consequences of great alliances. Therefore, Charles, I have resolved to take a wife from a lower rank of life.

Stra. You marry!

Bar. You shall see her. She is in the house where you are expected. Come with me.

Stra. What! I mix again with the world!

Bar. To do a generous action without requiring thanks is noble and praiseworthy. But so obstinately to avoid those thanks, as to make the kindness a burthen, is affectation.

Stra. Leave me! leave me! Every one tries to form a circle of which he may be the centre. So do I. As long as there remains a bird in these woods to greet the rising sun with its melody, I shall court no other society.

Bar. Do as you please to-morrow; but give me your company this evening.

Stra. No!

Bar. Not though it were in your power, by this single visit, to secure the happiness of your friend for life?

Stra. Ha! Then I must.—But how?

Bar. You shall sue in my behalf to Mrs. Haller. You have the talent of persuasion.

Stra. I! my dear Steinfort!

Bar. The happiness or misery of your friend depends upon it. I'll contrive that you shall speak to her alone. Will you?

Stra. I will; but upon one condition.

Bar. Name it.

Stra. That you allow me to be gone to-morrow, and not endeavour to detain me.

Bar. Go! Whither?

Stra. No matter. Promise this, or I will not come.

Bar. Well, I do promise. Come.

Stra. I have directions to give my servant.

Bar. In half an hour, then, we shall expect you. Remember, you have given your word.

Stra. I have. [*Exit BARON through gate.*] Francis! Francis!

Enter FRANCIS from lodge.

Stra. Why are you out of the way?

Fra. Sir, I came when I heard you call.

Stra. I shall leave this place to-morrow.

Fra. With all my heart.

Stra. Perhaps to go into another land.

Fra. With all my heart again.

Stra. Perhaps into another quarter of the globe.

Fra. With all my heart still. Into which quarter?

Stra. Wherever heaven directs! Away! away! from Europe! From this cultivated moral lazaret! Do you hear, Francis? To-morrow, early.

Fra. Very well.

[*Going.*]

Stra. Come here, come here first, I have an errand for you. Hire that carriage in the village; drive to the town hard by; you may be back by sun-set. I shall give you a letter to a widow who lives there. With her you will find two children. They are mine.

Fra. [*Astonished.*] Your children, sir?

Stra. Take them and bring them hither.

Fra. Your children, sir?

Stra. Yes, mine! Is it so very inconceivable?

Fra. That I should have been three years in your service, and never have heard them mentioned, is somewhat strange.

Stra. Pshaw! Blockhead!—

Fra. You have been married, then?

Stra. Well—go, go, and prepare for our journey.

Fra. That I can do in five minutes. [*Going.*]

Stra. I shall come and write the letter directly.

Fra. Very well, sir.

[*Exit.*]

Stra. Yes, I'll take them with me. I'll accustom myself to the sight of them. The innocents! they shall not be poisoned by the refinements of society. Rather let them hunt their daily sustenance upon some desert island with their bow and arrow; or creep, like torpid Hottentots, into a corner, and stare at each other. Fool that I was, to be prevailed upon once more to exhibit myself among these apes! What a ridiculous figure shall I make! And in the character of a suitor too! He cannot be serious! 'Tis but some friendly artifice to draw me from my solitude. Why did I promise him? Yet, my sufferings have been many; and, to oblige a friend, why should I hesitate to add another painful hour to the wretched calendar of my life! I'll go, I'll go.

[*Exit into lodge.*]

SCENE II.—*The Anti-chamber.*

Enter CHARLOTTE.

Char. No, indeed, my lady! If you choose to bury yourself in the country, I shall take my leave.

I am not calculated for a country life. And, to sum up all, when I think of this Mrs. Haller—

Enter SOLOMON.

Sol. What of Mrs. Haller, my sweet miss?

Char. Why, Mr. Solomon, who is Mrs. Haller? You know every thing; you hear every thing.

Sol. I have received no letters from any part of Europe on the subject, miss.

Char. But who is to blame? The Count and Countess. She dines with them; and at this very moment is drinking tea with them. Is this proper?

Sol. By no means.

Char. Should not a Count and Countess, in all their actions, show a proper degree of pride and pomposity?

Sol. To be sure! To be sure, they should!

Char. No, I won't submit to it. I'll tell her ladyship, when I dress her to-morrow, that either Mrs. Haller or I must quit the house.

Sol. [*Seeing the BARON.*] St!

Enter BARON.

Bar. Didn't I hear Mrs. Haller's name here?

Sol. [*Confused.*] Why—yes—we—we—

Bar. Charlotte, tell my sister I wish to see her as soon as the tea-table is removed.

Char. Either she or I go, that I'm determined. [*Exit.*]

Bar. May I ask what it was you were saying?

Sol. Why, please your Honourable Lordship, we were talking here and there—this and that—

Bar. I almost begin to suspect some secret.

Sol. Secret! Heaven forbid! Mercy on us! No! I should have had letters on the subject if there had been a secret.

Bar. Well then, since it was no secret, I presume I may know your conversation.

Sol. You do us great honour, my lord. Why, then, at first, we were making a few common-place observations. Miss Charlotte remarked we had all our faults. I said, "Yes." Soon after, I remarked that the best persons in the world were not without their weaknesses. She said, "Yes."

Bar. If you referred to Mrs. Haller's faults and weaknesses, I am desirous to hear more.

Sol. Sure enough, sir, Mrs. Haller is an excellent woman; but she's not an angel, for all that. I am an old faithful servant to his Excellency the Count, and therefore it is my duty to speak when any thing is done disadvantageous to his interest.

Bar. Well!

Sol. For instance, now; his Excellency may think he has at least some score of dozens of the old six-and-twenty hock. Mercy on us! There are not ten dozen bottles left; and not a drop has gone down my throat, I'll swear.

Bar. [*Smiling.*] Mrs. Haller has not drank it, I suppose?

Sol. Not she herself, for she never drinks wine. But if any body be ill in the village, any poor woman lying-in, away goes a bottle of the six-and-twenty! Innumerable are the times that I've reprov'd her; but she always answers me snappishly, that she will be responsible for it.

Bar. So will I, Mr. Solomon.

Sol. Oh! with all my heart, your Honourable Lordship. It makes no difference to me. I had the care of the cellar twenty years, and can safely take my oath, that I never gave the poor a single drop in the whole course of my life.

Bar. How extraordinary is this woman!

Sol. Extraordinary! one can make nothing of

her. To-day, the vicar's wife is not good enough for her. To-morrow, you may see her sitting with all the women of the village. To be sure, she and I agree pretty well; for, between me and your Honourable Lordship, she has cast an eye upon my son Peter.

Bar. Has she?

Sol. Yes—Peter's no fool, I assure you. The school-master is teaching him to write. Would your Honourable Lordship please to see a specimen? I'll go for his copybook. He makes his pot-hooks capitally.

Bar. Another time, another time. Good bye for the present, Mr. Solomon. [*SOLOMON bows.*] Good day, Mr. Solomon.

Sol. Your Honourable Lordship's most obedient servant.

Bar. Mr. Solomon, I wish to be alone.

Sol. As your lordship commands. If the time should seem long in my absence, and your lordship wishes to hear the newest news from the seat of war, you need only send for old Solomon. I have letters from Leghorn, Cape Horn, and every known part of the habitable globe. [*Exit.*]

Bar. Tedious old fool! Yet hold. Did he not speak in praise of Mrs. Haller? Pardon'd be his rage for news and politics.

Enter COUNTESS.

Well, sister, have you spoken to her?

Countess. I have: and if you do not steer for another haven, you will be doomed to drive upon the ocean for ever.

Bar. Is she married?

Countess. I don't know.

Bar. Is she of a good family?

Countess. I can't tell.

Bar. Does she dislike me?

Countess. Excuse my making a reply.

Bar. I thank you for your sisterly affection, and the explicitness of your communications. Luckily, I placed little reliance on either; and have found a friend, who will save your ladyship all further trouble.

Countess. A friend!

Bar. Yes. The Stranger, who saved your son's life this morning, proves to be my intimate friend.

Countess. What's his name?

Bar. I don't know.

Countess. Is he of good family?

Bar. I can't tell.

Countess. Will he come hither?

Bar. Excuse my making a reply.

Countess. Well, the retort is fair—but insufferable.

Bar. You can't object to the *Da Capo* of your own composition.

Enter COUNT and MRS. HALLER.

Count. Zounds! do you think I am Xenocrates: or like the poor sultan with marble legs? There you leave me *tête-à-tête* with Mrs. Haller, as if my heart were a mere flint. So you prevailed, brother. The Stranger will come then, it seems.

Bar. I expect him every minute.

Count. I'm glad to hear it. One companion more, however. In the country, we never can have too many.

Bar. This gentleman will not exactly be an addition to your circle, for he leaves this place to-morrow.

Count. But he won't, I think. Now, Lady Winterson, summon all your charms. There is no art in conquering us poor devils; but this strange man,

who does not care a doit for you all together, is worth your efforts. Try your skill. I shan't be jealous.

Countess. I allow the conquest to be worth the trouble. But what Mrs. Haller has not been able to effect in three months, ought not to be attempted by me.

Mrs. H. Oh, madam, he has given me no opportunity of trying the force of my charms, for I have never once happened to see him.

Count. Then he's a blockhead; and you an idler.

Sol. [Without.] This way, sir! This way!

Enter SOLOMON.

Sol. The Stranger begs leave to have the honour—

[*Exit SOLOMON.*]

Count. Welcome! Welcome! [*Runs to meet the STRANGER, whom he conducts in by the hand.*] My dear sir—Lady Wintensen—Mrs. Haller—

[*Mrs. HALLER, as soon as she sees the STRANGER, shrieks and swoons in the arms of the BARON. The STRANGER casts a look at her, and rushes out. The BARON and COUNTESS bear Mrs. HALLER off, followed by the COUNT.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—The Anti-chamber.

Enter BARON

Bar. Oh! deceitful hope! Thou phantom of future happiness. To thee have I stretched out my arms, and thou hast vanished into air! Wretched Steinfort! The mystery is solved. She is the wife of my friend! I cannot myself be happy; but I may, perhaps, be able to reunite two lovely souls whom cruel fate has severed. Ha! they are here. I must propose it instantly.

Enter COUNTESS and Mrs. HALLER.

Countess. Into the garden, my dear friend! Into the air!

Mrs. H. I am quite well. Do not alarm yourselves on my account.

Bar. Madam, pardon my intrusion; but to lose a moment may be fatal. He means to quit the country to-morrow. We must devise means to reconcile you to—the Stranger.

Mrs. H. How, my lord? You seem acquainted with my history?

Bar. I am. Waldbourg has been my friend ever since we were boys. We served together from the rank of cadet. We have been separated seven years. Chance brought us this day together, and his heart was open to me.

Mrs. H. How do I feel what it is to be in the presence of an honest man, when I dare not meet his eye.

Bar. If sincere repentance, if years without reproach, do not give us a title to man's forgiveness, what must we expect hereafter? No, lovely penitent! your contrition is complete. Error for a moment wrested from slumbering virtue the dominion of your heart: but she awoke, and, with a look, banished her enemy for ever. I know my friend. He has the firmness of a man; but, with it, the gentlest feelings of your sex. I hasten to him. With the fire of pure disinterested friendship will I enter on this work; that, when I look back upon

my past life, I may derive from this good action consolation in disappointment, and even resignation in despair.

Mrs. H. Oh, stay! What would you do? No! never! My husband's honour is sacred to me. I love him unutterably; but never, never can I be his wife again; even if he were generous enough to pardon me.

Bar. Madam! Can you, Countess, be serious?

Mrs. H. Not that title, I beseech you! I am not a child who wishes to avoid deserved punishment. What were my penitence, if I hoped advantage from it beyond the consciousness of atonement for past offence?

Countess. But if your husband himself?—

Mrs. H. Oh! he will not! he cannot! And let him rest assured I never would replace my honour at the expense of his.

Bar. He still loves you.

Mrs. H. Loves me! Then he must not—No—he must purify his heart from a weakness which would degrade him!

Bar. Incomparable woman! I go to my friend—perhaps, for the last time! Have you not one word to send him?

Mrs. H. Yes, I have two requests to make. Often when, in excess of grief, I have despaired of every consolation, I have thought I should be easier if I might behold my husband once again, acknowledge my injustice to him, and take a gentle leave of him for ever. This, therefore, is my first request—a conversation for a few short minutes, if he does not quite abhor the sight of me. My second request is—Oh—not to see, but to hear some account of my poor children.

Bar. If humanity and friendship can avail, he will not for a moment delay your wishes.

Countess. Heaven be with you!

Mrs. H. And my prayers. [*Exit BARON.*]

Countess. Come, my friend, come into the air, till he returns with hope and consolation.

Mrs. H. Oh, my heart! how art thou afflicted! My husband! My little ones! Past joys and future fears.—Oh, dearest madam, there are moments in which we live years. Moments which steal the roses from the cheek of health, and plough deep furrows in the brow of youth.

Countess. Banish these sad reflections. Come, let us walk. The sun will set soon; let nature's beauties dissipate anxiety.

Mrs. H. Alas! Yes, the setting sun is a proper scene for me.

Countess. Never forget a morning will succeed.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—The Skirts of the Park, Lodge, &c.

Enter BARON, from gates.

Bar. On earth there is but one such pair. They shall not be parted. Yet what I have undertaken is not so easy as I at first hoped. What can I answer when he asks me, whether I would persuade him to renounce his character, and become the derision of society? For he is right: a faithless wife is a dishonour! and to forgive her, is to share her shame. What though Adelaide may be an exception; a young deluded girl, who has so long and so sincerely repented; yet what cares an unfeeling world for this? The world! He has quitted it. 'Tis evident he loves her still; and upon this assurance builds my sanguine heart the hope of a happy termination to an honest enterprise.

Enter FRANCIS with two Children, WILLIAM and AMELIA.

Fra. Come along my pretty ones—come.

Will. Is it far to home?

Fra. No, we shall be there directly now.

Bar. Hold! Whose children are these?

Fra. My master's.

Will. Is that my father?

Bar. It darts like lightning through my brain. A word with you. I know, you love your master. Strange things have happened here. Your master has found his wife again.

Fra. Indeed! Glad to hear it.

Bar. Mrs. Haller—

Fra. Is she his wife? Still more glad to hear it.

Bar. But he is determined to go from her.

Fra. Oh!

Bar. We must try to prevent it.

Fra. Surely.

Bar. The unexpected appearance of the children may perhaps assist us.

Fra. How so?

Bar. Hide yourself with them in that hut. Before a quarter of an hour is passed you shall know more.

Fra. But—

Bar. No more questions, I entreat you. Time is precious.

Fra. Well, well: questions are not much in my way. Come, children.

Will. Why, I thought you told me I should see my father?

Fra. So you shall, my dear. Come, moppets.

[*Goes into the hut with the Children.*]

Bar. Excellent! I promise myself much from this little artifice. If the mild look of the mother fails, the innocent smiles of these his own children will surely find the way to his heart. [*Taps at the lodge door; the STRANGER comes out.*] Charles, I wish you joy.

Str. Of what?

Bar. You have found her again.

Str. Show a bankrupt the treasure which he once possessed, and then congratulate him on the amount!

Bar. Why not, if it be in your power to retrieve the whole?

Str. I understand you: you are a negotiator from my wife. It won't avail.

Bar. Learn to know your wife better. Yes, I am a messenger from her; but without power to treat. She, who loves you unutterably, who without you never can be happy, renounces your forgiveness; because, as she thinks, your honour is incompatible with such a weakness.

Str. Pshaw! I am not to be caught.

Bar. Charles! consider well—

Str. Steinfort, let me explain all this. I have lived here four months. Adelaide knew it.

Bar. Knew it! She never saw you till to-day.

Str. That you may make fools believe. Hear further: she knows too, that I am not a common sort of man; that my heart is not to be attacked in the usual manner. She, therefore, framed a deep-concerted plan. She played a charitable part; but in such a way, that it always reached my ears. She played a pious, modest, reserved part, in order to excite my curiosity. And, at last, to-day she plays the prude. She refuses my forgiveness, in hopes, by this generous device, to extort it from my compassion.

Bar. Charles! I have listened to you with asto-

nishment. This is a weakness only to be pardoned in a man who has so often been deceived by the world. Your wife has expressly and steadfastly declared, that she will not accept your forgiveness, even if you yourself were weak enough to offer it.

Str. What then has brought you hither?

Bar. More than one reason. First, I am come in my own name, as your friend and comrade, to conjure you solemnly not to spurn this creature from you; for, by my soul, you will not find her equal.

Str. Give yourself no further trouble.

Bar. Be candid, Charles. You love her still.

Str. Alas! yes.

Bar. Her sincere repentance has long since obliterated her crime.

Str. Sir! a wife, once induced to forfeit her honour, must be capable of a second crime.

Bar. Not so, Charles. Ask your heart what portion of the blame may be your own.

Str. Mine?

Bar. Yours. Who told you to marry a thoughtless inexperienced girl? One scarce expects established principles at five and-twenty in a man, yet you require them in a girl of sixteen! But of this no more. She has erred; she has repented; and, during three years, her conduct has been so far above reproach, that even the piercing eye of calumny has not discovered a speck upon this radiant orb.

Str. Now, were I to believe all this—and I confess that I would willingly believe it—yet can she never again be mine. Oh! what a feast would it be for the painted dolls and vermin of the world, when I appear among them with my runaway wife upon my arm! What mocking, whispering, pointing!—Never! Never! Never!

Bar. Enough! As a friend I have done my duty: I now appear as Adelaide's ambassador. She requests one moment's conversation: she wishes once again to see you, and never more! You cannot deny her this only, this last request.

Str. I understand this too: she thinks my firmness will be melted by her tears: she is mistaken. She may come.

Bar. She will come, to make you feel how much you mistake her. I go for her.

Str. Another word.

Bar. Another word!

Str. Give her this paper, and these jewels. They belong to her.

Bar. That you may do yourself.

[*Exit.*]
Str. The last anxious moment of my life draws near. I shall see her once again; I shall see her on whom my soul doats. Is this the language of an injured husband? What is this principle which we call honour? Is it a feeling of the heart, or a quibble in the brain? I must be resolute: it cannot now be otherwise. Let me speak solemnly, yet mildly; and beware that nothing of reproach escape my lips.

Enter COUNTESS, MRS. HALLER, and BARON.

Yes, her penitence is real, it is real. She shall not be obliged to live in mean dependence: she shall be mistress of herself, she shall—Ha! they come. Awake, insulted pride! Protect me, injured honour!

Mrs. H. Leave me now, I beseech you, my lord!

Str. What would you with me, Adelaide?

Mrs. H. No—for Heaven's sake! I was not prepared for this—Adelaide!—No, no. For Hea-

ven's sake!—Harsh words alone are suited to a culprit's ear.

Stra. Well, madam!

Mrs. H. Oh! If you will ease my heart, if you will spare and pity me, use reproaches.

Stra. Reproaches! Here they are; here on my sorrowful cheek—here in my hollow eye—here in my faded form. These reproaches I could not spare you.

Mrs. H. Were I a hardened sinner, this forbearance would be charity: but I am a suffering penitent, and it overpowers me! Alas! then I must be the herald of my own shame. For where shall I find peace till I have eased my soul by my confession.

Stra. No confession, madam. I release you from every humiliation. I perceive you feel that we must part for ever.

Mrs. H. I know it. Nor come I here to supplicate your pardon; nor has my heart contained a ray of hope that you would grant it. All I dare ask is, that you will not curse my memory.

Stra. No, I do not curse you. I shall never curse you.

Mrs. H. From the inward conviction that I am unworthy of your name, I have, during three years, abandoned it. But this is not enough; you must have that redress which will enable you to choose another—another wife; in whose chaste arms may Heaven protect your hours in bliss! This paper will be necessary for the purpose; it contains a written acknowledgment of my guilt.

Stra. [Tearing it.] Perish the record for ever!—No, Adelaide, you only have possessed my heart; and, I am not ashamed to own it, you alone will reign there for ever.—Your own sensations of virtue, your resolute honour, forbid you to profit by my weakness; and even if—this is beneath a man! But—never—will another fill Adelaide's place here.

Mrs. H. Then nothing now remains but that one sad, hard, just word—Farewell!

Stra. Stay a moment. For some months we have, without knowing it, lived near each other. I have learnt much good of you. You have a heart open to the wants of your fellow creatures. I am happy that it is so. You shall not be without the power of gratifying your benevolence. I know you have a spirit that must shrink from a state of obligation. This paper, to which the whole remnant of my fortune is pledged, secures you independence, Adelaide; and let the only recommendation of the gift be, that it will administer to you the means of indulging in charity, the divine propensity of your nature.

Mrs. H. Never! To the labour of my hands alone will I owe my sustenance. A morsel of bread, moistened with the tear of penitence, will suffice my wishes, and exceed my merits. It would be an additional reproach, to think that I served myself, or even others, from the bounty of the man whom I had so deeply injured.

Stra. Take it, madam; take it.

Mrs. H. I have deserved this. But I throw myself upon your generosity. Have compassion on me!

Stra. [Aside.] Villain! Of what a woman hast thou robbed me!—Well, madam, I respect your sentiments, and withdraw my request; but on condition, that if ever you shall be in want of any thing, I may be the first and only person in the world to whom you will make your application.

Mrs. H. I promise it, my lord.

Stra. And now I may, at least, desire you to take back what is your own—your jewels.

Mrs. H. How well do I recollect the sweet evening when you gave me these! That evening my father joined our hands; and joyfully I pronounced the oath of eternal fidelity.—It is broken. This locket you gave me on my birth-day.—That was a happy day! We had a country feast—How cheerful we all were!—This bracelet I received after my William was born!—No! Take them—take them—I cannot take these, unless you wish that the sight of them should be an incessant reproach to my almost broken heart.

Stra. I must go. My soul and pride will hold no longer. Farewell.

Mrs. H. Oh! But one minute more! An answer to but one more question.—Feel for a mother's heart!—Are my children still alive?

Stra. Yes, they are alive.

Mrs. H. And well?

Stra. Yes, they are well.

Mrs. H. Heaven be praised! William must be much grown?

Stra. I believe so.

Mrs. H. What! Have you not seen them then?—And little Amelia, is she still your favourite? Oh! generous man, allow me to behold them once again!—Let me once more kiss the features of their father in his babes, and I will kneel to you, and part with them for ever. [She kneels—he raises her.]

Stra. Willingly, Adelaide! This very night. I expect the children every minute. They have been brought up near this spot. I have already sent my servant for them. He might, ere this time, have returned. I pledge my word to send them to the Castle as soon as they arrive. There, if you please, they may remain 'till day-break to-morrow: then they must go with me.

[THE COUNTESS AND BARON exchange signals; BARON goes into the Hut, and soon returns with the CHILDREN.]

Mrs. H. In this world then—We have no more to say.—[Seizing his hand.] Forget a wretch, who never will forget you.—Let me press this hand once more to my lips—this hand which once was mine. And when my penance shall have broken my heart, when we again meet in a better world—

Stra. There, Adelaide, you may be mine again.

Stra. } Oh! Oh!

[Parting.]

Mrs. H. } Children entering. Dear father! Dear mother!

[They press the Children in their arms, then separate themselves instantly—gaze at each other, and rush into an embrace. The Children cling round their parents.]

LOVERS' VOWS:

A PLAY, IN FIVE ACTS,

ALTERED FROM THE GERMAN OF KOTZEBUE,

BY MRS. INCHBALD.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

BARON WILDENHAIM
COUNT CASSEL
ANHALT
FREDERICK
VERDUN (the Butler)
Landlord
Cottager
Farmer
Countryman.

AGATHA FRIBURG
AMELIA WILDENHAIM
Cottager's Wife
Country Girl.

Huntsmen, Servants, &c.

SCENE—Germany.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Highroad, a Town at a distance.—
An Inn on one side, and a Cottage on the other.*

The LANDLORD pushes AGATHA out of the inn.

Lan. No, no! no room for you any longer.—It is the fair to-day in the next village; as great a fair as any in the German dominions. The country people with their wives and children take up every corner we have.

Aga. You will turn a poor sick woman out of doors, who has spent her last farthing in your house?

Lan. For that very reason; because she has spent her last farthing.

Aga. I can work.

Lan. You can hardly move your hands.

Aga. My strength will come again.

Lan. Then you may come again.

Aga. What am I to do? Where shall I go?

Lan. It is fine weather—you may go any where.

Aga. Who will give me a morsel of bread to satisfy my hunger?

Lan. Sick people eat but little.

Aga. Hard, unfeeling man, have pity.

Lan. When times are hard, pity is too expensive for a poor man. Ask alms of the different people that go by.

Aga. Beg! I would rather starve.

Lan. You may beg, and starve, too. What a fine lady you are! Many an honest woman has been obliged to beg. Why should not you? [*AGATHA sits down upon a large stone under a tree.*] For instance, here comes somebody; and I will teach you how to begin.

Enter a Countryman with working tools.

Good day, neighbour Nicholas.

Cou. Good day.

Lan. Won't you give a trifle to this poor woman? [*Countryman takes no notice, but walks off.*] That would not do—the poor man has nothing himself but what he gets by hard labour. Here comes a rich farmer; perhaps he will give you something.

Enter Farmer.

Good morning to you, sir. Under yon tree sits a poor woman in distress, who is in need of your charity.

Far. Is she not ashamed of herself? Why don't she work?

Lan. She has had a fever. If you would but pay for one dinner—

Far. The harvest has been but indifferent, and my cattle and sheep have suffered by a distemper.

[*Erit.*

Lan. My fat smiling face was not made for begging; you'll have more luck with your thin, sour one—so, I'll leave you to yourself. [*Erit into house.*

Aga. [*Rises and comes forward.*] Oh, Providence! thou hast till this hour protected me, and hast given me fortitude not to despair. Receive my humble thanks, and restore me to health, for the sake of my poor son, the innocent cause of my sufferings, and yet my only comfort. [*Kneeling.*] Oh, grant that I may see him once more! See him improved in strength of mind and body; and that by thy gracious mercy he may never be visited with affliction great as mine. Protect his father, too, merciful Providence, and pardon his crime of perjury to me! Here, in the face of heaven (supposing my end approaching, and that I can but a few days longer struggle with want and sorrow), here, I solemnly forgive my seducer for all the ills, the accumulated

evils, which his allurements, his deceit and cruelty, have, for twenty years past, drawn upon me.

Enter a Country Girl with a basket.

Ag. [*Near fainting.*] My dear child, if you could spare me a trifle—

Girl. I have not a farthing in the world—but I am going to market to sell my eggs, and as I come back I'll give you threepence—And I'll be back as soon as ever I can. [*Exit.*]

Ag. There was a time when I was as happy as this country girl, and as willing to assist the poor in distress. [*Retires to the tree, and sits down.*]

Enter FREDERICK, in a German soldier's uniform, with a knapsack on his shoulders.

Fre. Halt! Stand at ease! It is a very hot day—[*Throws down his sword and knapsack.*] A draught of good wine will not be amiss. But first let me consult my purse. [*Takes out a couple of pieces of money, which he turns about in his hand.*] This will do for a breakfast—the other remains for my dinner; and in the evening I shall be at home. [*Going up to house.*] Ha! Halloo! Landlord! [*Sees AGATHA, who is leaning against the tree.*] Who is that? A poor sick woman! She don't beg; but her appearance makes me think she is in want. Must one always wait to give till one is asked? Shall I go without my breakfast now, or lose my dinner? The first, I think, is the best. Ay, I don't want a breakfast, for dinner-time will soon be here. To do good satisfies both hunger and thirst. [*Goes to her.*] Take this, good woman.

Ag. [*Stretches forth her hand, and looks steadily at him.*] Frederick!

Fre. Mother!—Mother! For God's sake what is this! How is this! And why do I find my mother thus? Speak!

Ag. I cannot speak, dear son! [*Embracing.*] My dear Frederick! The joy is too great—I was not prepared—

Fre. Dear mother, compose yourself: [*Leans her head against his breast.*] Now then, be comforted! How she trembles! She is fainting.

Ag. I am so weak, and my head so giddy—I had nothing to eat all yesterday.

Fre. Good heavens! here is my little money, take it all. Oh, mother! mother! [*Runs to the inn.*] Landlord! Landlord!

[*FREDERICK knocks violently at the door; the LANDLORD comes out.*]

Lan. What is the matter?

Fre. A bottle of wine—quick, quick!

Lan. A bottle of wine! For whom?

Fre. For me. Why do you ask? Why don't you make haste?

Lan. Well, well, Mr. Soldier: but can you pay for it?

Fre. Here is money—make haste, or I'll break every window in your house.

Lan. Patience! Patience! [*Goes into house.*]

Fre. [*To AGATHA.*] You were hungry yesterday, when I sat down to a comfortable dinner. You were hungry when I partook of a good supper. Oh! why is so much bitter mixed with the joy of my return?

Ag. Be patient, my dear Frederick. Since I see you, I am well. But I have been very ill: so ill that I despaired of ever beholding you again.

Fre. Ill, and I was not with you? I will, now, never leave you more. Look, mother, how tall and strong I am grown. These arms can now afford,

you support. They can, and shall, procure you subsistence.

Lan. [*Coming out of the house with a small pitcher.*] Here is wine—a most delicious nectar. [*Aside.*] It is only Rhenish; but it will pass for the best old Hock.

Fre. [*Snatching the pitcher.*] Give it me.

Lan. No, no; the money first. One shilling and twopence, if you please.

Fre. [*Gives him money.*] This is all I have.—Here, here, mother.

[*While AGATHA drinks, LANDLORD counts the money.*]

Lan. Three-halfpence too short! However, one must be charitable. [*Exit into house.*]

Ag. I thank you, my dear Frederick.—*Wine* revives me—*Wine* from the hand of my son gives me almost a new life.

Fre. Don't speak too much, mother—Take your time.

Ag. Tell me, dear child, how you have passed the five years since you left me.

Fre. Both good and bad, mother. To-day plenty—to-morrow not so much—and sometimes nothing at all.

Ag. You have not written to me this long while.

Fre. Dear mother, consider the great distance I was from you!—And then, in the time of war, how often letters miscarry.—Besides—

Ag. No matter, now I see you. But have you obtained your discharge?

Fre. Oh, no, mother; I have leave of absence only for two months; and that for a particular reason. But I will not quit you so soon, now I find you are in want of my assistance.

Ag. No, no, Frederick; your visit will make me so well, that I shall in a very short time recover strength to work again; and you must return to your regiment, when your furlough is expired. But you told me leave of absence was granted you for a particular reason.—What reason?

Fre. When I left you, five years ago, you gave me every thing you could afford, and all you thought would be necessary for me. But one trifle you forgot, which was the certificate of my birth from the church-book. You know, in this country, there is nothing to be done without it. At the time of parting from you, I little thought it could be of that consequence to me, which I have since found it would have been. Once I became tired of a soldier's life, and, in the hope I should obtain my discharge, offered myself to a master to learn a profession; but his question was, "Where is your certificate from the church-book of the parish in which you were born?" It vexed me that I had not it to produce, for my comrades laughed at my disappointment. My captain behaved kinder, for he gave me leave to come to fetch it—and you see, mother, here I am.

Ag. So you are come for the purpose of fetching your certificate from the church-book?

Fre. Yes, mother.

Ag. Oh! oh!

Fre. What is the matter? For heaven's sake, mother, tell me what's the matter?

Ag. You have no certificate.

Fre. No!

Ag. No.—The laws of Germany excluded you from being registered at your birth—for you are a natural son.

Fra. [*After a pause.*] So!—And who is my father?

Ag. Oh, Frederick, your wild looks are daggers to my heart. Another time.

Fre. No, no—I am still your son—and you are still my mother. Only tell me, who is my father?

Ag. When we parted, five years ago, you were too young to be intrusted with a secret of so much importance. But the time is come, when I can, in confidence, open my heart, and unload that burden with which it has been long oppressed. And yet, to reveal my errors to my child, and sue for his mild judgment on my conduct—

Fre. You have nothing to sue for; only explain this mystery.

Ag. I will, I will. But—my tongue is locked with remorse and shame. You must not look at me.

Fre. Not look at you! Cursed be that son, who could find his mother guilty, although the world should call her so.

Ag. Then listen to me, and take notice of that village, of that castle, and of that church. In that village I was born—in that church I was baptized. My parents were poor, but reputable farmers. The lady of that castle and estate requested them to let me live with her, and she would provide for me through life. They resigned me; and, at the age of fourteen, I went to my patroness. She took pleasure to instruct me in all kinds of female literature and accomplishments; and three happy years had passed, under her protection, when her only son, who was an officer in the Saxon service, obtained permission to come home. I had never seen him before—he was a handsome young man, in my eyes, a prodigy; for he talked of love, and promised me marriage. He was the first man who had ever spoken to me on such a subject. His flattery made me vain, and his repeated vows—Don't look at me, dear Frederick: I can say no more. Oh! oh! my son! I was intoxicated by the fervent caresses of a young, inexperienced, capricious young man, and did not recover from the delirium till it was too late.

Fre. Go on. Let me know more of my father.

Ag. When the time drew near that I could no longer conceal my guilt and shame, my seducer prevailed on me not to expose him to the resentment of his mother. He renewed his former promises of marriage at her death; on which relying, I gave him my word to be secret—and I have to this hour buried his name deep in my heart.

Fre. Proceed, proceed! give me full information—I will have courage to hear it all.

Ag. His leave of absence expired, he returned to his regiment, depending on my promise, and well assured of my esteem. As soon as my situation became known, I was questioned, and received many severe reproaches: but I refused to confess who was my undoer; and for that obstinacy was turned from the castle. I went to my parents; but their door was shut against me. My mother, indeed, wept as she bade me quit her sight for ever; but my father wished increased affliction might befall me.

Fre. Be quick with your narrative, or you'll break my heart.

Ag. I now sought protection from the old clergyman of the parish. He received me with compassion. On my knees I begged forgiveness for the scandal I had caused to his parishioners; promised amendment; and he said he did not doubt me. Through his recommendation I went to town, and, hid in humble lodgings, procured the means of subsistence by teaching to the neighbouring children what I had learnt under the tuition of my benefactress. To instruct you, my Frederick, was my care and delight; and, in return for your filial love, I would not thwart your wishes when they led to a soldier's life; but I

saw you go from me with an aching heart. Soon after my health declined, I was compelled to give up my employment; and, by degrees, became the object you now see me. But, let me add, before I close my calamitous story, that, when I left the good old clergyman, taking along with me his kind advice and his blessing, I left him with a firm determination to fulfil the vow I had made of repentance and amendment. I have fulfilled it—and now, Frederick, you may look at me again.

Fre. But my father all this time? I apprehend he died.

Ag. No—he married.

Fre. Married!

Ag. A woman of virtue—of noble birth and immense fortune. Yet I had written to him many times; had described your infant innocence and wants; had glanced obliquely at former promises—

Fre. No answer to these letters?

Ag. Not a word. But in the time of war, you know, letters miscarry.

Fre. Nor did ever return to this estate?

Ag. No—since the death of his mother this castle has only been inhabited by servants—for he settled as far off as Alsace, upon the estate of his wife.

Fre. I will carry you in my arms to Alsace. No—why should I ever know my father? My heart is satisfied with a mother. No—I will not go to him. I will not disturb his peace—I leave that task to his conscience. What say you, mother, can't we do without him?—We don't want him. I will write directly to my captain. Let the consequence be what it will, leave you again I cannot. Should I be able to get my discharge, I will work all day at the plough, and all the night with my pen. It will do mother, it will do! heaven's goodness will assist me—it will prosper the endeavours of a dutiful son for the sake of a helpless mother.

Ag. Where could be found such another son?

Fre. But tell me my father's name, that I may know how to shun him.

Ag. Baron Wildenhaim,

Fre. Baron Wildenhaim! I shall never forget it.—Oh! you are near fainting. Your eyes are cast down. What's the matter? Speak, mother!

Ag. Nothing particular: only fatigued with talking. I wish to take a little rest.

Fre. I did not consider that we have been all this time in the open road. [*Goes to the inn, and knocks at the door.*] Here, landlord!

LANDLORD re-enters from house.

Lan. Well, what is the matter now?

Fre. Make haste, and get a bed ready for this good woman.

Lan. A bed for this good woman! Ha! ha! ha! She slept last night in that pent-house; so she may to-night. [*Exit, shutting the door.*]

Fre. You are an infamous—Oh! my poor mother—Ha! halloo! Who's there?

Enter COTTAGER, from cottage.

Cot. Good day, young soldier. What is it you want?

Fre. Good friend, look at that poor woman. She is perishing in the public road! It is my mother. Will you give her a small corner in your hut? I beg for mercy's sake—Heaven will reward you.

Cot. Can't you speak quietly? I understand you very well. Wife, shake up our bed—here is a poor sick woman wants it.

Enter WIFE.

Why could not you say all this in fewer words? Why such a long preamble? Why for mercy's

sake, and heaven's reward? Why talk about reward for such trifles as these? Come, let us lead her in; and welcome she shall be to a bed, as good as I can give her, and to our homely fare.

Fre. Ten thousand thanks and blessings on you!

Wife. Thanks and blessings; here's a piece of work indeed about nothing!—Good sick lady, lean on my shoulder. [*To FREDERICK.*] Thanks and rewards, indeed! Do you think husband and I have lived to these years, and don't know our duty?—Lean on my shoulder. [*Ereunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Room in the Cottage.

AGATHA, COTTAGER, his WIFE, and FREDERICK, discovered.—AGATHA reclining upon a Bench; FREDERICK leaning over her.

Fre. Good people, have you nothing to give her? Nothing that's nourishing?

Wife. Run, husband, run, and fetch a bottle of wine from the landlord of the inn.

Fre. No, no; his wine is as bad as his heart: she has drank some of it, which I am afraid has turned to poison.

Cot. Suppose, wife, you look for a new-laid egg?

Wife. Or a drop of brandy, husband; that mostly cures me.

Fre. Do you hear, mother? Will you, mother? She will not. Is there no doctor in this neighbourhood?

Wife. At the end of the village there lives a horse-doctor. I have never heard of any other.

Fre. What shall I do? She is dying. My mother is dying; pray for her, good people!

Ag. Make yourself easy, dear Frederick; I am well, only weak,—some wholesome nourishment—

Fre. Yes, mother, directly—directly. [*Aside.*] Oh! where shall I—no money—not a farthing left.

Wife. Oh, dear me! Had you not paid the rent yesterday, husband—

Cot. I then should know what to do. But, as I hope for mercy, I have not a penny in my house.

Fre. Then I must—[*Apart.*]—Yes I will go and beg. But, should I be refused—I will then—I leave my mother in your care, good people; do all you can for her, I beseech you! I shall soon be with you again. [*Erit.*]

Cot. If he should go to our parson, I am sure he would give him something. [*AGATHA rises.*]

Ag. Is that good old man still living who was minister here some time ago?

Wife. No—it pleased Providence to take that worthy man to heaven two years ago. We have lost in him both a friend and a father. We shall never get such another.

Cot. Wife, wife, our present rector is likewise a very good man.

Wife. Yes; but he is so very young.

Cot. Our late parson was once young too.

Wife. [*To AGATHA.*] This young man being tutor in our Baron's family, he is very much beloved by them all; and so the baron gave him this living in consequence.

Cot. And well he deserved it for his pious instructions to our young lady; who is, in consequence, good and friendly to every body.

Ag. What young lady do you mean?

Cot. Our baron's daughter.

Ag. Is she here?

Wife. Dear me! Don't you know that? I thought every body had known that. It is almost five weeks since the baron and all his family arrived at the castle.

Ag. Baron Wildenhaim?

Wife. Yes, Baron Wildenhaim.

Ag. And his lady?

Cot. His lady died in France, many miles from hence; and her death, I suppose, was the cause of his coming to this estate—for the baron has not been here till within these five weeks ever since he was married. We regretted his absence much, and his arrival has caused great joy.

Wife. By all accounts the baroness was very haughty, and very whimsical.

Cot. Wife, wife, never speak ill of the dead. Say what you please against the living, but not a word against the dead.

Wife. And yet, husband, I believe the dead care the least what is said against them.—And so, if you please, I'll tell my story. The late baroness was, they say, haughty and proud; and they do say, the baron was not so happy as he might have been: but he, bless him—our good baron, is still the same as when a boy. Soon after madam had closed her eyes, he left France, and came to Wildenhaim, his native country.

Cot. Many times has he joined in our village dances. Afterwards, when he became an officer, he was rather wild, as most young men are.

Wife. Yes, I remember when he fell in love with poor Agatha, Friburg's daughter: what a piece of work that was—It did not do him much credit. That was a wicked thing.

Cot. Have done—no more of this. It is not well to stir up old grievances.

Wife. Why, you said I might speak ill of the living. 'Tis very hard, indeed, if one must not speak ill of one's neighbours, dead or alive.

Cot. Who knows whether he was the father of Agatha's child? She never said he was.

Wife. Nobody but him, that I'm sure. I would lay a wager—no, no, husband, you must not take his part—it was very wicked! Who knows what is now become of that poor creature? She has not been heard of this many a year. May be, she is starving for hunger. Her father might have lived longer, too, if that misfortune had not happened.

Cot. See here! Help! She is fainting—take hold.

Wife. Oh, poor woman!

Cot. Let us take her into the next room.

Wife. Oh, poor woman! I am afraid she will not live. Come, cheer up, cheer up. You are with those who feel for you. [*They lead her into the cottage.*]

SCENE II.—An Apartment in the Castle.

Baron WILDENHAIM enters, attended by a gentleman in waiting.

Bar. Has not Count Cassel left his chamber yet?

Gen. No, my lord, he has but now rung for his valet.

Bar. The whole castle smells of his perfumery.—Go, call my daughter hither. [*Erit Gentleman.*] And am I, after all, to have an ape for a son-in-law? No, I shall not be in a hurry—I love my daughter too well. We must be better acquainted before I give her to him. I shall not sacrifice my Amelia to the will of others, as I myself was sacrificed. The poor girl might, in thoughtlessness, say yes, and afterwards be miserable. What a pity she is not a

boy! The name of Wildenheim will die with me. My fine estates, my good peasants, all will fall into the hands of strangers. Oh! why was not my Amelia a boy!

Enter AMELIA.

Ame. Good morning, dear my lord.

Bar. Good morning, Amelia. Have you slept well?

Ame. Oh! yes, papa. I always sleep well.

Bar. Not a little restless last night?

Ame. No.

Bar. Amelia, you know you have a father who loves you, and I believe you know you have a suitor, who is come to ask permission to love you. Tell me candidly how you like Count Cassel?

Ame. Very well.

Bar. Do not you blush when I talk of him?

Ame. No.

Bar. No?—I am sorry for that—[*Aside.*] Have you dream'd of him?

Ame. No.

Bar. Have you not dream'd at all to-night?

Ame. Oh, yes—I have dream'd of our chaplain, Mr. Anhalt.

Bar. Ah, ha! As if he stood before you and the Count to ask for the ring.

Ame. No, not that. I dream'd we were all still in France; and he, my tutor, just going to take his leave of us for ever.—I woke with the fright, and found my eyes full of tears.

Bar. Pshaw! I want to know if you can love the count. You saw him at the last ball we were at in France; when he capered round you; when he danced minuets; when he—but I cannot say what his conversation was.

Ame. Nor I either—I do not remember a syllable of it.

Bar. No? then I do not think you like him.

Ame. I believe not.

Bar. But I think proper to acquaint you, he is rich, and of great consequence: rich, and of consequence; do you hear?

Ame. Yes, dear papa. But my tutor has always told me, that birth and fortune are inconsiderable things, and cannot give happiness.

Bar. There he is right. But if it happens, that birth and fortune are joined with sense and virtue—

Ame. But is it so with Count Cassel?

Bar. Hem! Hem! [*Aside.*] I will ask you a few questions on this subject; but be sure to answer me honestly—Speak the truth.

Ame. I never told an untruth in my life.

Bar. Nor ever conceal the truth from me, I command you.

Ame. Indeed, my lord, I never will.

Bar. I take you at your word. And now reply to me truly—Do you like to hear the count spoken of?

Ame. Good or bad?

Bar. Good. Good.

Ame. Oh, yes; I like to hear good of every body.

Bar. But do you not feel a little fluttered when he is talked of?

Ame. No.

Bar. Are not you a little embarrassed?

Ame. No.

Bar. Don't you wish sometimes to speak to him, and have not the courage to begin?

Ame. No.

Bar. Do you not wish to take his part, when his companions laugh at him?

Ame. No—I love to laugh at him myself.

Bar. Provoking! [*Aside.*] Are not you afraid of him when he comes near you?

Ame. No, not at all.—Oh, yes, once.

Bar. Ah! now it comes!

Ame. Once at a ball he trod on my foot; and I was so afraid he should tread on me again.

Bar. You put me out of patience. Hear me, Amelia. To see you happy is my wish. But matrimony without concord is like a duetto badly performed; for that reason, nature, the great composer of all harmony, has ordained, that, when bodies are allied, hearts should be in perfect unison. However, I will send Mr. Anhalt to you—

Ame. Do, papa.

Bar. He shall explain to you my sentiments. [*Rings.*] A clergyman can do this better than—

Enter a Servant.

Go directly to Mr. Anhalt; tell him I shall be glad to see him for a quarter of an hour if he is not engaged. [*Erit Servant.*]

Ame. [*Calls after him.*] Wish him a good morning from me.

Bar. The count is a tedious time dressing.—Have you breakfasted, Amelia?

Ame. No, papa.

[*They sit down at table to breakfast.*]

Bar. How is the weather? Have you walked this morning?

Ame. Oh, yes—I was in the garden at five o'clock; it is very fine.

Bar. Then I'll go out shooting. I do not know in what other way to amuse my guest.

Enter Count CASSEL.

Cou. Ah, my dear Colonel! Miss Wildenheim, I kiss your hand.

Bar. Good morning; good morning; though it is late in the day, count. In the country we should rise earlier.

Cou. It is Hebe herself, or Venus, or—

Ame. Ha! ha! ha! Who can help laughing at his nonsense.

Bar. Neither Venus nor Hebe, but Amelia Wildenheim, if you please. [*Rises.*]

Cou. [*Sitting down to breakfast.*] You are beautiful, Miss Wildenheim.—Upon my honour, I think so. I have travelled, and seen much of the world, and yet I can positively admire you.

Ame. I am sorry I have not seen the world.

Cou. Wherefore?

Ame. Because I might then, perhaps, admire you.

Cou. True; for I am an epitome of the world. In my travels I learnt delicacy in Italy—(a little more cream)—[*Puts his cup over to Amelia.*]—hau-tour in Spain—in France, enterprise—in Russia, prudence—in England, sincerity—in Scotland, frugality—(a little more sugar, if you please, Miss Wildenheim)—in Ireland, hospitality—and in the wilds of America I learnt love.

Ame. Is there any country where love is taught?

Cou. In all barbarous countries. But the whole system is exploded in places that are civilized.

Ame. And what is substituted in its stead?

Cou. Intrigue.

Ame. What a poor uncomfortable substitute!

Cou. There are other things—Song, dance, the opera, and war.

Bar. What are you talking of there?

Cou. Of war, colonel.

Bar. [*Rising.*] Ay, we like to talk of what we don't understand.

Cou. [*Rising.*] Therefore, to a lady, I always speak of politics; and to her father on love

Bar. I believe, count, notwithstanding your sneer, I am still as much a proficient in that art as yourself.

Cou. I do not doubt it, my dear colonel, for you are a soldier; and, since the days of Alexander, whoever conquers men, is certain to overcome women.

Bar. An achievement to animate a poltroon.

Cou. And, I verily believe, gains more recruits than the king's pay.

Bar. Now we are on the subject of arms, should you like to go out a shooting with me for an hour before dinner?

Cou. Bravo, colonel! A charming thought! This will give me an opportunity to use my elegant gun: the butt is inlaid with mother-of-pearl. You cannot find better work, or better taste.—Even my coat-of-arms is engraved.

Bar. But can you shoot?

Cou. That I have never tried—except with my eyes, at a fine woman.

Bar. I am not particular what game I pursue.—I have an old gun; it does not look fine; but I can always bring down my bird.

Enter Servant.

Ser. Mr. Anhalt begs leave—

Bar. Tell him to come in.—I shall be ready in a moment. [*Exit Servant.*]

Cou. Who is Mr. Anhalt?

Ame. Oh, a very good man.

Cou. A good man! In Italy, that means a religious man; in France, it means a cheerful man; in Spain, it means a wise man; and in England, it means a rich man.—Which good man of all these is Mr. Anhalt?

Ame. A good man in every country except England.

Cou. And give me the English good man before that of any other nation.

Bar. And of what nation would you prefer your good woman to be, count?

Cou. Of Germany.

Ame. In compliment to me?

Cou. In justice to my own judgment.

Bar. Certainly. For have we not an instance of one German woman, who possesses every virtue that ornaments the whole sex; whether as a woman of illustrious rank, or in the more exalted character of a wife and a mother?

Enter Mr. ANHALT.

Anh. I come by your command, baron—

Bar. Quick, count. Get your elegant gun. I pass your apartments, and will soon call for you.

Cou. I fly.—Beautiful Amelia, it is a sacrifice I make to your father, that I leave for a few hours his amiable daughter. [*Exit.*]

Bar. My dear Amelia, I think it scarcely necessary to speak to Mr. Anhalt, or that he should speak to you on the subject of the count; but, as he is here, leave us alone.

Ame. Good morning, Mr. Anhalt.—I hope you are very well. [*Exit.*]

Bar. I'll tell you in a few words why I sent for you. Count Cassel is here, and wishes to marry my daughter.

Anh. Really!

Bar. He is—he—in a word, I don't like him.

Anh. And Miss Wildenhaim—

Bar. I shall not command, neither persuade her to the marriage—I know too well the fatal influence of parents on such a subject. Objections, to be

sure, if they could be removed—but when you find a man's head without brains, and his bosom without a heart, these are important articles to supply. Young as you are, Anhalt, I know no one so able to restore, or to bestow those blessings on his fellow creatures, as you. The count wants a little of my daughter's simplicity and sensibility. Take him under your care while he is here, and make him something like yourself. You have succeeded to my wish in the education of my daughter. Form the count after your own manner. I shall then have what I have sighed for all my life—a son.

Anh. With your permission, baron, I will presume to ask one question. What remains to interest you in favour of a man whose head and heart are good for nothing?

Bar. Birth and fortune. Yet, if I thought my daughter absolutely disliked him, or that she loved another, I would not thwart a first affection; no, for the world I would not. But that her affections are already bestowed is not probable.

Anh. Are you of opinion that she will never fall in love?

Bar. Oh, no! I am of opinion that no woman ever arrived at the age of twenty without that misfortune.—But this is another subject.—Go to Amelia, explain to her the duties of a wife, and of a mother—If she comprehends them as she ought, then ask her if she thinks she could fulfil those duties as the wife of Count Cassel.

Anh. I will.—But—I—Miss Wildenhaim—I—I shall—I—I shall obey your commands.

Bar. Do so. Ah! so far this weight is removed; but there lies still a heavier next my heart. You understand me.—How is it, Mr. Anhalt? Have you not yet been able to make any discoveries on that unfortunate subject?

Anh. I have taken infinite pains; but in vain. No such person is to be found.

Bar. Believe me, this burden presses on my thoughts so much, that many nights I go without sleep. A man is sometimes tempted to commit such depravity when young.—Oh, Anhalt! had I, in my youth, had you for a tutor; but I had no instructor but my passions; no governor but my own will. [*Exit.*]

Anh. This commission of the baron's, in respect to his daughter—I am—if I should meet her now, I cannot—I must recover myself first, and then prepare. A walk in the fields, and a fervent prayer.—After these, I trust, I shall return as a man whose views are solely placed on a future world; all hopes in this with fortitude resigned. [*Exit.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—An Open Field.

Enter FREDERICK, with a few pieces of money, which he turns about in his hand.

Fre. To return with this trifle, for which I have stooped to beg! return to see my mother dying! I would rather fly to the world's end. What can I buy with this; it is hardly enough to pay for the nails that will be wanted for her coffin. My great anxiety will drive me to distraction. However, let the consequence of our affliction be what it may, all will fall upon my father's head; and may he pant

for heaven's forgiveness as my poor mother.—[*At a distance is heard the firing of a gun, then the cry of "Halloo, halloo!"—Gamekeepers and Sportsmen run across the stage.*] Here they come—a nobleman, I suppose, or a man of fortune. Yes, yes—and I will once more beg for my mother.—May heaven send relief!

Enter the BARON, followed by the COUNT.

Bar. Quick, quick, count! Aye, aye, that was a blunder, indeed. Don't you see the dogs? There they run—they have lost the scent. [*Exit.*]

Cou. So much the better, colonel, for I must take a little breath.

[*FREDERICK goes up to him with great modesty.*]

Fre. Gentleman, I beg you will bestow, from your superfluous wants, something to relieve the pain, and nourish the weak frame, of an expiring woman.

Re-enter the BARON.

Cou. What police is here! that a nobleman's amusements should be interrupted by the attack of vagrants.

Fre. [*To the BARON.*] Have pity, noble sir, and relieve the distress of an unfortunate son, who supplicates for his dying mother.

Bar. [*Taking out his purse.*] I think, young soldier, it would be better if you were with your regiment on duty, instead of begging.

Fre. I would with all my heart: but at this present moment my sorrows are too great. I entreat your pardon. What you have been so good as to give me, is not enough.

Bar. Not enough!

Fre. No, it is not enough.

Cou. The most singular beggar I ever met in all my travels.

Fre. If you have a charitable heart, give me one dollar.

Bar. This is the first time I was ever dictated to by a beggar what to give him.

Fre. With one dollar you will save a distracted man.

Bar. I don't choose to give any more. Count, go on.

[*Exit COUNT, and as the BARON turns to follow him, FREDERICK seizes him by the breast, and draws his sword.*]

Fre. Your purse, or your life.

Bar. Here! here! seize and secure him.

[*Enter Gamekeepers, who lay hold of FREDERICK, and disarm him.*]

Fre. What have I done!

Bar. Take him to the castle, and confine him in one of the towers. I shall follow you immediately.

Fre. One favour I have to beg, one favour only.—I know that I am guilty, and am ready to receive the punishment my crime deserves. But I have a mother who is expiring for want,—pity her, if you cannot pity me—bestow on her relief. If you will send to yonder hut, you will find that I do not impose on you a falsehood. For her it was I drew my sword—for her I am ready to die.

Bar. Take him away, and imprison him where I told you.

Fre. 'Woe to that man to whom I owe my birth!

[*Exit with Gamekeepers.*]

Bar. Here, Frank, run directly to yonder hamlet; inquire in the first, second, and third cottage, for a poor sick woman—and if you really find such a person, give her this purse. [*Exit Gamekeeper.*] A most extraordinary event! And what a well-look-

ing youth; something in his countenance and address which struck me inconceivably! If it is true that he begged for his mother—but if he did—for the attempt upon my life he must die. Vice is never half so dangerous as when it assumes the garb of morality. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*A Room in the Castle.—Four chairs.*

Enter AMELIA.

Ame. Why am I so uneasy, so peevish; who has offended me? I did not mean to come into this room. In the garden I intended to go. [*Going—turns back.*] No, I will not—yes, I will—just go and look if my auriculas are still in blossom, and if the apple-tree is grown which Mr. Anhalt planted. I feel very low spirited—something must be the matter.—Why do I cry?—Am I not well?

Enter MR. ANHALT.

Ah! good morning, my dear sir—Mr. Anhalt, I mean to say.—I beg pardon.

Anh. Never mind, Miss Wildenheim—I don't dislike to hear you call me as you did.

Ame. In earnest!

Anh. Really. You have been crying. May I know the reason? The loss of your mother still?—

Ame. No; I have left off crying for her.

Anh. I beg pardon if I have come at an improper hour; but I wait upon you by the commands of your father.

Ame. You are welcome at all hours. My father has more than once told me, that he who forms my mind, I should always consider as my greatest benefactor. And my heart tells me the same.

Anh. I think myself amply rewarded by the good opinion you have of me.

Ame. When I remember what trouble I have sometimes given you, I cannot be too grateful.

Anh. [*Aside.*] Oh, heavens! [*To AMELIA.*] I—I come from your father with a commission.—If you please we will sit down. [*He places chairs, and they sit.*] Count Cassel is arrived.

Ame. Yes, I know.

Anh. And do you know for what reason?

Ame. He wishes to marry me.

Anh. Does he? But, believe me, the baron will not persuade you. No, I am sure he will not.

Ame. I know that.

Anh. He wishes that I should ascertain whether you have an inclination—

Ame. For the count, or for matrimony, do you mean?

Anh. For matrimony.

Ame. All things that I don't know, and don't understand, are quite indifferent to me.

Anh. For that very reason I am sent to you to explain the good and the bad of which matrimony is composed.

Ame. Then I beg first to be acquainted with the good.

Anh. When two sympathetic hearts meet in the marriage state, matrimony may be called a happy life. When such a wedded pair find thorns in their path, each will be eager, for the sake of the other, to tear them from the root. Where they have to mount hills, or wind a labyrinth, the most experienced will lead the way, and be a guide to his companion. Patience and love will accompany them in their journey, while melancholy and discord they leave far behind. Hand in hand they pass on from morning till evening, through their

summer's day, till the night of age draws on, and the sleep of death overtakes the one. The other, weeping and mourning, yet looks forward to the bright region where he shall meet his still surviving partner among trees and flowers, which themselves have planted in the fields of eternal verdure.

Ame. Oh, you may tell my father I'll marry.

[*Rising.*]

Anh. [*Rising.*] This picture is pleasing; but I must beg you not to forget that there is another on the same subject. When convenience and fair appearance, joined to folly and ill-humour, forge the fetters of matrimony, they gall with their weight the married pair. Discontented with each other—at variance in opinions—their mutual aversion increases with the years they live together. They contend most where they should most unite—torment where they should most soothe. In this rugged way, choked with the weeds of suspicion, jealousy, anger, and hatred, they take their daily journey till one of these also sleep in death. The other then lifts up his dejected head, and calls out in acclamations of joy—oh, liberty! dear liberty!

Ame. I will not marry.

Anh. You mean to say you will not fall in love.

Ame. Oh, no! I am in love.

Anh. Are in love! [*Starting.*] And with the count?

Ame. I wish I was.

Anh. Why so?

Ame. Because he would, perhaps, love me again.

Anh. Who is there that would not?

Ame. Would you?

Anh. I—I—me—I—I am out of the question.

Ame. No; you are the very person to whom I have put the question.

Anh. What do you mean?

Ame. I am glad you don't understand me. I was afraid I had spoken too plain.

Anh. Understand you! As to that—I am not dull.

Ame. I know you are not; and, as you have for a long time instructed me, why should not I now begin to teach you?

Anh. Teach me what?

Ame. Whatever I know and you don't.

Anh. There are some things I had rather never know.

Ame. So, you may remember, I said when you began to teach me mathematics. I said I had rather not know it; but now I have learnt it, it gives me a great deal of pleasure—and—perhaps, who can tell but that I might teach something as pleasant to you as resolving a problem is to me.

Anh. Woman herself is a problem.

Ame. And I'll teach you to make her out.

Anh. You teach?

Ame. Why not? None but a woman can teach the science of herself: and though I own I am very young, a young woman may be as agreeable for a tutress as an old one. I am sure I always learnt faster from you than from the old clergyman who taught me before you came.

Anh. This is nothing to the subject.

Ame. What is the subject?

Anh. Love.

Ame. [*Going up to him.*] Come, then, teach it me—teach it me as you taught me geography, languages, and other important things.

Anh. [*Turning from her.*] Pshaw!

Ame. Ah! you won't—you know you have already taught me that, and you won't begin again.

Anh. You misconstrue—you misconceive every

thing I say or do. The subject I came to you upon was marriage.

Ame. A very proper subject for the man who has taught me love, and I accept the proposal.

[*Courtesying.*]

Anh. Again you misconceive and confound me.

Ame. Ay, I see how it is,—you have no inclination to experience with me “the good part of matrimony.” I am not the female with whom you would like to go “hand-in-hand up hills, and through labyrinths”—with whom you would like to “root up thorns;” and with whom you would delight to “plant lilies and roses.” No; you had rather call out—“Oh, liberty! dear liberty!”

Anh. Why do you force from me what it is villainous to own?—I love you more than life—Oh, Amelia! had we lived in those golden times which the poets picture, no one but you—But, as the world is changed, your birth and fortune make—Our union is impossible.—To preserve the character, and, more, the feelings of an honest man, I would not marry you without the consent of your father; and could I, dare I, propose it to him?

Ame. He has commanded me never to conceal or disguise the truth. I will propose it to him. The subject of the count will force me to speak plainly, and this will be the most proper time, while he can compare the merit of you both.

Anh. I conjure you not to think of exposing yourself and me to his resentment.

Ame. It is my father's will that I should marry—it is my father's wish to see me happy.—If, then, you love me as you say, I will marry, and will be happy—but only with you. I will tell him this. At first he will start—then grow angry—then be in a passion. In his passion he will call me “undutiful;” but he will soon recollect himself, and resume his usual smiles, saying, “Well, well, if he love you, and you love him, in the name of heaven, let it be.”—Then I shall hug him round the neck, kiss his hands, run away from him, and fly to you; it will soon be known that I am your bride, the whole village will come to wish me joy, and heaven's blessing will follow.

Enter Butler.

Ah! is it you?

But. Without vanity, I have taken the liberty to enter this apartment the moment the good news reached my ears.

Ame. What news?

But. Pardon an old servant, your father's old butler, gracious lady, who has had the honour to carry the baron in his arms—and afterwards, with humble submission, to receive many a box o' the ear from you—if he thinks it his duty to make his congratulations with due reverence on this happy day, and to join with the muses in harmonious tunes on the lyre.

Ame. Oh! my good butler, I am not in a humour to listen to the muses and your lyre.

But. There has never been a birth-day, nor wedding-day, nor christening-day, celebrated in your family, in which I have not joined with the muses in full chorus. In forty-six years, three hundred and ninety-seven congratulations on different occasions have dropped from my pen. To-day, the three hundred and ninety-eighth is coming forth; for heaven has protected our noble master, who has been in great danger.

Ame. Danger! My father in danger! What do you mean?

But. One of the gamekeepers has returned to in-

form the whole castle of a base and knavish trick, of which the world will talk, and my poetry hand down to posterity.

Ame. What, what is all this?

But. The baron, my lord and master, in company with the strange count, had not been gone a mile beyond the lawn, when one of them—

Ame. What happen'd? Speak, for heaven's sake!

But. My verse shall tell you.

Ame. No, no; tell us in prose.

Anh. Yes, in prose.

But. Ah, you have neither of you ever been in love, or you would prefer poetry to prose. But excuse [*Pulls out a paper.*] the haste in which it was written. I heard the news in the fields—always have paper and a pencil about me, and composed the whole forty lines crossing the meadows and the park in my way home. [*Reads.*]

“Oh, muse, ascend the forked mount,

And lofty strains prepare,

About a baron and a count,

Who went to hunt the hare.

The hare she ran with utmost speed,

And sad and anxious looks,

Because the furious hounds, indeed,

Were near to her, gadzooks.

At length the count and baron bold

Their footsteps homeward bended—

For why, because, as you were told,

The hunting it was ended.

Before them straight a youth appears,

Who made a piteous pother,

And told a tale, with many tears,

About his dying mother.

The youth was in severe distress,

And seemed as he had spent all;

He look'd a soldier by his dress,

For that was regimental.

The baron's heart was full of ruth,

And from his eye fell brine O!

And soon he gave the mournful youth

A little ready rhino.

He gave a shilling, as I live,

Which sure was mighty well;

But to some people if you give

An inch—they'll take an ell.

The youth then drew his martial knife,

And seiz'd the baron's collar,—

He swore he'd have the baron's life,

Or else another dollar.

Then did the baron, in a fume,

Soon raise a mighty din,

Whereon came butler, huntsman, groom,

And eke the whipper-in.

Maugre this young man's warlike coat,

They bore him off to prison;

And held so strongly by his throat,

And almost stopp'd his whizzin.

Soon may a neckcloth called a rope

Of robbing cure this elf;

If so, I'll write, without a trope,

His dying speech myself.

And, had the baron chanced to die,

Oh! grief to all the nation,

I must have made an elegy,

And not this fine narration.

MORAL.

Henceforth let those who all have spent,
And would by begging live,

Take warning here, and be content

With what folks choose to give.

Ame. Your muse, Mr. Butler, is in a very inventive humour this morning.

Anh. And your tale too improbable even for fiction.

But. Improbable! It's a real fact.

Ame. What, a robber in our grounds at noon-day? Very likely, indeed!

But. I don't say it was likely—I only say it's true.

Anh. No, no, Mr. Verdun, we find no fault with your poetry: but don't attempt to impose it on us for truth.

Ame. Poets are allowed to speak falsehood, and we forgive yours.

But. I won't be forgiven, for I speak the truth. And here the robber comes, in custody, to prove my words.

“Soon may a neckcloth called a rope

Of robbing cure this elf;

If so, I'll write, without a trope,

His dying speech myself.” [*Exit.*

Ame. Look! as I live, so he does—they come nearer;—he's a young man, and has something interesting in his figure. An honest countenance, with grief and sorrow in his face. No, he is no robber—I pity him! Oh! look how the keepers drag him unmercifully into the tower—Now they lock it—Oh! how that poor unfortunate man must feel!

Anh. [*Aside.*] Hardly worse than I do.

Enter the BARON.

Ame. [*Runs up to him.*] A thousand congratulations, my dear papa.

Bar. For heaven's sake, spare your congratulations. The old butler, in coming up stairs, has already overwhelmed me with them.

Anh. Then, it is true, my lord? I could hardly believe the old man.

Ame. And the young prisoner, with all his honest looks, is a robber?

Bar. He is; but I verily believe for the first and last time. A most extraordinary event, Mr. Anhalt. This young man begged; then drew his sword upon me; but he trembled so when he seized me by the breast, a child might have overpowered him. I almost wish he had made his escape—this adventure may cost him his life, and I might have preserved it with one dollar; but now to save him would set a bad example.

Ame. Oh, no! my lord, have pity on him! Plead for him, Mr. Anhalt.

Bar. Amelia, have you had any conversation with Mr. Anhalt?

Ame. Yes, my lord.

Bar. Respecting matrimony!

Ame. Yes; and I have told him—

Anh. [*Hastily.*] According to your commands, Baron—

Ame. But he has conjured me—

Anh. I have endeavoured, my lord, to find out—

Ame. Yet, I am sure, dear papa, your affection for me—

Anh. You wish to say something to me in your closet, my lord?

Bar. What the devil is all this conversation? You will not let one another speak—I don't understand either of you.

Ame. Dear father, have you not promised you will not thwart my affections when I marry, but suffer me to follow their dictates?

Bar. Certainly.

Ame. Do you hear, Mr. Anhalt?
Anh. I beg pardon—I have a person who is waiting for me—I am obliged to retire.

[*Exit in confusion.*]

Bar. [*Calls after him.*] I shall expect you in my closet. I am going there immediately.

Ame. Pray, my lord, stop a few minutes longer: I have something of great importance to say to you.

Bar. Something of importance! to plead for the young man, I suppose! But that's a subject I must not listen to, [*Exit.*]

Ame. I wish to plead for two young men—For one, that he may be let out of prison; for the other, that he may be made a prisoner for life. [*Looks out.*] The tower is still locked. How dismal it must be to be shut up in such a place! and perhaps—[*Calls.*]—Butler! Butler! come this way. I wish to speak to you. This young man has risked his life for his mother, and that accounts for the interest I take in his misfortunes.

Enter the Butler.

Pray have you carried any thing to the prisoner to eat?

But. Yes.

Ame. What was it?

But. Some fine black bread, and water as clear as crystal.

Ame. Are you not ashamed? Even my father pities him. Go directly down to the kitchen, and desire the cook to give you something good and comfortable; and then go into the cellar for a bottle of wine.

But. Good and comfortable, indeed!

Ame. And carry both to the tower.

But. I am willing at any time, dear lady, to obey your orders; but, on this occasion, the prisoner's food must remain bread and water—It is the baron's particular command.

Ame. Ah! My father was in the height of passion when he gave it.

But. Whatsoever his passion might be, it is the duty of a true and honest dependant to obey his lord's mandates. I will not suffer a servant in this house, nor will I myself give the young man any thing except bread and water. But I'll tell you what I'll do; I'll read my verses to him.

Ame. Give me the key of the cellar—I'll go myself.

But. [*Gives the key.*] And there's my verses—[*Taking them from his pocket.*] Carry them with you, they may comfort him as much as the wine.

[*She throws them down—Exit.*]

But. [*In amazement.*] Not take them! Refuse to take them!—[*Takes them up, and reads.*]

"I must have made an elegy,

And not this fine narration."

[*Exit.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Prison in the Castle.

FREDERICK seated.

Fre. How a few moments destroy the happiness of man! When I, this morning, set out from my inn, and saw the sun rise, I sung with joy. [*Rises.*] Flattered with the hope of seeing my mother, I formed a scheme how I would with joy surprise her. But, farewell all pleasant prospects—I return to my native country, and the first object I behold is my

dying parent; my first lodging a prison; and my next walk will perhaps be—Oh, merciful providence! have I deserved all this?

Enter AMELIA, with a basket.

Ame. Wait there, Francis—I shall soon be back.

Fre. Who's there?

Ame. You must be both hungry and thirsty, I fear.

Fre. Oh, no! neither.

Ame. Here's a bottle of wine, and something to eat. [*Places the basket on the table.*] I have often heard my father say that wine is quite a cordial to the heart.

Fre. A thousand thanks, dear stranger. Ah! could I prevail on you to have it sent to my mother, who is upon her death-bed, under the roof of an honest peasant called Hubert! Take it hence, my kind benefactress, and save my mother.

Ame. But first assure me that you did not intend to murder my father.

Fre. Your father! Heaven forbid—I meant but to preserve her life who gave me mine.—Murder your father! No, no—I hope not.

Ame. And I thought not—or, if you had murdered any one, you had better have killed the count; nobody would have missed him.

Fre. Who, may I inquire, were those gentlemen whom I hoped to frighten into charity.

Ame. Ay, if you only intended to frighten them, the count was the very person for your purpose. But you caught hold of the other gentleman.—And could you hope to intimidate Baron Wildenhaim?

Fre. Baron Wildenhaim!—Almighty powers!

Ame. What's the matter?

Fre. The man to whose breast I held my sword—

Ame. Was Baron Wildenhaim—the owner of this estate—my father!

Fre. My father!

Ame. Good heaven, how he looks! I am afraid he's mad. Here! Francis, Francis! [*Exit.*]

Fre. My father! Eternal Judge! thou dost not slumber! The man, against whom I drew my sword this day, was my father! One moment longer, and, provoked, I might have been the murderer of my father! My hair stands on end! My eyes are clouded? I cannot see any thing before me! [*Stinks into a chair.*] If providence had ordained that I should give the fatal blow, who would have been most in fault?—I dare not pronounce—That benevolent young female who left me just now, is, then, my sister—and I suppose that fop who accompanied my father—

Enter MR. ANHALT.

Welcome, sir! By your dress you are of the church, and consequently a messenger of comfort. You are most welcome, sir.

Anh. I wish to bring comfort, and avoid upbraidings; for your own conscience will reproach you more than the voice of a preacher. From the sensibility of your countenance, together with a language and address superior to the vulgar, it appears, young man, you have had an education which should have preserved you from a state like this.

Fre. My education I owe to my mother. Filial love, in return, has plunged me into the state you see. A civil magistrate will condemn according to the law—a priest, in judgment, is not to consider the act itself, but the impulse which led to the act.

Anh. I shall judge with all the lenity my religion dictates: and you are the prisoner of a nobleman

who compassionates you for the affection which you bear towards your mother; for he has sent to the village where you directed him, and has found the account you gave relating to her true. With this impression in your favour, it is my advice, that you endeavour to see and supplicate the baron for your release from prison, and all the peril of his justice.

Fre. I—I see the baron! I—I supplicate for my deliverance. Will you favour me with his name? Is it not Baron—

Anh. Baron Wildenhaim.

Fre. Baron Wildenhaim! He lived formerly in Alsace?

Anh. The same. About a year after the death of his wife he left Alsace; and arrived here a few weeks ago to take possession of this his paternal estate.

Fre. So! his wife is dead; and that generous young lady who came to my prison just now is his daughter?

Anh. Miss Wildenhaim, his daughter.

Fre. And that young gentleman I saw with him this morning is his son?

Anh. He has no son.

Fre. Oh, yes, he has—I mean him that was out shooting to-day.

Anh. He is not his son.

Fre. [To himself.] Thank heaven!

Anh. He is only a visitor.

Fre. I thank you for this information; and, if you will undertake to procure me a private interview with Baron Wildenhaim—

Anh. Why private? However, I will venture to take you for a short time from this place, and introduce you; depending on your innocence, or your repentance—on his conviction in your favour, or his mercy towards your guilt. Follow me. [Exit.]

Fre. I have beheld an affectionate parent in deep adversity. Why should I tremble thus?—Why doubt my fortitude in the presence of an unnatural parent in prosperity? [Exit.]

SCENE II.—A Room in the Castle—table and two chairs.

Enter Baron WILDENHAIM and AMELIA.

Bar. I hope you judge more favourably of Count Cassel's understanding since the private interview you have had with him. Confess to me the exact effect of the long conference between you.

Ame. To make me hate him.

Bar. What has he done?

Ame. Oh! told me of such barbarous deeds he has committed.

Bar. What deeds?

Ame. Made vows of love to so many women, that, on his marriage with me, a hundred female hearts will at least be broken.

Bar. Pshaw! do you believe him?

Ame. Suppose I do not; is it to his honour that I believe he tells a falsehood?

Bar. He is mistaken merely.

Ame. Indeed, my lord, in one respect I am sure he speaks truth. For our old butler told my waiting-maid of a poor young creature who has been deceived, undone; and she and her whole family involved in shame and sorrow by his perfidy.

Bar. Are you sure the butler said this?

Ame. See him, and ask him. He knows the whole story,—indeed he does; the names of the persons, and every circumstance.

Bar. Desire he may be sent to me

Ame. [Goes to the door and calls.] Order old Verdun to come to the baron directly.

Bar. I know tale-bearers are apt to be erroneous. I'll hear from himself the account you speak of.

Ame. I believe it is in verse.

Bar. In verse!

Ame. But then, indeed, it's true.

Enter BUTLER.

Ame. Verdun, pray have you not some true poetry?

But. All my poetry is true—and, so far, better than some people's prose.

Bar. But I want prose on this occasion, and command you to give me nothing else. Have you heard of an engagement which Count Cassel is under to any other woman than my daughter?

But. I am to tell your honour in prose?

Bar. Certainly. Amelia, he does not like to divulge what he knows in the presence of a third person—leave the room. [Exit AMELIA.]

But. No, no—that did not cause my reluctance to speak.

Bar. What then?

But. Your not allowing me to speak in verse—for here is the poetic poem.

Bar. How dare you pretend to contend with my will? Tell me in plain language all you know on the subject I have named.

But. Well then, my lord, if you must have the account in quiet prose, thus it was—Phœbus, one morning, rose in the east, and having handed in the long-expected day, he called up his brother Hy-men—

Bar. Have done with your rhapsody.

But. Ay; I knew you'd like it best in verse—

[Reads.]

There lived a lady in this land,

Whose charms the heart made tingle;

At church she had not given her hand,

And therefore still was single.

Bar. Keep to prose.

But. I will, my lord; but I have repeated it so often in verse I scarce know how.—Count Cassel, influenced by the designs of Cupid in his very worst humour,—

Count Cassel woo'd this maid so rare,

And in her eye found grace;

And if his purpose was not fair—

Bar. No verse.

But. It probably was base.

I beg your pardon, my lord; but the verse will intrude, in spite of my efforts to forget it. 'Tis as difficult for me at times to forget, as 'tis for other men at times to remember. But, in plain truth, my lord, the count was treacherous, cruel, forsworn.

Bar. I am astonished! [Takes a chair and sits.]

But. And would be more so if you would listen to the whole poem. Pray, my lord, listen to it.

Bar. You know the family? All the parties?

But. I will bring the father of the damsel to prove the veracity of my muse. His name is Baden—poor old man! [Reads.]

The sire consents to bless the pair,

And names the nuptial day.

When, lo! the bridegroom was not there,

Because he was away.

Bar. But tell me—had the father his daughter's innocence to deplore?

But. Ah! my lord! ah! and you must hear that part in rhyme. Loss of innocence never sounds well except in verse. [Reads.]

For, ah! the very night before,
No prudent guard upon her,
The count he gave her oaths a score,
And took in change her honour.

[*BARON rises.*]

MORAL.

Then you, who now lead single lives,
From this sad tale beware;
And do not act as you were wives,
Before you really are.

Enter Count CASSEL.

Bar. [*To the BUTLER.*] Leave the room instantly.

Cou. Yes, good Mr. Family Post, leave the room,
and take your doggrels with you.

But. Don't affront my poem, your honour; for I
am indebted to you for the plot.

The count he gave her oaths a score,
And took in change her honour.

[*Exit BUTLER.*]

Bar. Count, you see me agitated.

Cou. What can be the cause?

Bar. I'll not keep you in doubt a moment. You
are accused, young man, of being engaged to another
woman, while you offer marriage to my child.

Cou. To only one other woman?

Bar. What do you mean?

Cou. My meaning is, that when a man is young
and rich, has travelled, and is no personal object of
disapprobation,—to have made vows but to one woman
is an absolute slight upon the rest of the sex.

Bar. Without evasion, sir, do you know the name
of Baden? Was there ever a promise of marriage
made by you to his daughter? Answer me plainly;
or must I take a journey to inquire of the father.

Cou. No; he can tell you no more than, I dare
say, you already know; and which I shall not con-
tradict.

Bar. Amazing insensibility! And can you hold
your head erect while you acknowledge perfidy?

Cou. My dear baron,—if every man who deserves
to have a charge such as this brought against him,
was not permitted to look up, it is a doubt whom we
might not meet crawling on all fours.

Bar. [*Starts—recollects himself*] Yet—neverthe-
less—the act is so atrocious—

Cou. But nothing new.

Bar. Yes—I hope—I hope it is new.

Cou. What, did you never meet with such a thing
before?

Bar. If I have—I pronounced the man who so
offended—a villain.

Cou. You are singularly scrupulous. I question
if the man thought himself so.

Bar. Yes, he did.

Cou. How do you know.

Bar. I have heard him say so.

Cou. But he ate, drank, and slept, I suppose?

Bar. Perhaps he did.

Cou. And was merry with his friends; and his
friends as fond of him as ever?

Bar. Perhaps—perhaps they were.

Cou. And perhaps he now and then took upon
him to lecture young men for their gallantries?

Bar. Perhaps he did.

Cou. Why, then, after all, baron, your villain is
a mighty good, prudent, honest fellow, and I have
no objection to your giving me that name.

Bar. But do you not think of some atonement to
the unfortunate girl?

Cou. Did your villain atone?

Bar. No: when his reason was matured, he

wished to make some recompense, but his endeavours
were too late.

Cou. I will follow his example, and wait till my
reason is matured, before I think myself competent
to determine what to do.

Bar. And till that time I defer your marriage
with my daughter.

Cou. Would you delay her happiness so long?
Why, my dear baron, considering the fashionable
life I lead, it may be these ten years before my judg-
ment arrives to its necessary standard.

Bar. I have the head-ache, count: these tidings
have discomposed, disordered me—I beg your ab-
sence for a few minutes.

Cou. I obey—and let me assure you, my lord,
that, although, from the extreme delicacy of your
honour, you have ever through life shuddered at se-
duction, yet there are constitutions, and there are
circumstances, in which it can be palliated.

Bar. Never.

Cou. Not in a grave, serious, reflecting man, such
as you, I grant. But in a gay, lively, inconsiderate,
flimsy, frivolous coxcomb, such as myself, it is excu-
sable: for me to keep my word to a woman would
be deceit: 'tis not expected of me. It is my cha-
racter to break oaths in love; as it is in your nature,
my lord, never to have spoken any thing but wisdom
and truth. [*Exit.*]

Bar. Could I have thought a creature so insigni-
ficant as that had power to excite sensations such
as I feel at present! I am, indeed, worse than he is,
as much as the crimes of a man exceed those of an
idiot.

Enter AMELIA.

Ame. I heard the count leave you, my lord, and
so I am come to inquire—

Bar. [*Sitting down.*] You are not to marry Count
Cassel—and now mention his name to me no more.

Ame. I won't, indeed I won't—for I hate his
name. But thank you, my dear father, for this
good news. [*Sits opposite to him.*] And who am I to
marry?

Bar. I can't tell.

Ame. I never liked the count.

Bar. Nor more did I.

Ame. I think love comes just as it pleases, with-
out being asked.

Bar. It does so.

Ame. And there are instances, where, perhaps,
the object of love makes the passion meritorious.

Bar. To be sure there are.

Ame. For example, my affection for Mr. Anhalt
as my tutor.

Bar. Right.

Ame. I should like to marry. [*Sighing*]

Bar. So you shall. It is proper for every body
to marry.

Ame. Why, then, does not Mr. Anhalt marry?

Bar. You must ask him that question yourself.

Ame. I have.

Bar. And what did he say?

Ame. Will you give me leave to tell you what he
said.

Bar. Certainly.

Ame. And what I said to him?

Bar. Certainly.

Ame. And won't you be angry?

Bar. Undoubtedly not.

Ame. Why, then—you know you commanded
me never to disguise or conceal the truth.

Bar. I did so.

Ame. Why, then, he said—

Bar. What did he say?

Ame. He said—he would not marry me without your consent for the world.

Bar. And pray, how came this the subject of your conversation?

Ame. [Both rising.] I brought it up.

Bar. You brought it up! and what did you say?

Ame. I said, that birth and fortune were such old-fashioned things to me, I cared nothing about either; and that I had once heard my father declare he should consult my happiness in marrying me beyond any other consideration.

Bar. I will once more repeat to you my sentiments. It is the custom in this country for the children of nobility to marry only with their equals; but, as my daughter's content is more dear to me than an ancient custom, I would bestow you on the first man I thought calculated to make you happy; by this I do not mean to say that I should not be severely nice in the character of the man to whom I gave you; and Mr. Anhalt, from his obligations to me, and his high sense of honour, thinks too nobly—

Ame. Would it not be noble to make the daughter of his benefactor happy?

Bar. But when that daughter is a child, and thinks like a child—

Ame. No, indeed, papa, I begin to think very like a woman. Ask him if I don't.

Bar. Ask him! You feel gratitude for the instructions you have received from him, and you fancy it love.

Ame. Are there two gratuities?

Bar. What do you mean?

Ame. Because I feel gratitude to you; but that is very unlike the gratitude I feel towards him.

Bar. Indeed!

Ame. Yes; and then he feels another gratitude towards me. What's that?

Bar. Has he told you so?

Ame. Yes.

Bar. That was not right of him.

Ame. Oh! if you did but know how I surprised him!

Bar. Surprised him!

Ame. He came to me by your command, to examine my heart respecting Count Cassel. I told him that I would never marry the count.

Bar. But him?

Ame. Yes, him.

Bar. Very fine, indeed! And what was his answer?

Ame. He talked of my rank in life; of my aunts and cousins; of my grandfather, and great grandfather; of his duty to you; and endeavoured to persuade me to think no more of him.

Bar. He acted honestly.

Ame. But not politely.

Bar. No matter.

Ame. Dear father! I shall never be able to love another—never be happy with any one else.

[Throwing herself on her knees.

Bar. Rise, I command you.

Enter ANHALT.

Anh. My lord, forgive me! I have ventured on the privilege of my office, as a minister of holy charity, to bring the poor soldier, whom your justice has arrested, into the adjoining room; and I presume to entreat you will admit him to your presence, and hear his apology or supplication.

Bar. Anhalt, you have done wrong. I pity the

unhappy boy; but you know I cannot, must not forgive him.

Anh. I beseech you, then, my lord, to tell him so yourself. From your lips he may receive his doom with resignation.

Ame. Oh, father! See him and take pity on him; his sorrows have made him frantic.

Bar. Leave the room, Amelia. Instantly.

[Exit AMELIA.]

Anh. He asked a private audience; perhaps he has some confession to make that may relieve his mind, and may be requisite for you to hear.

Bar. Well, bring him in—and do you wait in the adjoining room till our conference is over. I must then, sir, have a conference with you.

Anh. I shall obey your commands.

[He goes to the door, re-enters with FREDERICK, then retires.]

Bar. [Haughtily to FREDERICK.] I know, young man, you plead your mother's wants in excuse for an act of desperation: but, powerful as this plea might be in palliation of a fault, it cannot extenuate a crime like yours.

Fre. I have a plea for my conduct even more powerful than a mother's wants.

Bar. What's that?

Fre. My father's cruelty.

Bar. You have a father, then?

Fre. I have, and a rich one—Nay, one that's reputed virtuous and honourable. A great man, possessing estates and patronage in abundance; much esteemed at court, and beloved by his tenants; kind, benevolent, honest, generous—

Bar. And with all those great qualities abandons you?

Fre. He does, with all the qualities I mention.

Bar. Your father may do right; a dissipated, desperate youth, whom kindness cannot draw from vicious habits, severity may.

Fre. You are mistaken—My father does not discard me for my vices—He does not know me—has never seen me—He abandoned me, even before I was born.

Bar. What do you say?

Fre. The tears of my mother are all that I inherit from my father. Never has he protected or supported me—never protected her.

Bar. Why don't you apply to his relations?

Fre. They disown me, too; I am, they say, related to no one. All the world disclaim me, except my mother—and there again I have to thank my father.

Bar. How so?

Fre. Because I am an illegitimate son. My seduced mother has brought me up in patient misery. Industry enabled her to give me an education; but the days of my youth commenced with hardships, sorrow, and danger. My companions lived happy around me, and had a pleasing prospect in their view, while bread and water only were my food, and no hopes joined to sweeten it. But my father felt not that!

Bar. [To himself.] He touches my heart.

Fre. After five years' absence from my mother, I returned this very day, and found her dying in the streets for want—not even a hut to shelter her, or a pallet of straw—But my father feels not that! He lives in a palace, sleeps on the softest down, enjoys all the luxuries of the great; and, when he dies, a funeral sermon will praise his great benevolence, his christian charities.

Bar. [Agitated.] What is your father's name?

Fre. He took advantage of an innocent young woman, gained her affection by flattery and false promises; gave life to an unfortunate being,—who was on the point of murdering his father.

Bar. Who is he?

Fre. [With vehemence.] Baron Wildenhaim?

[The BARON'S emotion expresses his sense of amazement, guilt, shame, and horror.

Fre. In this house did you rob my mother of her honour; and in this house I am a sacrifice for the crime. I am your prisoner—I will not be free—I am a robber—I give myself up. You shall accompany me to the spot of public execution. You shall hear in vain the chaplain's consolation and injunctions. You shall find how I, in despair, will, to the last moment, call for retribution on my father.

Bar. Stop! Be pacified—

Fre. And when you turn your head from my extended corse, you will behold my weeping mother.—Need I paint how her eyes will greet you?

Bar. Desist—barbarian, savage, stop!

Enter ANHALT, alarmed.

Anh. What do I hear? What is this?—Young man, I hope you have not made a second attempt?

Fre. Yes; I have done what it was your place to do. I have made a sinner tremble.

[Points to the BARON, and exits.

Anh. What can this mean?—I do not comprehend—

Bar. He is my son!—He is my son!—Go, Anhalt;—advise me—help me—Go to the poor woman his mother—He can show you the way—make haste—speed to protect her—

Anh. But what am I to—

Bar. Go—your heart will tell you how to act.

[Exit ANHALT.

Who am I? What am I?—Mad—raving—no—I have a son—a son! The bravest—I will—I must—oh! Why have I not embraced him yet? why not pressed him to my heart? Ah! see—[Looking after him.]—He flies from the castle—Who's there? Where are my attendants?

Enter two Servants.

Follow him—bring the prisoner back.—But observe my command—treat him with respect—treat him as my son—and your master. [Exeunt.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—Inside of the Cottage.

AGATHA, Cottager, and his Wife, discovered,

Ag. Pray look and see if he's coming

Cot. It is of no use. I have been in the road; have looked up and down; but neither see nor hear any thing of him.

Wife. Have a little patience.

Ag. I wish you would step out once more—I think he cannot be far off.

Cot. I will; I will go. [Exit.

Wife. If your son knew what heaven had sent you, he would be here very soon.

Ag. I feel so anxious—

Wife. But why? I should think a purse of gold, such as you have received, would make any body easy.

Ag. Where can he be so long? He has been gone four hours. Some ill must have befallen him.

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Wife. It is still broad day-light—don't think of any danger.—This evening we must all be merry. I'll prepare the supper. What a good gentleman our Baron must be! I am sorry I ever spoke a word against him.

Ag. How did he know I was here?

Wife. Heaven only can tell. The servant that brought the money was very secret.

Ag. [To herself.] I am astonished! I wonder! Oh! surely he has been informed—Why else should he have sent so much money?

Re-enter Cottager.

Ag. Well! not yet!

Cot. I might look till I am blind for him—but I saw our new rector coming along the road; he calls in sometimes. May be, he will this evening.

Wife. He is a very good gentleman; pays great attention to his parishioners; and where he can assist the poor he is always ready.

Enter Mr. ANHALT.

Anh. Good evening, friends.

Cot. Thank you, reverend sir.

[They both run to fetch a chair.

Anh. I thank you, good people—I see you have a stranger here.

Cot. Yes, your reverence; it is a poor sick woman whom I took in doors.

Anh. You will be rewarded for it. [To AGATHA.] May I beg leave to ask your name?

Ag. Ah! If we were alone—

Anh. Good neighbours, will you leave us alone for a few minutes? I have something to say to this poor woman.

Cot. Wife, do you hear? Come along with me.

[Exeunt Cottager and his Wife.

Anh. Now—

Ag. Before I tell you who I am, what I am, and what I was—I must beg to ask—are you of this country?

Anh. No; I was born in Alsace.

Ag. Did you know the late rector personally, whom you have succeeded?

Anh. No.

Ag. Then you are not acquainted with my narrative.

Anh. Should I find you to be the person whom I have long been in search of, your history is not altogether unknown to me.

Ag. That you have been in search of! Who gave you such a commission?

Anh. A man, who, if it so prove, is much concerned for your misfortunes.

Ag. How? Oh, sir! tell me quickly—Whom do you think to find in me?

Anh. Agatha Friburg.

Ag. Yes, I am that unfortunate woman; and the man who pretends to take concern in my misfortunes is—Baron Wildenhaim—he who betrayed me, abandoned me and my child, and killed my parents. He would now repair our sufferings with this purse of gold. [Takes out the purse.] Whatever may be your errand, sir, whether to humble or to protect me, it is alike indifferently. I therefore request you to take this money to him who sent it. Tell him, my honour has never been saleable. Tell him, destitute as I am, even indigence will not tempt me to accept charity from my seducer. He despised my heart—I despise his gold. He has trampled on me—I trample on his representative.

[Throws the purse on the ground.

Anh. Be patient—I give you my word, that when

the baron sent this present to an unfortunate woman, for whom her son had supplicated, he did not know that woman was Agatha.

Ag. My son! what of my son?

Anh. Do not be alarmed!—The baron met with an affectionate son, who begged for his sick mother, and it affected him.

Ag. Begged of the baron! of his father!

Anh. Yes; but they did not know each other; and the mother received the present on the son's account.

Ag. Did not know each other? Where is my son?

Anh. At the castle.

Ag. And still unknown?

Anh. Now he is known—an explanation has taken place; and I am sent here by the baron, not to a stranger, but to Agatha Friburg—not with gold! His commission was—"do what your heart directs you."

Ag. How is my Frederick? How did the baron receive him?

Anh. I left the castle just in the moment the discovery was made. By this time your son is, perhaps, in the arms of his father.

Ag. Oh! is it possible, that a man, who has been twenty years deaf to the voice of nature, should change so suddenly?

Anh. I do not mean to justify the baron; but—he has loved you—and fear of his noble kindred alone caused his breach of faith to you.

Ag. But to desert me wholly, and wed another—

Anh. War called him away: wounded in the field, he was taken to the adjacent seat of a nobleman, whose only daughter, by anxious attention to his recovery, won his gratitude; and, influenced by the will of his worldly friends, he married. But no sooner was I received into the family, and admitted to his confidence, than he related to me your story; and at times would exclaim in anguish,—"The proud imperious baroness avenges the wrongs of my deserted Agatha." Again, when he presented me this living, and I left France to take possession of it, his last words, before we parted, were—"The moment you arrive at Wildenhaim, make all inquiries to find out my poor Agatha." Every letter I afterwards received from him contained,—"Still, still, no tidings of my Agatha." And fate ordained it should be so till this fortunate day.

Ag. What you have said has made my heart overflow.—Where will this end?

Anh. I know not yet the baron's intentions; but your sufferings demand immediate remedy; and one way only is left,—come with me to the castle. Do not start—you shall be concealed in my apartments till you are called for.

Ag. I go to the baron's!—No.

Anh. Go, for the sake of your son,—reflect, that his fortunes may depend upon your presence.

Ag. And he is the only branch on which my hope still blossoms; the rest are withered. I will forget my wrongs as a woman, if the baron will atone to the mother—he shall have the woman's pardon if he will merit the mother's thanks.—I will go to the castle—for the sake of my Frederick, go even to his father. But where are my good host and hostess, that I may take leave, and thank them for their kindness?

Anh. [Taking up the purse.] Here, good friend! Good woman!

Enter Cottager and his Wife.

Wife. Yes, yes, here am I.

Anh. Good people, I will take your guest with me. You have acted an honest part, and therefore receive this reward for your trouble.

[He offers the purse to Cottager, who puts it by, and turns away.]

And. [To the Wife.] Do you take it.

Wife. I always obey my pastor.

[Takes it.]

Ag. Good bye. [Shakes hands with the Cottagers.]

For your hospitality to me, may ye enjoy continued happiness!

Cot. Fare you well—fare you well.

Wife. If you find friends and get health, we won't trouble you to call on us again; but if you should fall sick, or be in poverty, we shall take it very hard if we don't see you. [Exit.]

SCENE II.—A Room in the Castle.

BARON sitting upon a sofa, FREDERICK standing near him, with one hand pressed between his—the BARON rises.

Bar. Been in battle too!—I am glad to hear it. You have known hard services, but now they are over, and joy and happiness will succeed. The reproach of your birth shall be removed, for I will acknowledge you my son and heir to my estate.

Fre. And my mother—

Bar. She shall live in peace and affluence. Do you think I would leave your mother unprotected for, unprotected? No! About a mile from this castle I have an estate called Weldeudorf—there she shall live, and call her own whatever it produces. There she shall reign, and be sole mistress of the little paradise. There her past sufferings shall be changed to peace and tranquillity. On a summer's morning we, my son, will ride to visit her; pass a day, a week, with her; and in this social intercourse time will glide pleasantly.

Fre. And pray, my lord, under what name is my mother to live, then?

Bar. How?

Fre. In what capacity? As your domestic—or as—

Bar. That we will settle afterwards.

Fre. Will you allow me, sir, to leave the room a little while, that you may have leisure to consider now?

Bar. I do not know how to explain myself in respect to your mother, more than I have done already.

Fre. My fate, whatever it may be, shall never part me from her. This is my firm resolution, upon which I call heaven to witness. My lord, it must be Frederick of Wildenhaim, and Agatha of Wildenhaim; or Agatha Friburg and Frederick Friburg. [Exit.]

Bar. Young man! Frederick! [Calling after him.] Hasty indeed! would make conditions with his father. No, no, that must not be. I just now thought how well I had contrived my plans—had relieved my heart of every burden, when, a second time, he throws a mountain upon it. Stop, friend conscience, why do you take his part? For twenty years thus you have used me, and been my torture.

Enter Mr. ANHALT.

Ah! Anhalt, I am glad you are come. My conscience and myself are at variance.

Anh. Your conscience is in the right.

Bar. You don't know yet what the quarrel is.

Anh. Conscience is always right—because it never speaks unless it is so.

Bar. Ay, a man of your order can more easily

attend to its whispers than an old warrior. The sound of cannon has made him hard of hearing. I have found my son again, Mr. Anhalt, a fine brave young man—I mean to make him my heir; am I in the right?

Anh. Perfectly.

Bar. And his mother shall live in happiness; my estate, Woldendorf, shall be her's—I'll give it to her, and she shall make it her residence. Don't I do right?

Anh. No.

Bar. No! What else should I do?

Anh. Marry her

Bar. I marry her!

Anh. Baron Wildenhaim is a man who will not act inconsistently; as this is my opinion, I expect your reasons if you do not.

Bar. Would you have me marry a beggar?

Anh. Is that your only objection?

Bar. I have more—many more.

Anh. May I beg to know them likewise?

Bar. My birth.

Anh. Go on.

Bar. My relations will despise me.

Anh. Go on.

Bar. 'Death! are not these reasons enough?—I know no other.

Anh. Now, then, it is my turn to state mine for the advice I have given you. But first I presume to ask a few questions. Did Agatha, by artful insinuation, gain your affection? or did she give you cause to suppose her inconstant?

Bar. Neither; but for me she was always virtuous and good.

Anh. Did it cost you trouble and earnest entreaty to make her otherwise?

Bar. Yes.

Anh. You pledged your honour?

Bar. Yes.

Anh. Called God to witness?

Bar. Yes.

Anh. The witness you called at that time was the Being who sees you now. What you gave in pledge was your honour, which you must redeem. Therefore, thank heaven that it is in your power to redeem it. By marrying Agatha, the ransom's made; and she brings a dower greater than any princess can bestow—peace to your conscience. If you then esteem the value of this portion, you will not hesitate a moment to exclaim,—Friends, wish me joy, I will marry Agatha.

[*BARON walks backwards and forwards, then takes ANHALT by the hand*

Bar. "Friend, wish me joy, I will marry Agatha."

Anh. I do wish you joy.

Bar. Where is she?

Anh. In the castle—in my apartments here—I conducted her through the garden to avoid curiosity.

Bar. Well, then, this is the wedding-day. This very evening you shall give us your blessing.

Anh. Not so soon, not so private. The whole village was witness of Agatha's shame—the whole

village must be witness of Agatha's re-established honour. Do you consent to this?

Bar. I do.

Anh. Now the quarrel is decided. Now is your conscience quiet?

Bar. As quiet as an infant's. I only wish the first interview was over.

Anh. Compose yourself. Agatha's heart is to be your judge.

Enter AMELIA.

Bar. Amelia, you have a brother.

Anh. I have just heard so, my lord; and rejoice to find the news confirmed by you.

Bar. I know, my dear Amelia, I can repay you for the loss of Count Cassel; but what return can I make to you for the loss of half your fortune?

Anh. My brother's love will be ample recompense.

Bar. I will reward you better. Mr. Anhalt, the battle I have just fought, I owe to myself: the victory I gained, I owe to you. A man of your principles, at once a teacher and an example of virtue, exalts his rank in life to a level with the noblest family—and I shall be proud to receive you as my son.

Anh. My lord, you overwhelm me with confusion, as well as with joy.

Bar. My obligations to you are infinite—Amelia shall pay the debt.

Anh. Oh, my dear father! what blessings have you bestowed on me in one day! [*To ANHALT.*] I will be your scholar still, and use more diligence than ever to please my master.

Anh. His present happiness admits of no addition.

Bar. Nor does mine—And there is yet another task to perform, that will require more fortitude, more courage, than this has done! A trial that—[*Bursts into tears.*] I cannot prevent them—Let me—let me—A few minutes will bring me to myself. Where is Agatha?

Anh. I will go and fetch her. [*Exit ANHALT.*

Bar. Stop! Let me first recover a little.—That door she will come from—that was once the dressing room of my mother—from that door I have seen her come many times—have been delighted with her lovely smiles—how shall I now behold her altered looks! Frederick must be my mediator. Where is he?—Where is my son? Now I am ready—my heart is prepared to receive her. Haste! haste! bring her in.

[*ANHALT leads in AGATHA—the BARON clasps her in his arms—then kneels by her side.*

Bar. Agatha, Agatha, do you know this voice?

Ag. Wildenhaim.

Bar. Can you forgive me?

Ag. Forgive you! [*Embracing him.*

Enter FREDERICK.

Fre. I hear the voice of my mother!—Ha! mother! father!

[*FREDERICK throws himself on his knees by the side of his mother—She clasps him in her arms.*

—*Amelia goes to the side of her father, attentively viewing AGATHA.—ANHALT stands on the side of FREDERICK.—The curtain slowly drops.*

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA;

AN OPERA, IN THREE ACTS,

BY JOHN GAY

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

CAPTAIN MACHEATH
FILCH
PEACHUM
LOCKIT
MAT-O'-THE-MINT
BEN BUDGE
CROOK-FINGER'D JACK
JEMMY TWITCHER
WAT DREARY
NIMMING NED
HARRY PADDINGTON
ROBIN OF BAGSHOT
DRAWER.

MRS. PEACHUM
POLLY
LUCY
MRS. COAXER
DOLLY TRULL
MRS. VIXEN
BETTY DOXEY
JENNY DIVER
MRS. SLAMMERKIN
SUKEY TAWDREY
MOLLY BRAZEN.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—Peachum's House.

PEACHUM *sitting at a table, with a large book of accounts before him.*

AIR.—PEACHUM.

Through all the employments of life,
Each neighbour abuses his brother;
Whore and rogue they call husband and wife;
All professions be-rogue one another.
The priest calls the lawyer a cheat;
The lawyer be-knaves the divine;
And the statesman, because he's so great,
Thinks his trade is as honest as mine.
A lawyer's is an honest employment; so is mine.
Like me, too, he acts in a double capacity; both
against rogues, and for them: for 'tis but fitting,
that we should protect and encourage cheats, since
we live by them.

Enter FILCH.

Filch. Sir, Black Moll has sent word, her trial comes on in the afternoon, and she hopes you will order matters so as to bring her off.

Peach. Why, as the wench is very active and industrious, you may satisfy her that I'll soften the evidence.

Filch. Tom Gag, sir, is found guilty.

Peach. A lazy dog! When I took him, the time before, I told him what he would come to, if he did not mend his hand. This is death without reprieve. I may venture to book him [*Writes*]; for Tom Gag, forty pounds. Let Betty Sly know, that I'll save her from transportation, for I can get more by her staying in England.

Filch. Betty hath brought more goods to our lock this year, than any five of the gang; and, in truth, 'tis pity to lose so good a customer.

Peach. If none of the gang takes her off, she may, in the common course of business, live a twelve-month longer. I love to let women 'scape. A good sportsman always lets the hen partridges fly, because the breed of the game depends upon them. Besides, here the law allows us no reward; there is nothing to be got by the death of women—except our wives.

Filch. Without dispute, she is a fine woman! 'Twas to her I was obliged for my education. To say a bold word, she has trained up more young fellows to the business than the gaming-table.

Peach. Truly, Filch, thy observation is right. We and the surgeons are more beholden to women, than all the professions besides.

AIR.—FILCH.

'Tis woman that seduces all mankind!

By her we first were taught the wheedling arts;
Her very eyes can cheat; when most she is kind,
She tricks us of our money, with our hearts.
For her, like wolves by night, we roam for prey,
And practice every fraud to bribe her charms;
For suits of love, like law, are won by pay,
And beauty must be fee'd into our arms.

Peach. But make haste to Newgate, boy, and let my friends know what I intend; for I love to make them easy, one way or another.

Filch. When a gentleman is long kept in suspense, penitence may break his spirit ever after. Besides, certainty gives a man a good air upon his trial, and makes him risk another, without fear

or scruple. But I'll away, for 'tis a pleasure to be a messenger of comfort to friends in affliction.

[*Exit.*]

Peach. But it is now high time to look about me for a decent execution against next sessions. I hate a lazy rogue, by whom one can get nothing till he is hanged. A register of the gang. [*Reading.*] "Crock-finger'd Jack—a year and a half in the service"—let me see how much the stock owes to his industry: one, two, three, four, five gold watches, and seven silver ones. A mighty clean-handed fellow! Sixteen snuff-boxes, five of them true gold; six dozen of handkerchiefs, four silver-hilted swords, half a dozen of shirts, three tie-periwigs, and a piece of broadcloth. Considering these are only the fruits of his leisure hours, I don't know a prettier fellow: for no man alive hath a more engaging presence of mind upon the road.—"Wat Dreary, alias Brown Will"—an irregular dog, who hath an underhand way of disposing of his goods; I'll try him only for a session or two longer, upon his good behaviour.—"Harry Paddington"—a poor petty larceny rascal, without the least genius! That fellow, though he were to live these six months, will never come to the gallows with any credit.—"Slippery Sam"—he goes off the next session; for the villain hath the impudence to have views of following his trade as a tailor, which he calls an honest employment.—"Mat-o'-the-Mint"—listed not above a month ago; a promising, sturdy fellow, and diligent in his way; somewhat too bold and hasty, and may raise good contributions on the public, if he does not cut himself short by murder.—"Tom Tiptle"—a guzzling soaking sot, who is always too drunk to stand himself, or to make others stand; a cart is absolutely necessary for him.—"Robin of Bagshot, alias Gordon, alias Bluff Bob, alias Caruncle, alias Bob Booty"—

Enter MRS. PEACHUM.

Mrs. P. What of Bob Booty, husband? I hope nothing bad hath betided him. You know, my dear, he's a favourite customer of mine—'twas he made me a present of this ring.

Peach. I have set his name down in the black list, that's all, my dear; he spends his life among women, and as soon as his money is gone, one or other of the ladies will hang him for the reward, and there's forty pounds lost to us for ever!

Mrs. P. You know, my dear, I never meddle in matters of death; I always leave those affairs to you. Women, indeed, are bitter bad judges in these cases; for they are so partial to the brave, that they think every man handsome, who is going to the camp or the gallows. But really, husband, you should not be too hard-hearted, for you never had a finer, braver set of men than at present. We have not had a murder among them all these seven months: and truly, my dear, that is a great blessing.

Peach. What a dickens is the woman always whimpering about murder for! No gentleman is ever looked upon the worse for killing a man in his own defence; and if business cannot be carried on without it, what would you have a gentleman do? So, my dear, have done upon this subject. Was Captain Macheath here, this morning, for the bank-notes he left with you last week?

Mrs. P. Yes, my dear; and though the bank hath stopped payment, he was so cheerful, and so agreeable! Sure, there is not a finer gentleman upon the road than the Captain! If he comes from Bagshot at any reasonable hour, he hath promised

to make one this evening, with Polly, me, and Bob Booty, at a party at quadrille. Pray, my dear, is the Captain rich?

Peach. The Captain keeps too good company ever to grow rich. Marybone and the chocolate-houses are his undoing. The man that purposes to get money by play, should have the education of a fine gentleman, and be trained up to it from his youth.

Mrs. P. Really, I am sorry, upon Polly's account, the Captain hath not more discretion. What business hath he to keep company with lords and gentlemen? he should leave them to prey upon one another.

Peach. Upon Polly's account! what a plague doth the woman mean?—Upon Polly's account!

Mrs. P. Captain Macheath is very fond of the girl.

Peach. And what then?

Mrs. P. If I have any skill in the ways of women, I am sure Polly thinks him a very pretty man.

Peach. And what then? you would not be so mad as to have the wench marry him! Gamblers and highwaymen are, generally, very good to their mistresses, but they are the very devils to their wives.

Mrs. P. But if Polly should be in love, how should we help her, or how can she help herself?—Poor girl! I am in the utmost concern about her.

Peach. Lookye, wife, a handsome wench, in our way of business, is as profitable as at the bar of a Temple coffee-house, who looks upon it as her livelihood, to grant every liberty but one. My daughter to me should be like a court lady to a minister of state, a key to the whole gang. Married! if the affair is not already done, I'll terrify her from it, by the example of our neighbours.

Mrs. P. Mayhap, my dear, you may injure the poor girl: she loves to imitate the fine ladies, and she may only allow the Captain liberties, in the view of interest.

Peach. But 'tis your duty, my dear, to warn the girl against her ruin; and to instruct her how to make the most of her beauty. I'll go to her this moment, and sift her. In the meantime, wife, rip out the coronets and marks of these dozen of cambric handkerchiefs; for I can dispose of them, this afternoon, to a chap in the city. [*Exit.*]

Mrs. P. Never was a man more out of the way in an argument than my husband. Why must our Polly, forsooth differ from her sex, and love only her husband? and why must Polly's marriage, contrary to all observation, make her the less followed by other men? All men are thieves in love, and like a woman the better for being another's property.

Enter FILCH.

Mrs. P. Come hither, Filch: I am as fond of this child, as though my mind misgave me he were my own. He hath as fine a hand at picking a pocket as a woman, and is as nimble-fingered as a juggler. If an unlucky session does not cut the rope of thy life, I pronounce, boy, thou wilt be a great man in history. Where was your post last night, my boy?

Filch. I plied at the opera, madam; and, considering 'twas neither dark nor rainy, so that there was no great hurry in getting chairs and coaches, made a tolerable hand on't. These seven handkerchiefs, madam. [*Taking them from different parts of his dress.*]

Mrs. P. Coloured ones, I see. They are of sure

sale from our warehouse at Redriff, among the seamen.

Filch. And this snuff-box.

Mrs. P. Set in gold! A pretty encouragement this to a young beginner!

Filch. I had a fair tug at a charming gold watch. Plague take the tailors, for making the fobs so deep and narrow! it stuck by the way, and I was forced to make my escape under a coach. Really, madam, I fear I shall be cut off in the flower of my youth, so that every now and then, since I was pumped, I have thoughts of taking up and going to sea.

Mrs. P. You should go to Hockley-in-the-Hole, and to Marybone, child, to learn valour; these are the schools that have bred so many brave men. I thought, boy, by this time, thou hadst lost fear as well as shame. Poor lad! how little does he know yet of the Old Bailey! For the first fact, I'll insure thee from being hanged: and going to sea, *Filch*, will come time enough upon a sentence of transportation. But, hark you, my lad,—don't tell me a lie; for you know I hate a liar:—do you know of any thing that hath passed between Captain Macheath and our Polly?

Filch. I beg you, madam, don't ask me; for I must either tell a lie to you, or to Miss Polly; for I promised her I would not tell.

Mrs. P. But, when the honour of our family is concerned—

Filch. I shall lead a sad life with Miss Polly, if ever she comes to know I told you. Besides, I would not willingly forfeit my own honour, by betraying anybody.

Mrs. P. Yonder comes my husband and Polly. Come, *Filch*, you shall go with me into my own room, and tell me the whole story. I'll give thee a glass of a most delicious cordial, that I keep for my own drinking. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter PEACHUM and POLLY.

Polly. I know as well as any of the fine ladies how to make the most of myself, and of my man too. A woman knows how to be mercenary, though she hath never been in a court, or at an assembly. We have it in our natures, papa. If I allow Captain Macheath some trifling liberties, I have this watch, and other visible marks of his favour, to show for it. A girl who cannot grant some things, and refuse what is most material, will make but a poor hand of her beauty, and soon be thrown upon the common.

AIR.—POLLY.

Virgins are like the fair flow'r in its lustre,
Which in the garden enamels the ground;
Near it the bees in play flutter and cluster,
And gaudy butterflies frolic around.

But when once pluck'd 'tis no longer alluring,
To Covent-garden 'tis sent (as yet sweet),
There fades, and shrinks, and grows past all enduring,

Rots, stinks, and dies, and is trod under feet.

Peach. You know, *Polly*, I am not against your toying and trifling with a customer, in the way of business, or to get out a secret or so; but if I find out that you have played the fool, and are married, you jade you! I'll cut your throat, hussy. Now you know my mind.

Enter Mrs. PEACHUM, in a passion.

AIR.—Mrs. PEACHUM.

Our *Polly* is a sad slut! nor heeds what we have taught her,
I wonder any man alive will ever rear a daughter!

For she must have both hoods and gowns, and hoops,
to swell her pride,
With scarves and stays, and gloves and lace, and she
will have men beside;
And when she's dress'd with care and cost, all
tempting, fine, and gay,
As men should serve a cucumber, she flings herself
away.

You baggage! you hussy! you inconsiderate jade! had you been hanged, it would not have vexed me; for that might have been your misfortune; but to do such a mad thing by choice!—The wench is married, husband.

Peach. Married! the Captain is a bold man, and will risk anything for money: to be sure, he believes her a fortune. Do you think your mother and I should have lived comfortably so long together, if ever we had been married, baggage?

Mrs. P. I knew she was always a proud slut; and now the wench hath played the fool and married; because, forsooth, she would do like the gentry! Can you support the expense of a husband, hussy, in gaming and drinking? Have you money enough to carry on the daily quarrels of man and wife about who shall squander most? If you must be married, could you introduce nobody into our family but a highwayman? Why, you foolish jade! thou wilt be as ill-used, and as much neglected, as if thou hadst married a lord!

Peach. Let not your anger, my dear, break through the rules of decency; for the Captain looks upon himself, in the military capacity, as a gentleman by his profession. Besides what he hath already, I know he is in a fair way of getting or of dying; and both these ways, let me tell you, are most excellent chances for a wife. Tell me, hussy! are you ruined or no?

Mrs. P. With *Polly's* fortune, she might very well have gone off to a person of distinction: yes, that you might, you pouting slut!

Peach. What! is the wench dumb? Speak, or I'll make you plead by squeezing out an answer from you. Are you really bound wife to him, or are you only upon liking? [*Pinching her.*]

Polly. Oh!

Mrs. P. How the mother is to be pitied who hath handsome daughters! Locks, bolts, bars, and lectures of morality, are nothing to them: they break through them all; they have as much pleasure in cheating a father and mother, as in cheating at cards.

Peach. Why, *Polly*, I shall soon know if you are married, by Macheath's keeping from our house.

AIR.—POLLY.

Can love be controll'd by advice?

Will Cupid our mothers obey?

Though my heart were as frozen as ice,
At his flame 'twould have melted away.

When he kiss'd me, so sweetly he press'd,

'Twas so sweet, that I must have complied,

So I thought it both safest and best,

To marry, for fear you should chide.

Mrs. P. Then all the hopes of our family are gone for ever and ever!

Peach. And Macheath may hang his father and mother in-law, in hopes to get into their daughter's fortune.

Polly. I did not marry him (as 'tis the fashion), coolly and deliberately, for honour or money—but I love him.

Mrs. P. Love him! worse and worse! I thought

the girl had been better bred. Oh, husband! husband! her folly makes me mad! My head swims! I'm distracted! I can't support myself—Oh!—

[Faints in a chair.]

Peach. See, wench, to what a condition you have reduced your poor mother! A glass of cordial this instant! How the poor woman takes it to heart! [*POLLY goes out and returns.—She gives the bottle and glass to PEACHUM, who hands a glass of it to Mrs. P.*] Ah, hussy! now this is the only comfort your mother has left.

Polly. Give her another glass, sir; my mamma drinks double the quantity whenever she is in this way. This, you see, fetches her.

[PEACHUM fills the glass.]

Mrs. P. The girl shows such readiness, and so much concern, that I almost could find in my heart to forgive her. [*Drinks again.*]

DUET.—*Mrs. PEACHUM and POLLY.*

Mrs. P. O Polly, you might have toy'd and kiss'd: By keeping men off, you keep them on.

Polly. But he so teased me,
And he so pleased me,
What I did, you must have done.

Mrs. P. Not with a highwayman, you sorry slut.

Peach. A word with you, wife. 'Tis no new thing for a wench to take a man without consent of parents. You know 'tis the frailty of woman, my dear.

Mrs. P. Yes, indeed, the sex is frail; but the first time a woman is frail, she should be somewhat nice methinks, for then or never is the time to make her fortune: after that she hath nothing to do but to guard herself from being found out, and she may do what she pleases.

Peach. Make yourself a little easy; I have a thought shall soon set all matters again to rights. Why so melancholy, Polly? since what is done cannot be undone, we must endeavour to make the best of it.

Mrs. P. Well, Polly, as far as one woman can forgive another, I forgive thee.—Your father is too fond of you, hussy.

Polly. Then all my sorrows are at an end.

Mrs. P. A mighty likely speech, in troth, for a wench who is just married!

AIR.—*POLLY.*

I like a ship in storms was toss'd,
Yet afraid to put into land,
For seiz'd in the port, the vessel's lost
Whose treasure is contraband.
The waves are laid,
My duty's paid;
O joy beyond expression!
Thus safe ashore,
I ask no more;
My all's in my possession.

Peach. I hear customers in t'other room. Go talk with them, Polly; but come again as soon as they are gone.—But harkye, child! if 'tis the gentleman who was here yesterday about the repeating watch, say you can't get intelligence of it till tomorrow, for I lent it to Sukey Straddle to make a figure with to-night at the tavern in Drury-lane. If t'other gentleman calls for the silver-hilted sword, you know Beetle-browed Jemmy hath it on, and he doth not come from Tunbridge till Tuesday night, so that it cannot be had till then. [*Exit POLLY.*]
Dear wife, be a little pacified; don't let your passion run away with your senses: Polly, I grant you, hath done a rash thing.

Mrs. P. If she had had only an intrigue with the fellow, why the very best families have excused and huddled up a frailty of that sort. 'Tis marriage, husband, that makes it a blemish.

Peach. But money, wife, is the true fuller's-earth for reputations; there is not a spot or stain but what it can take out. I tell you, wife, I can make this match turn to our advantage.

Mrs. P. I am very sensible, husband, that Captain Macheath is worth money, but I am in doubt whether he hath not two or three wives already; and then, if he should die in a session or two, Polly's dower would come into dispute.

Peach. That, indeed, is a point which ought to be considered. The lawyers are bitter enemies to those in our way; they don't care that anybody should get a clandestine livelihood but themselves.

Enter *POLLY.*

Polly. 'Twas only Nimming Ned: he brought in a damask window-curtain, a hoop-petticoat, a pair of silver candlesticks, a perriwig; and one silk stocking, from the fire that happened last night.

Peach. There is not a fellow that is cleverer in his way, and saves more goods out of the fire, than Ned. But now, Polly, to your affair; for matters must not be as they are. You are married then, it seems?

Polly. Yes, sir.

Peach. And how do you propose to live, child?

Polly. Like other women, sir, upon the industry of my husband.

Mrs. P. What! is the wench turned fool! A highwayman's wife, like a soldier's, hath as little of his pay as of his company.

Peach. And had not you the common views of a gentlewoman in your marriage, Polly?

Polly. I don't know what you mean, sir.

Peach. Of a jointure, and of being a widow.

Polly. But I love him, sir: how then could I have thoughts of parting with him?

Peach. Parting with him! why that is the whole scheme and intention of all marriage articles. The comfortable state of widowhood is the only hope that keeps up a wife's spirits. Where is the woman who would scruple to be a wife, if she had it in her power to be a widow whenever she pleased? If you have any views of this sort, Polly, I shall think the match not so very unreasonable.

Polly. How I dread to hear your advice! yet I must beg you to explain yourself.

Peach. Secure what he hath got; have him peached the next sessions, and then at once you are made a rich widow.

Polly. What! murder the man I love! the blood runs cold at my heart at the very thought of it!

Peach. Fie, Polly! what hath murder to do in the affair? Since the thing sooner or later must happen, I dare say that the Captain himself would like that we should get the reward for his death sooner than a stranger. Why, Polly, the Captain knows that as 'tis his employment to rob, so 'tis our's to take robbers. Every man in his business: so that there is no malice in the case.

Mrs. P. To have him 'peached is the only thing could ever make me forgive her.

AIR.—*POLLY.*

Oh ponder well! be not severe;

So save a wretched wife:

For on the rope that hangs my dear,
Depends poor Polly's life.

Mrs. P. But your duty to your parents, hussy, obliges you to hang him. What would many a wife give for such an opportunity!

Polly. What is a jointure, what is widowhood, to me? I know my heart; I cannot survive him. Thus, sir, it will happen to your poor Polly.

Mrs. P. What! is the fool in love in earnest then? I hate thee for being particular. Why, wench, thou art a shame to thy very sex.

Polly. But hear me, mother—if you ever loved—

Mrs. P. Those cursed play-books she reads have been her ruin! One word more, hussy, and I shall knock your brains out, if you have any.

Peach. Keep out of the way, Polly, for fear of mischief; and consider of what is proposed to you.

Mrs. P. Away, hussy! Hang your husband, and be dutiful.—[*Exit POLLY.*—The thing, husband, must and shall be done. If she will not know her duty, we know ours.

Peach. But really, my dear, it grieves one's heart to take off a great man. When I consider his personal bravery, his fine stratagems, how much we have already got by him, and how much more we may get, methinks I can't find in my heart to have a hand in his death: I wish you could have made Polly undertake it.

Mrs. P. But in case of necessity—our own lives are in danger.

Peach. Then, indeed, we must comply with the customs of the world, and make gratitude give way to interest: he shall be taken off.

Mrs. P. I'll undertake to manage Polly.

Peach. And I'll prepare matters for the Old Bailey. [*Ereunt.*]

Enter POLLY.

Polly. Now I'm a wretch indeed!—Methinks I see him already in the cart, sweeter and more lovely than the nosegay in his hand! I hear the crowd extolling his resolution and intrepidity!—I see him at the tree! the whole circle are in tears! What then will become of Polly? As yet I may inform him of their designs, and aid him in his escape.—It shall be so.—But then he flies, absents himself, and I bar myself from his dear, dear conversation! that too will distract me. If he keeps out of the way, my papa and mamma may in time relent, and we may be happy.—If he stays he is hanged, and then he is lost for ever! He intended to lie concealed in my room till the dusk of the evening. If they are abroad, I'll this instant let him out, lest some accident should prevent him. [*Knocks.*]

Enter MACHEATH.

DUET.—MACHEATH and POLLY.

Mac. Pretty Polly, say,
When I was away,
Did your fancy never stray
To some newer lover?

Polly. Without disguise,
Heaving sighs,
Doating eyes,
My constant heart discover.
Fondly let me loll!

Mac. O pretty, pretty Poll!

Polly. And are you as fond of me as ever, my dear?

Mac. Suspect my honour, my courage, suspect anything but my love. May my pistols miss fire, and my mare slip her shoulder, while I am pursued, if ever I forsake thee!

Polly. Nay, my dear, I have no reason to doubt

you; for I find, in the romance you lent me, none of the great heroes were false in love.

AIR.—MACHEATH.

My heart was so free,
It roved like the bee,
Till Polly my passion requited;
I sipp'd each flower,
I changed every hour,
But here ev'ry flow'r is united.

Polly. Were you sentenced to transportation, sure, my dear, you could not leave me behind you—could you?

Mac. Is there any power, any force, that could tear me from thee? You might sooner tear a pension out of the hands of a courtier, a fee from a lawyer, a pretty woman from a looking-glass, or any woman from quadrille—but to tear me from thee is impossible!

DUET.—MACHEATH and POLLY.

Mac. Were I laid on Greenland's coast,
And in my arms embrac'd my lass,
Warm amidst eternal frost,
Too soon the half-year's night would pass.

Polly. Were I sold on Indian soil,
Soon as the burning day was clos'd,
I could mock the sultry toil,
When on my charmer's breast repos'd.

Mac. And I would love you all the day,

Polly. Every night would kiss and play

Mac. If with me you'd fondly stray

Polly. Over the hills and far away.

Polly. Yes, I would go with thee. But oh!—how shall I speak it? I must be torn from thee! We must part!

Mac. How! part?

Polly. We must, we must! My papa and mamma are set against thy life. They now, even now, are in search after thee: they are preparing evidence against thee; thy life depends upon a moment!

Mac. My hand, my heart, my dear, are so rivetted to thine, that I cannot unlose my hold!

Polly. But my papa may intercept thee, and then I should lose the very glimmering of hope. A few weeks, perhaps, may reconcile us all. Shall thy Polly hear from thee?

Mac. Must I then go?

Polly. And will not absence change your love?

Mac. If you doubt it, let me stay, and be hanged.
Polly. Oh, how I fear! how I tremble! Go; but, when safety will give you leave, you will be sure to see me again; for, till then, Polly is wretched.

DUET.—MACHEATH and POLLY.

Mac. The miser thus a shilling sees,
Which he's obliged to pay;
With sighs resigns it by degrees,
And fears 'tis gone for aye.

Polly. The boy thus, when his sparrow's flown,
The bird in silence eyes;
But soon as out of sight 'tis gone,
Whines, whimpers, sobs, and cries.

[*Ereunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—1 Tavern near Newgate.

JEMMY TWITCHER, CROOK-FINGERED JACK, WAT DREARY, ROBIN OF BAGSHOT, NIMMING NED, HARRY PADDINGTON, MAT-O'-THE MINT, BEN BUDGE, and the rest of the Gang, discovered at a table, with wine, brandy, and tobacco.

Ben. But pr'ythee, Mat, what is become of thy brother Tom? I have not seen him since my return from transportation.

Mat. Poor brother Tom had an accident, this time twelvemonth, and so clever a made fellow he was, I could not save him from those stealing rascals, the surgeons; and now, poor man, he is among the otamies, at Surgeon's-hall.

Ben. So, it seems, his time was come.

Jemmy. But the present time is our's, and nobody alive hath more. Why are the laws levelled at us? Are we more dishonest than the rest of mankind? What we win, gentlemen, is our own, by the law of arms, and the right of conquest.

Jack. Where shall we find such another set of practical philosophers; who, to a man, are above the fear of death?

Wat. Sound men and true!

Robin. Of tried courage, and indefatigable industry!

Ned. Who is there here that would not die for his friend?

Harry. Who is there here that would betray him for his interest?

Mat. Show me a gang of courtiers that can say as much. *[All laugh.]*

Ben. We are for a just partition of the world, for every man has a right to enjoy life.

Mat. We retrench the superfluities of mankind. The world is avaricious, and I hate avarice. A covetous fellow, like a jackdaw, steals what he was never made to enjoy, for the sake of hiding it. These are the robbers of mankind; for money was made for the free-hearted and generous: and where is the injury of taking from another what he hath not the heart to make use of? *[All laugh.]*

Jemmy. Our several stations for the day are fixed. Good luck attend us all! Fill the glasses.

AIR.—MAT.

Fill ev'ry glass, for wine inspires us,

And fires us,

With courage, love, and joy,

Women and wine should life employ;

Is there aught else on earth desirous?

Chorus. Fill ev'ry glass, &c.

Enter MACHEATH.

Mac. Gentlemen, well met: my heart hath been with you this hour, but an unexpected affair hath detained me. No ceremony, I beg you.

Mat. We were just breaking up, to go upon duty. Am I to have the honour of taking the air with you, sir, this evening upon the heath? I drink a dram, now and then, with the stage-coachmen, in the way of friendship and intelligence; and I know that, about this time, there will be passengers upon the western road, who are worth speaking with.

Mac. I was to have been of that party; but—

Mat. But what, sir?

Mac. Is there any one that suspects my courage?

Mat. We have all been witnesses of it.

Mac. My honour and truth to the gang?

Mat. I'll be answerable for it.

Mac. In the division of our booty, have I ever shewn the least marks of avarice or injustice?

Mat. By these questions, something seems to have ruffled you. Are any of us suspected?

Mac. I have a fixed confidence, gentlemen, in you all, as men of honour, and as such I value and respect you. Peachum is a man that is useful to us.

Mat. Is he about to shew us any foul play? I'll shoot him through the head.

All. And I.

Mac. I beg you, gentlemen, act with conduct and discretion. A pistol is your last resort.

Mat. He knows nothing of this meeting.

Mac. Business cannot go on without him: he is a man who knows the world, and is a necessary agent to us. We have had a slight difference; and till it is accommodated, I shall be obliged to keep out of his way. Any private dispute of mine shall be of no ill consequence to my friends. You must continue to act under his direction; for the moment we break loose from him, our gang is ruined.

Mat. He is, to us, of great convenience.

Mac. Make him believe I have quitted the gang.

All. How?

Mac. Which I never can do but with life. At our private quarters I will continue to meet you. A week, or so, will probably reconcile us.

Mat. Your instructions shall be observed. 'Tis now high time for us to repair to our several duties; so, till the evening, at our quarters, in Moorfields, we bid you farewell.

Mac. I shall wish myself with you. Success attend you. *[Sits down melancholy at a table.]*

AIR AND CHORUS.

MAT-O'-THE-MINT and Gang.

Let us take the road;

Hark! I hear the sound of coaches,

The hour of attack approaches,

To your arms, brave boys, and load.

See the ball I hold!

Let the chemists toil like asses,

Our fire their fire surpasses,

And turns all our lead to gold.

[The Gang, ranged in front of the stage, load their pistols, and stick them under their girdles; then go off, singing the first part in chorus.]

Mac. What a fool is a fond wench; Polly is most confoundedly bit. I love the sex; and a man who loves money might as well be contented with one guinea, as I with one woman. The town, perhaps, hath been as much obliged to me for recruiting it with free-hearted ladies, as to any recruiting officer in the army. If it were not for us, and the other gentlemen of the sword, Drury-lane would be uninhabited.

AIR.—MACHEATH.

If the heart of a man is depress'd with cares,
The mist is dispell'd when a woman appears;
Like the notes of a fiddle, she sweetly, sweetly,
Raises the spirits, and charms our ears.
Roses and lilies her cheeks disclose,
But her ripe lips are more sweet than those.

Press her,

Caress her,

With blisses,

Her kisses

Dissolve us in pleasure and soft repose.

I must have women; there is nothing unbends the mind like them: money is not so strong a cordial for the time. Drawer!

Enter Drawer.

Is the porter gone for all the ladies, according to my directions?

Drawer. I expect him back every minute; but you know, sir, you sent him as far as Hockley-in-the-hole for three of the ladies; for one in Vinegar-yard, and for the rest of them, somewhere about Lewkner's-lane. Sure some of them are below, for I hear the bar bell. As they come, I will shew them up. Coming! coming!

[Exit.]

Enter Mrs. COAXER, DOLLY TRULL, Mrs. VIXEN, BETTY DOXY, JENNY DIVER, Mrs. SLAMMERKIN, SUKEY TAWDRY, and MOLLY BRAZEN.

Mac. Dear Mrs. Coaxer, you are welcome; you look charmingly to-day: I hope you don't want the repairs of quality, and lay on paint. Dolly Trull, kiss me, you slut; you are always so taken up with stealing hearts, that you don't allow yourself time to steal any thing else. Ah, Dolly! thou wilt ever be a coquette. Mrs. Vixen, I'm your's; I always loved a woman of wit and spirit; they make charming mistresses, but plaguy wives. Betty Doxy! come hither, hussy: do you drink as hard as ever? You had better stick to good wholesome beer; for, in troth, Betty, strong waters will, in time, ruin your constitution; you should leave those to your betters. What, and my pretty Jenny Diver too! as prim and demure as ever: there is not any prude, though ever so high bred, hath a more sanctified look, with a more mischievous heart. Ah, thou art a dear, artful hypocrite! Mrs. Slammerkin! as careless and genteel as ever! All you fine ladies, who know your own beauty, affect an undress. But see, here's Sukey Tawdry come to contradict what I was saying. Molly Brazen! *[She kisses him.]* That's well done! I love a free-hearted wench: thou hast a most agreeable assurance, girl, and art as willing as a turtle.

AIR AND CHORUS.

MACHEATH and Ladies.

Youth's the season made for joys
Love is then our duty;
She alone who that employs,
Well deserves her beauty.
Let's be gay,
While we may,
Beauty's a flower despis'd in decay.

Chorus. Youth's the season, &c.

Let us drink and sport to-day,
Our's is not to-morrow;
Love with youth flies swift away,
Age is nought but sorrow.
Dance and sing,
Time's on the wing,
Life never knows the return of spring.

Chorus. Let us drink, &c.

Mac. Now, pray, ladies, take your places. Here, Drawer, bring us more wine. If any of the ladies choose gin, I hope they will be so free as to call for it.

Jenny. You look as if you meant me. Wine is strong enough for me. Indeed, sir, I never drink strong waters but when I have the cholick.

Mac. Just the excuse of the fine ladies: why a lady of quality is never without the cholick. I hope Mrs. Coaxer, you have had good success of late in your visits among the mercers.

Mrs. C. We have so many interlopers; yet, with industry, one may still have a little picking. If any woman hath more art than another, to be sure 'tis Jenny Diver.

Mac. Have done with your compliments, ladies, and drink about. You are not so fond of me, Jenny, as you used to be.

Jenny. 'Tis not convenient, sir, to shew my fondness among so many rivals. 'Tis your own choice, and not the warmth of my inclination, that will determine you. But, to be sure, sir, with so much good fortune as you have had upon the road, you must be grown immensely rich.

Mac. The reed, indeed, hath done me justice; but the gaming table hath been my ruin.

Jenny. A man of courage should never put anything to the risk but his life. These are the tools of a man of honour; *[putting his pistols on the table]* cards and dice are only fit for cowardly cheats, who prey upon their friends. *[She takes up one of his pistols, SUKEY TAWDRY the other.]*

Sukey. This, sir, is fitter for your hand. Besides your loss of money, 'tis a loss to the ladies. How fond could I be of you; but, before company 'tis ill-bred.

Mac. Wanton hussies!

Jenny. I must, and will, have a kiss to give my wine a zest. *[They take him about the neck, and make signs to PEACHUM and Constables, who rush in upon him.]*

Peach. I seize you, sir, as my prisoner.

Mac. Was this well done, Jenny? Women are decoy ducks. Who can trust them? Jades, jilts, furies!

Peach. Your case, Mr. Macheath, is not particular. The greatest heroes have been ruined by women.—But to do them justice, I must own they are a pretty sort of creatures, if we could trust them. You must now, sir, take your leave of the ladies; and, if they have a mind to make you a visit, they will be sure to find you at home. This gentleman, ladies, lodges in Newgate. Constables, wait upon the Captain to his lodgings.

AIR.—MACHEATH.

At the tree I shall suffer with pleasure,
At the tree I shall suffer with pleasure;
Let me go where I will,
In all kinds of ill,
I shall find no such furies as these are.

[Exit, guarded by PEACHUM and Constables.]

Mrs. V. Lookye, Mrs. Jenny; though Mr. Peachum may have made a private bargain with you and Sukey Tawdry, for betraying the Captain, as we were all assisting, we ought to share alike.

Jenny. As far as a bowl of punch, or a treat, I believe, Mrs. Sukey will join me; as for anything else, ladies, you cannot, in conscience, expect it.

Mrs. S. Dear madam! *[Offering the pass to Mrs. VIXEN.]*

Mrs. V. I wouldn't for the world.

Mrs. S. Nay, then I must stay here all night.

Mrs. V. Since you command me—

Mrs. S. *[After having given way to Mrs. VIXEN, pushes her from the door.]* Let your betters go before you. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE II.—Newgate.

Enter LOCKIT, MACHEATH, and Constables.

Lockit. Noble Captain you are welcome! You have not been a lodger of mine this year and a half.

You know the custom, sir; garnish, Captain, garnish. Hand me down those fetters there. [*Noise of chains behind.*]

Mac. Those, Mr. Lockit seem to be the heaviest of the whole set. With your leave, I should like the further pair better.

Lockit. Lookye, Captain, we know what is fittest for our prisoners. When a gentleman uses me with civility, I always do the best I can to please him. Hand them down, I say! We have them of all prices, from one guinea to ten; and 'tis fitting every gentleman should please himself.

Mac. I understand you, sir. [*Gives money.*] The fees here are so many, and so exorbitant, that few fortunes can bear the expense of getting off handsomely, or of dying like a gentleman.

Lockit. Those, I see, will fit the Captain better. Take down the further pair.

Enter Turnkey with the chains.

Do but examine them, sir. Never was better work; how genteelly they are made! They will sit as easy as a glove, and the nicest man in England might not be ashamed to wear them. [*He puts on the chains.*] If I had the best gentleman in the land in my custody, I could not equip him more handsomely. And so, sir, I now leave you to your private meditations. [*Exeunt LOCKIT and Turnkey.*]

AIR.—MACHEATH.

Man may escape from rope and gun,

Nay, some have out-liv'd the doctor's pill;

Who takes a woman must be undone,

That basilisk is sure to kill.

The fly, that sips treacle, is lost in the sweets,

So he that tastes woman, woman, woman,

He that tastes woman, ruin meets.

To what a woeful plight have I brought myself! Here must I (all day long, till I am hanged,) be confined to hear the reproaches of a wench who lays her ruin at my door. I am in the custody of her father; and, to be sure, if he knows of the matter, I shall have a fine time on't betwixt this and my execution. But I promised the wench marriage. What signifies a promise to a woman? Does not man, in marriage itself, promise a hundred things that he never means to perform? Do all we can, women will believe us; for they look upon a promise as an excuse for following their own inclinations. But here comes Lucy, and I cannot get from her: 'would I were deaf!

Enter LUCY through the arch.

Lucy. You base man, you! how can you look me in the face, after what hath past between us! Oh, Macheath! thou hast robbed me of my quiet. To see thee tortured would give me pleasure.

AIR.—LUCY.

Thus, when a good housewife sees a rat,

In her trap in the morning taken,

With pleasure her heart goes pit-a-pat,

In revenge for her loss of bacon.

Then she throws him

To the dog or cat,

To be worried, crush'd, and shaken.

Mac. Have you notenderness, my dear Lucy! to see your husband in these circumstances?

Lucy. A husband!

Mac. In every respect but the form; and that, my dear, may be said over us at any time. Friends should not insist upon ceremonies. From a man of honour, his word is as good as his bond.

Lucy. It is the pleasure of all you fine men to insult the women you have ruined.

Mac. The very first opportunity, my dear but have patience, you shall be my wife in whatever manner you please.

Lucy. Insinuating monster! And so you think I know nothing of the affair of Miss Polly Peachum? I could tear thy eyes out.

Mac. Sure, Lucy, you can't be such a fool as to be jealous of Polly?

Lucy. Are you not married to her, you brute, you?

Mac. Married! very good. The wench gives it out only to vex thee, and to ruin me in thy good opinion. 'Tis true I go to the house, I chat with the girl, I say a thousand things to her, as all gentlemen do, that mean nothing, to divert myself; and now the silly jade has set it about that I am married to her. Indeed, my dear Lucy, those violent passions may be of ill consequence to a woman in your condition.

Lucy. Come, come, Captain, for all your assurance, you know that Miss Polly hath put it out of your power to do me the justice you promised me.

Mac. A jealous woman believes everything her passion suggests. To convince you of my sincerity, if we can find the ordinary, I shall have no scruples of making you my wife; and I know the consequence of having two at a time.

Lucy. That you are only to be hanged and so get rid of them both.

Mac. I am ready, my dear Lucy, to give you satisfaction; if you think there is any in marriage. What can a man of honour say more?

Lucy. So then, it seems you are not married to Miss Polly?

Mac. You know, Lucy, the girl is prodigiously conceited: no man can say a civil thing to her, but, like other fine ladies, her vanity makes her think he's her own for ever and ever.

AIR.—MACHEATH.

The first time at the looking-glass

The mother sets her daughter,

The image strikes the smiling lass

With self-love ever after.

Each time she looks, she, fonder grown,

Thinks every charm grows stronger;

But, alas, vain maid! all eyes but your own

Can see you are not younger.

When women consider their own beauties, they are all alike unreasonable in their demands; for they expect their lovers should like them as long as they like themselves.

Lucy. Yonder is my father; perhaps, this way we may light upon the ordinary, who shall try if you will be as good as your word; for I long to be made an honest woman. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter PEACHUM, and LOCKIT with an account book.

Lockit. In this last affair, brother Peachum, we are agreed. You have consented to go halves in Macheath.

Peach. We shall never fall out about an execution. But as to that article, pray how stands your last year's account?

Lockit. If you will run your eye over it, you'll find 'tis fairly and squarely stated.

Peach. This long arrear of the Government is very hard upon us. Can it be expected that we should hang our acquaintance for nothing, when our betters will hardly save their's without being paid for it? Unless the people in employment pay better,

I promise them for the future I shall let other rogues live beside their own.

Lockit. Perhaps, brother, they are afraid those matters may be carried too far. We are treated, too, by them with contempt, as if our profession were not reputable.

Peach. In one respect, indeed, our employment may be reckoned dishonest; because, like great statesmen, we encourage those who betray their friends.

Lockit. Such language, brother, anywhere else, might turn to your prejudice. Learn to be more guarded, I beg you.

AIR.—*LOCKIT.*

When you censure the age,
Be cautious and sage;
Lest the courtiers offended should be;
If you mention vice or bribe,
'Tis so pat to all the tribe,
Each cries—That was levell'd at me!

Peach. Here's poor Ned Clincher's name, I see. Sure, brother Lockit, there was a little unfair proceeding in Ned's case; for he told me, in the condemned hold, that, for value received, you had promised him a session or two longer without molestation.

Lockit. Mr. Peachum, this is the first time my honour was ever called in question.

Peach. Business is at an end, if once we act dishonourably.

Lockit. Who accuses me?

Peach. You are warm, brother

Lockit. He that attacks my honour, attacks my livelihood; and this usage—sir—is not to be borne.

Peach. Since you provoke me to speak, I must tell you too, that Mrs. Coaxer charges you with defrauding her of her information-money for the apprehending of curl-pated Hugh. Indeed, indeed, brother, we must punctually pay our spies, or we shall have no information.

Lockit. Is this language to me, sirrah! who have saved you from the gallows, sirrah! [*Collaring each other.*]

Peach. If I am hanged, it shall be for ridding the world of an arrant rascal.

Lockit. This hand shall do the office of the halter you deserve, and throttle you—you dog!

Peach. Brother, brother; we are both in the wrong; we shall be both losers in the dispute; for you know we have it in our power to hang each other. You should not be so passionate.

Lockit. Nor you so provoking.

Peach. 'Tis our mutual interest; 'tis for the interest of the world, we should agree. If I said anything, brother, to the prejudice of your character, I ask pardon.

Lockit. Brother Peachum, I can forgive as well as resent. Give me your hand. Suspicion does not become a friend.

Peach. I only meant to give you occasion to justify yourself. But I must now step home, for I expect the gentleman about this snuff-box that Filch nipped two nights ago in the park. I appointed him at this hour. [*Exit.*]

Enter *LUCY.*

Lockit. Whence come you, hussy?

Lucy. My tears might answer that question.

Lockit. You have been whimpering and fondling, like a spaniel over the fellow that hath abused you.

Lucy. One can't help love; one can't cure it. 'Tis not in my power to obey you and hate him.

Lockit. Learn to bear your husband's death like a reasonable woman. 'Tis not the fashion now-a-days so much as to affect sorrow upon these occasions. Act like a woman of spirit, hussy, and thank your father for what he is doing.

AIR.—*LUCY.*

Is then his fate decreed, sir?

Such a man can I think of quitting?

When first we met, so moves me yet,

Oh, see how my heart is splitting!

Lockit. Lookye, Lucy, there is no saving him; so I think you must even do like other widows, buy yourself weeds, and be cheerful.

AIR.—*LOCKIT.*

You'll think, ere many days ensue,

This sentence not severe;

I hang your husband, child, 'tis true,

But with him hang your care.

Twang dillo dee.

[*Exit.*]

Enter *MACHEATH.*

Lucy. Though the ordinary was out of the way to-day, I hope, my dear, you will, upon the first opportunity, quiet my scruples. Oh, sir! my father's hard heart is not to be softened, and I am in the utmost despair.

Mac. But if I could raise a small sum—would not twenty guineas, think you, move him? Of all the arguments in the way of business, the perquisite is the most prevailing. Money well-timed, and properly applied, will do anything.

Lucy. What love or money can do shall be done; for all my comfort depends upon your safety.

Enter *POLLY.*

Polly. Where is my dear husband? Was a rope ever intended for this neck? Why dost thou turn away from me? 'tis thy Polly; 'tis thy wife.

Mac. Was ever such an unfortunate rascal as I am?

Lucy. Was there ever such another villain!

Polly. Oh, Macheath! was it for this we parted? Taken! imprisoned! tried! hanged! Cruel reflection! I'll stay with thee till death: no force shall tear thy dear wife from thee now. What means my love? Not one kind word! not one kind look! Think what thy Polly suffers, to see thee in this condition!

Mac. I must disown her. [*Aside.*] The wench is distracted!

Lucy. Am I then bilked of my virtue? Can I have no reparation? Sure men were born to lie, and women to believe them! Oh villain villain!

Polly. Am I not thy wife? Thy neglect of me, thy aversion to me, too severely proves it. Look on me. Tell me, am I not thy wife?

Lucy. Perfidious wretch!

Polly. Barbarous husband!

Lucy. Hadst thou been hanged five months ago, I had been happy.

Polly. If you had been kind to me till death, it would not have vexed me.

Lucy. Art thou, then, married to another? Hast thou two wives, monster?

Mac. If woman's tongue can cease for an answer? hear me.

Lucy. I won't. Flesh and blood can't bear my usage.

Polly. Shall not I claim my own? Justice bids me speak.

AIR.—MACHEATH.

How bappy could I be with either,
 Were t'other dear charmer away;
 But while ye thus teaze me together,
 To neither a word will I say;
 But toll de roll, &c.

[*Throws himself carelessly on the table*]

Polly. Sure, my dear, there ought to be some preference shown to a wife; at least she may claim the appearance of it. He must be distracted with misfortunes, or he could not use me thus. [*Aside.*]

Lucy. Oh, villain! villain! thou hast deceived me: I could even inform against thee with pleasure. Not a prude wishes more heartily to have facts against her intimate acquaintance, than I now wish to have facts against thee. I would have her satisfaction, and they should all out.

DUETT.—POLLY and LUCY.

Polly. I'm bubbled.

Lucy. I'm bubbled.

Polly. Oh, how I'm troubled!

Lucy. Bamboozled and bit.

Polly. My distresses are doubled.

Lucy. When you come to the tree, should the hangman refuse,
 These fingers with pleasure could fasten the noose.

Polly. I'm bubbled, &c.

Mac. Be pacified, my dear Lucy; this is all a fetch of Polly's, to make me desperate with you, in case I get off. If I am hanged, she would fain have the credit of being thought my widow. Really, Polly, this is no time for a dispute of this sort; for whenever you are talking of marriage, I am thinking of hanging.

Polly. And hast thou the art to persist in disowning me?

Mac. And hast thou the heart to persist in persuading me that I am married? Why, Polly, dost thou seek to aggravate my misfortunes?

Lucy. Really Miss Peachum, you do but expose yourself; besides, 'tis barbarous in you to worry a gentleman in his circumstances, Miss Polly.

AIR.—POLLY.

Cease your funning:

Force or cunning

Never shall my heart trepan;

All these sallies

Are but malice,

To seduce my constant man.

'Tis most certain,

By their flirting,

Women oft have envy shown;

Pleased to ruin

Other's wooing,

Never happy in their own.

Decency, madam, methinks might teach you to behave yourself with some reserve to the husband, while his wife is present.

Mac. But, seriously, Polly, this is carrying the joke a little too far.

Lucy. If you are determined, madam, to raise a disturbance in the prison, I shall be obliged to send for the turnkey, to show you the door. I am sorry, madam, you force me to be so ill-bred, madam.

Polly. Give me leave to tell you, madam, these forward airs don't become you in the least, madam; and my duty, madam, obliges me to stay with my husband, madam.

DUETT.—LUCY and POLLY.

Lucy. Why, how now, madam Flirt?

If you thus must chatter,

And are for flinging dirt,

Let's try who best can spatter.

Madam Flirt!

Polly. Why, how now, saucy jade?

Sure, the wench is tipsy,

How can you see me made [To him.

The scoff of such a gipsy?

Saucy jade! [To her.

Enter PEACHUM.

Peach. Where's my wench? Ah, hussy, hussy! Come home, you slut! and when your fellow is hanged, hang yourself, to make your family some amends.

Polly. Dear, dear father! do not tear me from him. I must speak; I have more to say to him. Oh! twist thy fetters about me, that he may not haul me from thee.

Peach. Sure, all women are alike; if ever they commit one folly, they are sure to commit another, by exposing themselves. Away; not a word more. You are my prisoner, now, hussy.

AIR.—POLLY.

No pow'r on earth can e'er divide

The knot that sacred love hath tied;

When parents draw against our mind,

The true love's knot they faster bind.

Oh, oh, ray, oh, Amborah. Oh, oh, &c.

[*Holding MACHEATH, PEACHUM pulling her.*

[*Exit PEACH. and POLLY. LUCY seats herself.*

Mac. I am naturally compassionate, wife, so that I could not use the wench as she deserved, which made you at first, suspect there was something in what she said.

Lucy. Indeed, my dear, I was strangely puzzled.

Mac. If that had been the case, her father would never have brought me into this circumstance. No, Lucy, I had rather die than be false to thee.

Lucy. How happy am I, if you say this from your heart; for I love thee so, that I could sooner bear to see thee hanged than in the arms of another.

Mac. But couldst thou bear to see me hanged?

Lucy. Oh, Macheath! I could never live to see that day.

Mac. You see, Lucy, in the account of love, you are in my debt. Make me, if possible, love thee more; and let me owe my life to thee. If you refuse to assist me, Peachum and your father will immediately put me beyond all means of escape.

Lucy. My father, I know, hath been drinking hard with the prisoners, and I fancy he is now taking his nap in his own room; if I can procure the keys, shall I go off with thee, my dear?

Mac. If we are together, 'twill be impossible to lie concealed. As soon as the search begins to be a little cool, I will send to thee; till then, my heart is thy prisoner.

Lucy. Come then, my dear husband, owe thy life to me; and though you love me not, be grateful. But that Polly runs in my head strangely.

Mac. A moment of time may make us unhappy for ever.

AIR.—LUCY.

I like the fox shall grieve,

Whose mate hath left her side;

Whom hounds from morn to eve,

Chase o'er the country wide.

Where can my lover hide?
Where cheat the weary pack?
If love be not his guide,
He never will come back.

[Ereunt.]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—Newgate.

Enter LUCY and LOCKIT.

Lockit. To be sure, wench, you must have been aiding and abetting to help him to this escape!

Lucy. Sir, here hath been Peachum and his daughter Polly; and, to be sure, they know the ways of Newgate as well as if they had been born and bred in the place all their lives. Why must all your suspicion light upon me?

Lockit. Lucy, Lucy, I will have none of these shuffling answers.

Lucy. Well then, if I know anything of him, I wish I may be burned.

Lockit. Keep your temper, Lucy, or I shall pronounce you guilty.

Lucy. Keep your's sir; I do wish I may be burned, I do; and what can I say more to convince you?

Lockit. Did he tip handsomely? How much did he come down with? Come, hussy, don't cheat your father, and I shall not be angry with you. Perhaps you have made a better bargain with him than I could have done. How much, my good girl?

Lucy. You know, sir, I am fond of him, and would have given money to have kept him with me.

Lockit. Ah, Lucy! thy education might have put thee more upon thy guard: for a girl, in the bar of an alehouse, is always besieged.

Lucy. If you can forgive me, sir, I will make a fair confession; for, to be sure, he hath been a most barbarous villain to me.

Lockit. And so you have let him escape, hussy, have you?

Lucy. When a woman loves, a kind look, a tender word, can persuade her to anything, and I could ask no other bribe. Notwithstanding all he swore, I am now fully convinced, that Polly Peachum is actually his wife. Did I let him escape, fool that I was, to go to her? Polly will wheedle herself into his money; and then Peachum will hang him, and cheat us both.

Lockit. So I am to be ruined, because, forsooth, you must be in love! A very pretty excuse.

Lucy. I gave him his life, and that creature enjoys the sweets of it. Ungrateful Macheath!

AIR.—LUCY.

My love is all madness and folly;

Alone I lie,

Toss, tumble, and cry,

What a happy creature is Polly!

Was e'er such a wretch as I?

With rage I reddened like scarlet,

That my dear inconstant varlet,

Stark blind to my charms,

Is lost in the arms

Of that jilt, that inveigling harlot!

Stark blind to my charms,

Is lost in the arms

Of that jilt, that inveigling harlot!

This, this my resentment alarms.

Lockit. And so, after all this mischief, I must stay

here to be entertained with your caterwauling, Mistress Puss? Out of my sight, wanton strumpet! You shall fast and mortify yourself into reason, with, now and then, a little handsome discipline, to bring you to your senses. Go! [Exit LUCY.] Peachum, then, intends to outwit me in this affair, but I'll be even with him. The dog is leaky in his liquor, so I'll ply him that way, get the secret from him, and turn this affair to my own advantage. Lucy!

Enter LUCY.

Are there any of Peachum's people now in the house?

Lucy. Filch, sir, is drinking a quartern of strong waters, in the next room, with Black Moll.

Lockit. Bid him come to me.

[Exit LUCY.]

Enter FILCH.

Why, boy, thou lookest as if thou wert half starved; like a shotten herring. But, boy, canst thou tell me where thy master is to be found?

Filch. At his lock, sir, at the Crooked Billet.

Lockit. Very well; I have nothing more with you. [Exit FILCH.] I'll go to him there, for I have many important affairs to settle with him, and in the way of those transactions, I'll artfully get into his secret; so that Macheath shall not remain a day longer out of my clutches.

[Exit.]

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. Jealousy, rage, love, and fear, are at once tearing me to pieces. How am I weather-beaten and shattered with distress!

AIR.—LUCY.

I'm like a skiff on the ocean tost,

Now high, now low, with each billow borne.

With her rudder broke, and her anchor lost,

Deserted and all forlorn.

While thus I lie lolling and tossing all night,

That Polly lies sporting on seas of delight!

Revenge, revenge, revenge,

Shall appease my restless sprite.

I have the ratsbane ready. But say I were to be hanged, I never could be hanged for anything that would give me greater comfort than the poisoning that slut.

Enter FILCH.

Filch. Madam, here's Miss Polly come to wait upon you.

Lucy. Shew her in.

[Exit FILCH.]

Enter POLLY.

Dear madam, your servant. I hope you will pardon my passion when I was so happy to see you last. I was so overrun with the spleen, that I was perfectly out of myself; and really when one hath the spleen, everything is to be excused by a friend.

AIR.—LUCY.

When a wife's in the pout,

(As she's sometimes, no doubt,)

The good husband, as meek as a lamb,

Her vapours to still,

First grants her will,

And the quieting draught is a dram;

Poor man! and the quieting draught is a dram.

I wish all our quarrels might have so comfortable a reconciliation.

Polly. I have no excuse for my own behaviour, madam, but my misfortunes; and really, madam, I suffer too upon your account.

Lucy. But, Miss Polly; in the way of friendship, will you give me leave to propose a glass of cordial to you?

Polly. Strong waters are apt to give me the head-ache. I hope, madam, you will excuse me.

Lucy. Not the greatest lady in the land could have better in her closet for her own private drinking. You seem mighty low in spirits, my dear.

Polly. I am sorry, madam, my health will not allow me to accept of your offer: I should not have left you in the rude manner I did, when we met last, madam, had not my papa hauled me away so unexpectedly. I was indeed somewhat provoked, and perhaps might use some expressions that were disrespectful; but really, madam, the Captain treated me with so much contempt and cruelty, that I deserved your pity rather than your resentment.

Lucy. But since his escape, no doubt, all matters are made up again. Ah! *Polly, Polly!* 'tis I am the unhappy wife, and he loves you as if you were only his mistress.

Polly. Sure, madam, you cannot think me so happy as to be the object of your jealousy! A man is always afraid of a woman who loves him too well; so that I must expect to be neglected and avoided.

Lucy. Then our cases, my dear *Polly*, are exactly alike; both of us, indeed, have been too fond. Indeed, my dear *Polly*, we are both of us a cup too low; let me prevail upon you to accept of my offer.

AIR.—*LUCY.*

Come, sweet lass,
Let's banish sorrow
Till to-morrow;
Come, sweet lass,
Let's take a chirping glass.
Wine can clear
The vapours of despair,
And make us light as air;
Then drink and banish care.

I can't bear, child, to see you in such low spirits; and I must persuade you to what I know will do you good. [*Exit.*]

Polly. All this wheedling of *Lucy* can't be for nothing—at this time too, when I know she hates me! The dissembling of a woman is always the forerunner of mischief. By pouring strong waters down my throat, she thinks to pump some secrets out of me: I'll be upon my guard, and won't taste a drop of her liquor, I'm resolved.

Re-enter Lucy, with strong waters.

Lucy. Come, Miss *Polly*.

Polly. Indeed, child, you have given yourself trouble to no purpose; you must, my dear, excuse me.

Lucy. Really, Miss *Polly*, you are as squeamishly affected about taking a cup of strong waters as a lady before company.

Polly. What do I see? *Macheath* again in custody! Now every glimmering of happiness is lost!

[*Drops the glass of liquor on the ground.*]

Enter Lockit, MACHEATH, PEACHUM, and Constables.

Lockit. Set your heart at rest, Captain: you have neither the chance of love or money for another escape, for you are ordered to be called down upon your trial immediately.

Peach. Away, hussies! This is not a time for a man to be hampered with his wives; you see the gentleman is in chains already.

Lucy. Oh, husband, husband! my heart longed to see thee; but to see thee thus distracts me!

Polly. Will not my dear husband look upon his *Polly*? why hadst thou not flown to me for protection? With me thou hadst been safe.

DUET.—*POLLY and LUCY.*

Polly. Hither, dear husband, turn your eyes!

Lucy. Bestow one glance to cheer me!

Polly. Think, with that look, thy *Polly* dies.

Lucy. -Oh, shun me not, but hear me!

Polly. 'Tis *Polly* sues.

Lucy. 'Tis *Lucy* speaks.

Polly. Is thus true love requited?

Lucy. My heart is bursting!

Polly. Mine too, breaks!

Lucy. Must I—

Polly. Must I be slighted?

Mac. What would you have me say, ladies? You see the affair will soon be at an end, without my disobliging either of you.

Peach. But the settling of this point, Captain, might prevent a lawsuit between your two ladies.

AIR.—*MACHEATH.*

Which way shall I turn me? how can I decide?

Wives, the day of your death, are as fond as a bride.

One wife's too much for most husbands to hear,

But two at a time, there's no mortal can bear!

This way, and that way, and which way I will,

What would comfort the one, t'other wife would take ill!

Polly. But if his own misfortunes have made him insensible to mine, a father, sure, will be more compassionate. Dear, dear sir! sink the material evidence, and bring him off at his trial. *Polly*, upon her knees, begs it of you.

AIR.—*POLLY.*

When my hero in court appears,

And stands arraign'd for his life,

Then think of poor *Polly's* tears,

For ah! poor *Polly's* his wife.

Like the sailor, he holds up his hand,

Distress'd on the dashing wave;

To die a dry death at land

Is as bad as a watery grave.

And alas, poor *Polly!*

Alack, and well-a-day!

Before I was in love,

Oh, ev'ry month was May!

Peach. Set your heart at rest, *Polly*; your husband is to die to-day; therefore, if you are not already provided, 'tis high time to look about for another. There's comfort for you, you slut!

Lockit. We are ready, sir, to conduct you to the Old Bailey.

AIR.—*MACHEATH.*

The charge is prepared, the lawyers are met,

The judges all ranged; a terrible show!

I go undismayed, for death is a debt—

A debt on demand, so take what I owe.

Then, farewell, my love; dear charmers, adieu!

Contented I die; 'tis the better for you.

Here ends all dispute, for the rest of our lives;

For this way, at once, I please all my wives.

Now, gentlemen, I am ready to attend you.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*Another part of the Prison.*

Dance of Prisoners in fetters.

SCENE III.—*The Condemned Hold*

MACHEATH in a melancholy posture.

MEDLEY.

Oh, cruel, cruel, cruel case!

Must I suffer this disgrace?

Of all the friends in time of grief,
When threat'ning death looks grimmer,
Not one so sure can bring relief,
As this best friend, a brimmer.

Since I must swing, I scorn,—I scorn to wince or
whine : [Drinks. Rises.]

But now again my spirits sink,
I'll raise them high with wine. [Drinks.]

But valour the stronger grows,
The stronger liquor we're drinking ;

And how can we feel our woes,
When we've lost the trouble of thinking ?

If thus a man can die,
Much bolder with brandy.

[Pours out a bumper of brandy.]

So I drink off this bumper ; and now I can stand
the test,

And my comrades shall see that I die as brave as
the best. [Drinks.]

But can I leave my pretty hussies
Without one tear or tender sigh ?
Their eyes, their lips, their busses,
Recall my love :—Ah ! must I die ?

Since laws were made for every degree,
To curb vice in others, as well as in me,
I wonder we ha'n't better company

Upon Tyburn tree.

But gold from law can take out the sting ;
And if rich men, like us, were to swing,
'Twould thin the land, such numbers to string
Upon Tyburn tree.

Enter Gaoler.

Gaoler. Some friends of your's, Captain, desire to
be admitted : I leave you together.

Enter BEN BUDGE, and MAT-O'-THE-MINT ; the
Gaoler searches them, and exit.

Mac. For having broke prison, you see, gentle-
men, I am ordered for immediate execution. The
sheriff's officers, I believe, are now at the door.
That Jemmy Twitcher should 'peach me, I own,
surprised me. 'Tis a plain proof that the world is
all alike, and that even our gang can no more trust
one another than other people ; therefore, I beg
you, gentlemen, to look well to yourselves ; for, in
all probability, you may live some months longer.

Mat. We are all heartily sorry, Captain, for your
misfortune ; but 'tis what we must all come to.

Mac. Peachum and Lockit, you know, are infa-
mous scoundrels ; their lives are as much in your
power, as your's are in their's. Remember your
dying friend ;—'tis my last request : bring those

villains to the gallows before you, and I am satis-
fied.

Mat. We'll do it.

Re-enter Gaoler.

Gaoler. Miss Polly and Miss Lucy entreat a word
with you. [Exit.]

Mac. Gentlemen, adieu !

[Ereunt BEN BUDGE and MAT-O'-THE MINT.]

Enter LUCY and POLLY.

Mac. My dear Lucy ! my dear Polly ! whatso-
ever hath passed between us is now at an end.

TRIO.—LUCY, POLLY, and MACHEATH.

Lucy. Would I might be hang'd !

Polly. And I would so too.

Lucy. To be hang'd with you.

Polly. My dear, with you.

Mac. Oh, leave me, thought ! I fear—I doubt !

I tremble—I droop ! See ! my courage is out.

[Turns up the empty bottle.]

Lucy. No token of love ?

Mac. See ! my courage is out.

[Turns up the empty bottle.]

Lucy. No token of love ?

Polly. Adieu !

Farewell !

Mac. But hark ! I hear the toll of the bell.

Re-enter Gaoler.

Gaoler. Four women more, Captain, with a child
a-piece.

Mac. Tell the sheriff's officers I am ready.

[Ereunt.]

Mob. [Within.] A reprieve ! a reprieve !

Re-enter MACHEATH, POLLY, LUCY, &c.

Mac. Look you, ladies, we will have no contro-
versy now,—and, ladies, I hope you will give me
leave to present a partner to each of you ; and, for
this time, I take Polly for mine ;—and for life, you
slut, for we are really married.

FINALE.

Thus I stand like the Turk, with his doxies around,
From all sides their glances his passion confound ;
For black, brown, and fair, his inconstancy burns,
And the different beauties subdue him by turns :
Each calls forth her charms, to provoke his desires,
Though willing to all, with but one he retires ;
But think of this maxim, and put off all sorrow,
The wretch of to-day may be happy to-morrow.

CHORUS.

Then think of this maxim, and cast away sorrow,
The wretch of to-day may be happy to-morrow.

THE ROAD TO RUIN;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS,

BY THOMAS HOLCROFT.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

OLD DORNTON
HARRY DORNTON
GOLDPINCH
MR. MILFORD
MR. SULKY
SILKY
MR. SMITH.
Hatter
Jacob
Hosier
Furrier
Sheriff's Officer
Footman.

WIDOW WARREN
SOPHIA
JENNY
MRS. LEDGER
Milliner
Mantumaker.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—Dornton's House.

Enter MR. DORNTON.

Dor. Past two o'clock, and not yet returned—
Well, well,—it's my own fault!—*Mr. Smith!*

Enter MR. SMITH.

Mr. S. Sir.

Dor. Is Mr. Sulky come in?

Mr. S. No, sir.

Dor. Are you sure Harry Dornton said he should
return to night?

Mr. S. Yes, sir.

Dor. And you don't know where he is gone?

Mr. S. He did not tell me, sir.

Dor. I ask you if you know.

Mr. S. I believe to Newmarket, sir.

Dor. You always believe the worst!—I'll sit up
no longer.—Tell the servants to go to bed. And,
do you hear? should he apply to you for money,
don't let him have a guinea.

Mr. S. Very well, sir.

Dor. I have done with him; he is henceforth no
son of mine! Let him starve!

ACT. DRAMA.—NOS. 43 & 44.

Mr. S. He acts very improperly, sir, indeed.

Dor. Improperly! How? [*Taking SMITH's
hand.*] What does he do?

Mr. S. Sir!

Dor. Have you heard anything of—

*Mr. S. No—no, sir—Nothing—nothing but what
you yourself tell me.*

Dor. Then how do you know he has acted im-
properly?

*Mr. S. He is certainly a very good-hearted young
gentleman, sir.*

Dor. Good-hearted! How dare you make such
an assertion?

Mr. S. Sir!

Dor. How dare you, Mr. Smith, insult me so?
Is not his gaming notorious; his racing, driving,
riding, and associating with knaves, fools, de-
bauchees, and blacklegs?

Mr. S. Upon my word, sir, I—

Dor. Upon your word. But it's over! His name
has this very day been struck out of the firm! Let
his drafts be returned. It's all ended! And, ob-
serve, not a guinea! If you lend him any yourself,
I'll not pay you. I'll no longer be a fond doating
father. Therefore, take warning! Take warning, I
say! Be his distress what it will, not a guinea!
Though you should hereafter see him begging,
starving in the streets, not so much as the loan of
a single guinea.

*Mr. S. I shall be careful to observe your orders,
sir.*

Dor. Sir! Why, would you see him starve?
Would you see him starve, and not lend him a gui-
nea? Would you, sir! Would you?

Mr. S. Sir! Certainly not, except in obedience
to your orders.

Dor. And could any orders justify your seeing a
poor unfortunate youth, rejected by his father, aban-
doned by his friends, starving to death?

Mr. S. There is no danger of that, sir.

Dor. I tell you the thing shall happen! He shall
starve to death! I'll never look on him more as a
son of mine! And I'm very certain, when I have
forsaken him, all the world will forsake him, too.
[*Weeps.*] Yes, yes! he is born to be a poor
wretched outcast.

Mr. S. I hope, sir, he still will make a fine man.

Dor. Will! there is not a finer, handsomer,
nobler-looking youth in the kingdom; no, not in
the world!

Mr. S. I mean, a worthy man, sir.

Dor. How can you mean any such thing? The company he keeps would corrupt a saint.

Mr. S. Sir, if you will only tell me what your pleasure is, I will endeavour to act like a faithful servant.

Dor. I know you are a faithful servant, Mr. Smith. [*Takes his hand*] I know you are —But you —you are not a father.

Enter Mr. SULKY.—Exit Mr. SMITH.

Dor. Well, Mr. Sulky, have you heard anything of him?

Sul. Yes.

Dor. And, hey! —Anything consoling—anything good?

Sul. No.

Dor. No? —No, say you! —Where is he? What is he about?

Sul. I don't know.

Dor. Don't? —You love to torture me, sir! —You love to torture me.

Sul. Humph!

Dor. For heaven's sake, tell me what you have heard!

Sul. I love to torture you.

Dor. Put me out of my pain! If you are not a tiger, put me out of my pain!

Sul. [*Slowly drawing a newspaper out of his pocket.*] There; read!

Dor. Dead?

Sul. Worse.

Dor. Mercy defend me! where? what?

Sul. The first paragraph in the postscript: the beginning line in capitals.

Dor. [*Reads.*] "The junior partner of the great banking house not a mile from the Post-office, has again been touched at Newmarket, for upwards of ten thousand pounds." —It can't be!

Sul. Humph!

Dor. Why, can it?

Sul. Yes.

Dor. How do you know? What proof have you that it is not a lie?

Sul. His own hand-writing.

Dor. How?

Sul. Bills at three days' sight to the full amount have already been presented.

Dor. And accepted?

Sul. Yes.

Dor. But—why—were you mad, Mr. Sulky? Were you mad?

Sul. I soon shall be.

Dor. Is not his name struck off the firm?

Sul. They were dated two days before.

Dor. The credit of my house begins to totter!

Sul. Well it may!

Dor. What the effect of such a paragraph may be, I cannot tell.

Sul. I can:—Ruin.

Dor. Are you serious, sir?

Sul. I am not inclined to laugh.—A run against the house, stoppage, disgrace, bankruptcy.

Dor. Really, Mr. Sulky, you—

Sul. Yes. I know I offend. I was bred in your house, you used me tenderly, I served you faithfully, and you admitted me a partner. Don't think I care for myself. No, I can sit at the desk again. But you! You! first man of the first commercial city on earth, your name in the Gazette! Were it mine only, I would laugh at it. What am I? who cares for me?

Dor. Where is the vile! —[*Calling.*] —Mr. Smith —Thomas—William!

Enter Mr. SMITH.

Call all the servants together, Mr. Smith; clerks, footmen, maids, every soul! Tell them their young master is a scoundrel.

Mr. S. Very well, sir.

Dor. Sir? Bid them shut the door in his face! I'll turn the first away that lets him set his foot in this house ever again!

Mr. S. Very well, sir.

Dor. Very well, sir? Damn your very well, sir! I tell you it is not very well, sir. He shall starve, die, rot in the street! Is that very well, sir?

[*Exeunt DORNTON and SMITH.*]

Sul. He has a noble heart. A fond father's heart. The boy was a fine youth; but he spoiled him; and now he quarrels with himself and all the world, because he hates his own folly. [*A knocking at the door.*] So! here is the youth returned.

[*Knocking again.—Exit*

Enter DORNTON, with Servants.

Dor. Don't stir! —On your lives, don't go to the door! Are the bolts and locks all fastened?

Servants. All, sir.

Dor. Don't mind his knocking! Go to bed, every soul of you, instantly, and fall fast asleep! He shall starve in the streets! [*Knocking again.*] Fetch me my blunderbuss! Make haste! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—A Street.

Enter HARRY DORNTON, MILFORD, and Postilions.

Pos. We smoked along, your honour!

Har. [*Knocks at door.*] I know you did. Had you been less free with your whip, you would have been a crown the richer. Your next step should be to turn drummers, and handle the cat-o'-nine-tails.

Pos. It is very late, your honour.

Har. Begone! I'll give you no more.

[*Knocks.—Exeunt Postilions.*]

Dor. [*At the window over him, with Mr. SULKY, throwing up the sash and presenting the blunderbuss.*] Knock again, you scoundrel, and you shall have the full contents loaded to the muzzle, rascal!

Har. So! I suspected dad was in his tantrums.

Mil. You have given him some cause.

Har. Very true. [*To his father.*] Consider, my dear sir, the consequences of lying out all night!

Dor. Begone, villain!

Har. Bad women, sir; damps, night airs!

Dor. Will you begone?

Har. Watch-houses, pickpockets, cutthroats!

Sul. Come, come, sir. [*Shutting the window.*]

Mil. We shall not get in.

Har. Pshaw! how little do you know of my father. The door will open in less than fifteen seconds.

Mil. Done, for a hundred!

Har. Done, done! [*Take out their watches—the door opens.*] I knew you were had; double or quits, we find the cloth laid, and supper on the table.

Mil. No, it won't do. [*Exeunt into the house*]

SCENE III.—Dornton's House.

Enter HARRY DORNTON, MILFORD, and a Footman

Foot. My old master is in a bitter passion, sir.

Har. I know it.

Foot. He is gone down to turn the servant out of doors that let you in.

Har. Is he? Then go you and let your fellow servant in again.

Foot. I dare not, sir.

Har. Then I must.

[*Exit.*

Foot. He enquired who was with my young master.

Mil. Well!

Foot. And when he heard it was you, sir, he was ten times more furious.

[*Exit.*

Re-enter HARRY DORNTON.

Har. All's well that ends well. This has been a cursed long voyage, Milford!

Mil. I am a hundred and fifty in.

Har. And I ten thousand out.

Mil. I believe I had better avoid your father for the present.

Har. I think you had. Dad considers you as my tempter; the cause of my ruin.

Mil. And I being in his debt, he conceives he may treat me without ceremony.

Har. Nay, damn it, Jack, do him justice: it is not the money you had of him, but the ill advice he imputes to you, that galls him.

Mil. I hear he threatens to arrest me.

Har. Yes! he has threatened to strike my name out of the firm, and disinherit me, a thousand times?

Mil. Oh, but he has been very serious in menacing me.

Har. And me too.

Mil. You'll be at the tennis-court to-morrow?

Har. No.

Mil. What, not to see the grand match?

Har. No.

Mil. Oh yes, you will.

Har. No; I am determined.

Mil. Yes, over night; you'll waver in the morning.

Har. No. It is high time, Jack, to grow prudent.

Mil. Ha, ha, ha! My plan is formed: I'll soon be out of debt.

Har. How will you get the money?

Mil. By calculation.

Har. Ha, ha, ha!

Mil. I am resolved on it. How many men of rank and honour, having lost their fortunes, have doubly recovered them!

Har. And very honourably!

Mil. Who doubts it?

Har. Ha, ha, ha! Nobody! nobody!

Mil. But pray, Harry, what is it you find so attractive in my late father's amorous relict?

Har. Ha, ha, ha! What, the Widow Warren?

Mil. She seems to think, and even reports, you are to marry her!

[*Both sit at a table.*

Har. Marry? Her? A coquette of forty, who ridiculously apes all the airs of a girl! Fantastic, selfish, and a fool! And marry? Disgusting idea! Thou wert philosophising, as we drove, on the condition of a post-horse—

Mil. Well?

Har. I would rather be a post-horse,—nay, the brute that drives a post-horse, than the base thing thou hast imagined!

[*Rises.*

Mil. Then why are you so often there?

[*Rises.*

Har. Because I can't keep away.

Mil. What, is it her daughter, Sophia?

Har. Lovely, bewitching innocent!

Mil. The poor young thing is fond of you?

Har. I should be half mad if I thought she was not; yet am obliged to half hope she is not.

Mil. Why?

Har. What a question! Am I not a profligate, and in all probability ruined? Not even my father can overlook this last affair! No! heigho!

Mil. The loss of my father's will, and the mystery made of its contents by those who witnessed it, are strange circumstances!

Har. In which the widow triumphs. And you, being a bastard, and left by the law to starve, she willingly pays obedience to laws so wise.

Mil. She refuses even to pay my debts.

Har. And the worthy alderman, your father, being overtaken by death in the south of France, carefully makes a will, and then as carefully hides it where it is not to be found; or commits it to the custody of some mercenary knave, who has made his market of it to the widow. So! here comes the supposed executor of this supposed will.

Enter Mr. SULKY.

My dear Mr. Sulky, how do you do?

Sul. Very ill.

Har. Indeed? I am very sorry! What's your disorder?

Sul. You.

Har. Ha, ha, ha!

Sul. Ruin, bankruptcy, infamy!

Har. The old story!

Sul. To a new tune.

Har. Ha, ha, ha!

Sul. You are—

Har. What, my good cynic?

Sul. A fashionable gentleman.

Har. I know it.

Sul. And fashionably ruined.

Har. No;—I have a father.

Sul. Who is ruined likewise.

Har. Ha, ha, ha! Is the Bank of England ruined?

Sul. I say, ruined. [*MILFORD walks about.*]

Nothing less than a miracle can save the house. The purse of Fortunatus could not supply you.

Har. No; it held nothing but guineas. Notes, bills, paper for me!

Sul. Such effrontery is insufferable. For these five years, sir, you have been driving to ruin more furiously than—

Har. An ambassador's coach on a birth-night. I saw you were stammering for a simile.

Sul. Sir!

Har. Youth mounts the box, seizes the reins, and Jehu headlong on in the dark; passion and prodigality blaze in the front, bewilder the coachman, and dazzle and blind the passengers; wisdom, prudence, and virtue are overset and maimed or murdered; and at last, repentance, like the footman's flambeau lagging behind, lights us to dangers when they are past all remedy.

Sul. Your name is struck off the firm. I was the adviser.

Har. You were very kind, Mr. Sulky.

Sul. Your father is at last determined.

Har. Ha, ha, ha! Do you think so?

Sul. You'll find so! And what brought you here, sir?

[*To MILFORD.*

Mil. A chaise and four.

Sul. It might have carried you to a safer place. When do you mean to pay your debts?

Mil. When my father's executor prevails on the Widow Warren to do me justice.

[*HARRY sits.*

Sul. And which way am I to prevail?

Mil. And which way am I to pay my debts?

Sul. You might have more modesty than insolently to come and brave one of your principal creditors, after having ruined his son by your evil counsel.

Har. Ha, ha, ha! Don't believe a word on't, my

good-grumbler: I ruined myself: I wanted no counsellor.

Mil. My father died immensely rich; and, though I am what the law calls illegitimate, I ought not to starve.

Sul. You have had five thousand pounds, and are five more in debt.

Mil. Yes; thanks to those who trust boys with thousands.

Sul. You would do the same now that you think yourself a man.

Mil. Indeed, I would not.

Sul. Had you been watching the widow at home, instead of galloping after a knot of gamblers and pick-pockets, you might perhaps have done yourself more service.

Mil. Which way, sir?

Sul. The will of your late father is found!

Mil. Found?

Sul. I have received a letter, from which I learn it was at last discovered, carefully locked up in a private drawer; and that it is now a full month since a gentleman of Montpellier, coming to England, was entrusted with it. But no such gentleman has yet appeared.

Mil. If it should have got into the hands of the widow—

Sul. Which I suspect it has! You are a couple of pretty gentlemen! But beware! misfortune is at your heels! Mr. Dornnton vows vengeance on you both, and justly. He is not gone to bed; and, if you have confidence enough to look him in the face, I would have you stay where you are.

Mil. I neither wish to insult, nor be insulted.

[*Exit.*]

Sul. [*Retiring to the table.*] Do you know, sir, your father turned the poor fellow into the street, who compassionately opened the door for you?

Har. Yes; and my father knows I as compassionately opened the door for the poor fellow in return.

Sul. Very well, sir! Your fame is increasing daily.

Har. [*Rising.*] I am glad to hear it.

Sul. Humph! Then perhaps you have paragoned yourself?

Har. Paragoned? Where? where?

Sul. In the St. James's Evening.

Har. Me?

Sul. Stating the exact amount—

Har. Of my loss?

Sul. Yours.—You march through every avenue to fame, dirty or clean.

Har. Well said! Be witty when you can; sarcastic you must be, in spite of your teeth. But I like you the better. You are honest. You are my cruet of Cayenne, and a sprinkling of you is excellent.

Sul. Well, sir, when you know the state of your own affairs, and to what you have reduced the house, you will be less ready to grin.

Har. Reduced the house! ha, ha, ha!

Enter DORNTON, with a newspaper in his hand.

Dor. So, sir!

Har. [*Bowing.*] I am happy to see you, sir.

Dor. You are there, after having broken into my house at midnight!—And you are here [*Holding up the paper*], after having ruined me and my house by your unprincipled prodigality! Are you not a scoundrel?

Har. No, sir; I am only a fool.

Sul. Good night to you, gentlemen.

Dor. Stay where you are, Mr. Sulky. I beg you to stay where you are, and be a witness to my solemn renunciation of him and his vices!

Sul. I have witnessed it a thousand times.

Dor. But this is the last. Are you not a scoundrel, I say?

Har. I am your son.

Dor. [*Calling.*] Mr. Smith! bring in those deeds.

Enter MR. SMITH.

You will not deny you are an incorrigible squanderer?

Har. I will deny nothing.

Dor. A nuisance, a wart, a blot, a stain upon the face of nature!

Har. A stain that will wash out, sir.

Dor. A redundancy, a negation; a besotted sophisticated incumbrance; a jumble of fatuity; your head, your heart, your words, your actions, all a jargon; incoherent and unintelligible to yourself, absurd and offensive to others!

Har. I am whatever you please, sir.

Dor. Bills never examined, every thing bought on credit, the price of nothing asked! Conscious you were weak enough to wish for baubles you did not want, and pant for pleasures you could not enjoy, you had not the effrontery to assume the circumspect caution of common sense! And, to your other destructive follies, you must add the detestable vice of gaming!

Har. These things, sir, are much easier done than defended.

Dor. But here. [*To SMITH.*] Give me that parchment! The partners have all been summoned! Look, sir! your name has been formally erased!

Har. The partners are very kind.

Dor. The suspicions already incurred by the known profligacy of a principal in the firm, the immense sums you have drawn, this paragraph, the run on the house it will occasion, the consternation of the whole city—

Har. All very terrible, and some of it very true.

[*Half aside.*]

Dor. If I should happily outlive the storm you have raised, it shall not be to support a prodigal, or to reward a gambler! You are disinherited! Read!

[*Taking more papers from SMITH.*]

Har. Your word is as good as the Bank, sir.

Dor. I'll no longer act the doating father, fascinated by your arts!

Har. I never had any art, sir, except the one you taught me.

Dor. I taught you! What, scoundrel? what?

Har. That of loving you, sir.

Dor. Loving me!

Har. Most sincerely!

Dor. Why, can you say, Harry—Rascal! I mean—that you love me?

Har. I should be a rascal indeed if I did not, sir.

Dor. Harry! Harry! No; confound me if I do! Sir, you are a vile—

Har. I know I am.

Dor. And I'll never speak to you more.

Har. Bid me good night, sir. Mr. Sulky here will bid me good night, and you are my father!

Good night, Mr. Sulky.

Sul. Good night.

[*Exit.*]

Har. Come, sir.

Dor. Good—I won't! If I do—

Har. Reproach me with my follies, strike out my name, disinherit me,—I deserve it all, and more. But say, "Good night, Harry!"

Dor. I won't! I won't! I won't!

Har. Poverty is a trifle,—we can whistle it off; but enmity—

Dor. I will not!

Har. Sleep in enmity! And who can say how soundly? Come! good night.

Dor. I won't! I won't.

[Runs off.]

Har. Say you so? Why, then, my noble-hearted dad, I am indeed a scoundrel!

Re-enter Mr. DORNTON.

Dor. Good night!

Har. Good night!

[Exit.]

[Exit.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—The House of the Widow Warren.

Enter JENNY and Mrs. LEDGER.

Jen. I tell you, good woman, I can do nothing for you.

Mrs. L. Only let me see Mrs. Warren.

Jen. And get myself snubbed. Not I, indeed.

Enter SOPHIA.

Sop. La, Jenny! Yonder's my mamma with a whole congregation of milliners, mantua-makers, mercers, haberdashers, lacemen, feathermen, and—all the world, consulting about second mourning.

Jen. I know it.

Sop. It will be six months to-morrow, since the death of my father-in-law; and she has been busy giving orders for this fortnight, that every thing might be brought home and tried on to-day. I do believe she'll sleep in her new clothes!

Jen. How you run on, miss!

Sop. What would my dear grandma' say, if she saw her? Why, she is even fonder of finery than I am!

Jen. Sure, miss, you are not fond of finery?

Sop. Oh, but I am. I wonder why she won't let me wear high-heeled shoes! I am sure I am old enough; I shall be eighteen next Christmas-day, at midnight; which is only nine months and two days! And since she likes to wear slips, and sashes, and ringlets, and—nonsense, like a girl, why should not I have high heels and gowns, and satins, and trains, and sweeps, and—like a woman?

Jen. It's very true what your mamma tells you, miss: you have been spoiled by your old fond grandmother, in Gloucestershire.

Sop. Nay, Jenny, I won't hear you call my dear grandma' names! Though every body told the loving old soul she would spoil me.

Jen. And now your mamma has sent for you up to town, to finish your *heddecation*.

Sop. Yes, she began on the very first day. There was the stay-maker sent for to screw up my shape; the shoemaker to cripple my feet; the hair-dresser to burn my hair! the jeweller to bore my ears; and the dentist to file my teeth.

Jen. Ah! You came here such a hoyden! [To Mrs. LEDGER.] What, an't you gone yet, mistress?

Sop. La, Jenny, how can you be so cross to people? What is the matter with this good woman?

Jen. Oh, nothing but poverty.

Sop. Is that all? Here, [Rummaging her pockets.] give her this half-crown, and make her rich.

Jen. Rich, indeed!

Sop. What, is not it enough? La, I am sorry I spent all my money yesterday! I laid it out in

sweetmeats, cakes, a canary-bird, and a poll parrot. But I hope you are not very, very poor?

Mrs. L. My husband served the late alderman five and-twenty years. His master promised to provide for him; but his pitiless widow can see him thrown with a broken heart upon the parish.

Sop. Oh dear!—Stop!—Stop a bit! [Capering off.] Be sure you don't go!

Enter Mr. SULKY.

Sul. Where's your mistress, girl?

Jen. My name is Jane Cocket, sir.

Sul. Where's your mistress?

Jen. Busy, sir.

Sul. Tell her to come down.—Don't stare, girl, but go and tell your mistress I want her.

Jen. [Aside.] Humph! Mr. Black-and-gruff!

[Exit.]

Re-enter SOPHIA, running.

Sop. I've got it! Here! Take this, good woman; go home and be happy! Take it, I tell you!

[Offering a purse.]

Sul. Who is this? Mrs. Ledger! How does your worthy husband?

Mrs. L. Alack, sir, ill enough: likely to starve in his latter days.

Sul. How! Starve?

Mrs. L. The widow refuses to do any thing for him.

Sul. Humph!

Mrs. L. Service, age, and honesty, are poor pleas with affluence, ease, and Mrs. Warren.

Sul. Humph!

Mrs. L. You, sir, I understand, are the late alderman's executor?

Sul. I can't tell.

Mrs. L. Perhaps you may be able to serve my husband?

Sul. I don't know. However, give my respects to him. He shan't starve: tell him that.

Sop. Nay, but take this in the meantime.

Sul. Ay; take it, take it. [Exit Mrs. LEDGER.] And who are you, Miss Charity?

Sop. Me, sir? Oh! I—I am my grandma's grand-daughter.

Sul. Humph!

Sop. Sophia Free love.

Sul. Oh!—The widow's daughter by her first husband?

Sop. Yes, sir.

Re-enter JENNY.

Sul. Where's your mistress?

Jen. Coming, sir. So! [To SOPHIA.] You have stolen your mamma's purse, miss?

Sop. La, don't say so; I only ran away with it! She was bargaining for some smuggled lace with one of your acquaintance, and I thought I could dispose of her money to better advantage.

Jen. Without her consent?

Sop. Yes, to be sure; I knew I should never dispose of it in that manner with her consent.

Jen. Well! Here comes your mamma. [Exit. Enter the Widow WARREN, in a fantastic girlish morning-dress, surrounded by Milliners, &c., and their Attendants, with band boxes; all talking as they enter.—SOPHIA humming a tune, and capering about.]

Wid. So you'll be sure not to forget my chapeau-a-la-Prusse, Mr. Mincing!

Hatter. Certainly not, madam.

Wid. And you'll make a delicate choice of the feathers?

Hatter. The selection will be elegant, madam.

Wid. Yes, I know, Mr. Mincing, you're a charming man! And you will let me have my pierrot a-la-Coblentz by nine in the morning, Mrs. Tiffany?

Mantua-maker. To a minute, ma'am.

Sul. Madam, when you have a moment's leisure—

Wid. Be quiet, you fright; don't interrupt me!—And my caraco a-la hussar, and my bavaeroises a-la-duchesse. And put four rows of pearl in my turban.

Milliner. Ver vell, me ladyship.

Wid. And you'll all come together exactly at nine?

Omnes. We'll all be here!

[*Going.*]

Wid. And don't forget the white ermine tippets, and the black fox muffs, and the Kamschatka furs, that you mentioned, Mr. Weazel!

Furrier. I'll bring a fine assortment, madam.

Wid. And, and, and—No; no—you may all go; I can think of nothing else;—I shall remember more to-morrow.

Hatter, Furrier, Milliner, &c. Thank you, madam!—Ver much obliged to you, ma'am!—Dee ver good bonjour to me ladyship.

[*Exeunt.*]

Wid. What was it you were saying, Mr. Sulky?—Pray, child, what have you done with my purse?

Sop. Given it away, ma'.

Wid. Given it away, minikin?

Sop. Yes, ma'.

Wid. Given my purse away? To whom? For what purpose?

Sop. La, ma', only—only to keep a poor woman from starving!

Wid. I protest, child, your grandmother has totally ruined you.

Sul. Not quite, madam; she has left the finishing to you.

Wid. What were you saying, Mr. Sulky?

Sul. You won't give me leave to say any thing, madam.

Wid. You know you are a shocking troublesome man, Mr. Sulky! I have a thousand things to remember, and can't bear teasing. It fatigues my spirits! So pray relate this very urgent business of your's in a single word. What would you have?

Sul. Justice.

Wid. Lord, what do you mean? Do you think I am in the commission?

Sul. Yes, of follies innumerable!

Wid. You are a sad savage, Mr. Sulky! And who is it you want justice for?

Sul. Your late husband's son, John Milford.

Wid. Now pray don't talk to me? You are a very intrusive person! You quite derange my ideas! I can think of nothing soft or satisfactory while you are present!

Sul. Will you hear me, madam?

Wid. I can't! I positively can't! It is an odious subject.

Sop. Nay, ma', how can you be so cross to my brother Milford?

Wid. Your brother, child?—Country education! How often, minikin, have I told you he is no brother of your's.

Sop. La, ma', he was your husband's son!

Wid. Yes, his ba—Faugh!—Odious word!—Your brother?

Sop. Yes, that he is! For he is in distress.

Sul. Humph!

Wid. And would you, now—you who pretend to be very prudent—ridiculous kind of a person, wish to see me squander the wealth of my poor dear little

old dead man on Mr. Milford, and his profligate companions?

Sul. Not I, indeed, madam; though the profligate to whom you make love should happen to be one of them.

Wid. Ha, ha, ha! Oh, the monster! I make love!—You have no eyes, Mr. Sulky! You are really blind! But I know whom you mean.

Sul. I mean young Dornton, madam.

Wid. To be sure you do! Whom could you mean? Elegant youth! Rapturous thought!

Sop. I am sure, sir, young Mr. Dornton is no profligate!

Sul. You are sure?

Sop. Yes, that I am.

Sul. Humph.

Sop. And it's very scandalous, very scandalous, indeed, to say he is my ma's lover!

Sul. Humph.

Sop. Because he is a fine genteel young gentleman; and you know ma' is—

Wid. Pray, minikin, be less flippant with your tongue.

Sop. Why, la, ma', you yourself know you are too—

Wid. Go up to your chamber, child!

Sop. I am sure, ma', I say it is very scandalous to call the handsome Mr. Dornton your lover!

[*Exit.*]

Sul. Do you blush?

Wid. Blush, indeed? Blush? Ha, ha, ha! You are a very unaccountable creature, Mr. Sulky!—Blush at the babbling of a child?

Sul. Who is your rival?

Wid. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! My rival? The poor minikin! My rival? But I have a message for you. Now do compose your features to softness and complacency! Look pleasant if you can! Smile for once in your life!

Sul. Don't make love to me! I'll have nothing to say to you!

Wid. Ha, ha, ha! Love?

Sul. Yes, you make love to Dornton! Nay, you make love to the booby Goldfinch! Even I am not secure in your company.

Wid. Ha, ha, ha! You are a shocking being, Mr. Sulky! But, if you should happen to see Mr. Dornton, do astonish your acquaintance; do a good-natured thing, and tell him I am at home all the day. Love to you? Ha, ha, ha! Oh, you figure! Your caricature of tenderness! You insupportable thing!

[*Exit.*]

Sul. Ah! All labour in vain!

Enter JENNY.

Stand out of the way, girl!

[*Exit.*]

Jen. There she goes! That's lucky! This way, sir!

Enter HARRY DORNTON, followed by a servant, with bills in his hand.

Jen. My mistress is gone up to her toilette, sir; but I can send you somebody you may like better.

[*Exit.*]

Har. Obliging abigail! [*Looking over his papers.*]

'Sdeath! What, all these tradesmen's bills?

Ser. All, sir. Mr. Smith sent me after you with them.

Har. When were they brought?

Ser. Some last night, but most this morning.

Har. Ill news travels fast, and honesty is devilish industrious. Go round to them all, return their bills, and bid them come themselves to-day. Has Mr. Williams, the hosier, sent in his bill?

Ser. No, sir.

Har. I thought as much; tell him to come with the rest, and on his life not to fail.

Ser. Very well, sir.

[Exit.

Enter SOPHIA.

Sop. Oh, Mr. Dornton, I am glad to see you! Do you know, I have got the song by heart that you were so good as to teach me!

Har. And do you know, my charming Sophia, you are the most delightful, beautiful, bewitching scholar that ever took lesson!

Sop. La, Mr. Dornton, I'm sure I'm very stupid!

Har. That you are all intelligence, all grace, all wit!

Sop. To be sure, my ma' caught me singing it, and she was pettish; because, you know, it's all about love, and ends with a happy marriage.

Har. But why pettish?

Sop. La, I can't tell. I suppose she wants to have all the marriage in the world to herself! It's her whole talk! I do believe she'd be married every morning that she rises, if any body would have her!

Har. Think not of her, my sweet Sophia, but tell me—

Sop. What?

Har. I dare not ask.

Sop. Why?

Har. Lest I should offend you.

Sop. Nay, now, Mr. Dornton, that is not right of you! I am never offended with any body, and I am sure I should not be offended with you! My grandma' always said I was the best tempered girl in the world.—What is it?

Har. Were you? [Taking her hand.] Did you ever know what it is to love?

Sop. La, now, how could you ask one such a question? You know very well one must not tell! Besides, you know, too, one must not be in love!

Har. Why not?

Sop. Because—Because I'm but a girl. My grandma' has told me a hundred times, it's a sin for any body to be in love before they be a woman grown, full one-and-twenty; and I am not eighteen!

Har. Love, they say, cannot be resisted.

Sop. Ah, but I have been taught better!—it may be resisted: nobody need be in love unless they like: and so I won't be in love, for I won't wilfully do amiss. No! I won't love any person, though I should love him ever so dearly!

Har. [Aside.] Angelic innocence! [Aloud.] Right, lovely Sophia, guard your heart against seducers.

Sop. Do you know it is full five weeks since Valentine's Day; and, because I'm not one-and-twenty, nobody sent me a Valentine!

Har. And did you expect one?

Sop. Nay, I can't say but I did think! In Gloucestershire, if any young man happens to have a liking for a young woman, she is sure to hear of it on Valentine's Day. But perhaps Valentine's Day does not fall so soon here as it does in the country.

Har. Why, it is possible you may yet receive a Valentine.

Sop. Nay, now, but don't you go to think that I am asking for one; for that would be very wrong of me, and I know better. My grandma' told me I must never mention nor think of such things till I am a woman, full one-and-twenty grown; and that, if I were to find such a thing at my window, or under my pillow, or concealed in a plum cake—

Har. A plum cake?

Sop. Yes, I assure you, I have heard of a Valentine sent baked in a plum cake—and, indeed, I

would not receive such a thing for the world—no, not from the finest man on earth, if I did not think him to be a true and faithful, true, true lover!

Har. But how must he prove his faith and truth?

Sop. Why, first, he must love me very dearly!—

With all his heart and soul! And then he must be willing to wait till I am one-and-twenty.

Har. And would not you love in return?

Sop. N—yes, when I come to be one-and-twenty.

Har. Not sooner?

Sop. Oh no! I must not!

Har. Surely, you might if you pleased?

Sop. Oh, but you must not persuade me to that! If you do, I shall think you are a bad man, such as my grandma' warned me of!

Har. And do you think me so?

Sop. Do I?—No!—I would not think you so for a thousand, thousand golden guineas!

Har. [Aside.] Fascinating purity! What am I about? To deceive or trifle with such unsuspecting affection would indeed be villainy!

Gol. [Without.] Is she above? must see her!

Sop. La, I hear that great, ridiculous, horse-jockey Goldfinch coming up! [Sighs.] Good bye, Mr. Dornton.

Har. Heaven bless you, Sophia!—Sweet Sophia, Heaven bless you, my lovely angel! heigho!

Sop. Heigho!

Gol. [Without.] Is she here?

Ser. [Without.] I don't know, sir.

Enter GOLDFINCH.

Gol. Hah! my tight one!

Har. Well, Charles?

Gol. How you stare!—an't I the go? that's your sort!

Har. Ha, ha, ha!

Gol. Where's the widow?

Har. Gone up to dress, and will not be down these two hours.

Gol. A hundred to eighty, I'd sup up a string of twenty horses in less time than she takes to dress her fetlocks, plait her mane, trim her ears, and buckle on her body clothes!

Har. You improve daily, Charles!

Gol. To be sure! that's your sort! An't I a genius?

Har. Quite an original!—You may challenge the whole fraternity of the whip to match you!

Gol. Match me! Newmarket can't match me!—That's your sort!

Har. Oh no! ha, ha, ha! you are harder to match than one of your own pied ponies—a very different being from either your father or grandfather.

Gol. Father or grandfather!—Shakebags both.

Har. How?

Gol. Father a sugar-baker, grandfather a slop-seller—I'm a gentleman—that's your sort!

Har. Ha, ha, ha! and your father was only a man of worth?

Gol. Kept a gig! Knew nothing of life! never drove four!

Har. No, but he was a useful member of society.

Gol. A usef—what's that?

Har. Ha, ha, ha! A pertinent question.

Gol. A gentleman like me a useful member of society! bet the long odds nobody ever heard of such a thing!

Har. You have not acquired your character in the world for nothing, Charles.

Gol. World! what does the world say?

Har. Strange things. It says you have got into the hands of jockies, Jews, and swindlers; and that,

though old Goldfinch was in his day one of the richest men on 'Change, his son will shortly become poorer than the poorest black-leg at Newmarket.

Gol. Damn the world!

Har. With all my heart, damn the world, for it says little better of me.

Gol. Bet you seven to five the Eclipse colts against the Highflyer, the second spring meeting.

Har. No.—I have done with the Highflyer and Eclipse too. So you are in pursuit of the widow?

Gol. Full cry; must have her.

Har. Ha ha, ha! heigho! you must?

Gol. All up with me else! If I don't marry the widow, I must smash! I've secured the knowing one.

Har. Whom do you mean, the maid?

Gol. Promised her a hundred on the wedding-day.

Enter JENNY.

Jen. My mistress can't see you, at present, gentlemen.

Gol. Can't see me? Take Harriet an airing in the phaeton.

Har. What, is Harriet your favourite?

Gol. To be sure, I keep her.

Har. You do?

Gol. Fine creature!

Har. Well bred?

Gol. Just to my taste! Like myself, free and easy. That's your sort!

Har. A fine woman?

Gol. Prodigious! Sister to the Irish Giant! Six feet in her stockings!—That's your sort!—Sleek coat, flowing mane, broad chest, all bone!—Dashing figure in a phaeton!—Sky blue habit, scarlet sash, green hat, yellow ribands, white feathers, gold band and tassel!—That's your sort!

Har. Ha, ha, ha! Heigho! Why, you are a high fellow, Charles!

Gol. To be sure! know the odds—hold four in hand—turn a corner in style—reins in form—elbows square—wrist pliant—hayait!—drive the Coventry stage twice a week all summer—pay for an inside place—mount the box—tip the coachy a crown—beat the mail—come in full speed—rattle down the gateway—take care of your heads!—never killed but one woman and a child in all my life—that's your sort!

Jen. [Aside to GOLDFINCH.] Take him with you. [Exit

Gol. Want a hedge? Take guineas to pounds—Precipitate against Dragon?

Har. No.

Gol. [Aside.] Wish I could have him a few!—odd or even for fifty?

Har. Ha, ha, ha! odd enough.

Gol. Will you cut a card, hide in the hat, chuck in the glass, draw cuts, heads or tails, gallop the naggot, swim the hedgehog, any thing?

Har. Nothing.

Gol. I'm up to all—that's your sort! get him with me and pigeon him. [Aside.] Come and see my grays—been to Tattersall's and bought a set of six—smokers! beat all England for figure, bone, and beauty! Hayit, charmers! that's your sort! bid for two pair of mouse ponies for Harriet.

Har. Ha, ha, ha! The Irish giantess drawn by mouse ponies!

Gol. Come and see 'em.

Har. No.—I am weary of the company of stable boys.

Gol. Why so? Shan't play you any tricks. If they squirt water at you, or make the colts kick you,

tell me, and I'll horsewhip 'em—Arch dogs! deal of wit!

Har. When they do, I'll horsewhip them myself.

Gol. Yourself? 'Ware that!—wrong there!

Har. I think I should be right.

Gol. Do you? what—been to school?

Har. To school! why yes—I—

Gol. Mendoza! oh! good morrow! [Going.

Har. Ha, ha, ha! There goes one of my friends! heigho!

Enter MILFORD hastily, followed by GOLDFINCH.

Gol. What is it, Jack, tell me!

Mil. Come, Harry! we shall be too late! they are about to begin! we may have what bets we please!

Gol. Where? what?

Mil. The great match! the famous Frenchman, and Will the marker! A thousand guineas aside!

Gol. What, tennis?

Mil. Yes. The Frenchman gives fifteen and a bisk.

Gol. To Will the marker?

Mil. Yes.

Gol. Well, for a hundred!

Mil. Done!

Gol. Done, done!

Har. I bar the bet; the odds are five to four already.

Gol. What, for the Mounseer?

Har. Yes.

Gol. I'll take it, five hundred to four.

Har. Done!

Gol. Done, done!

Har. No, I bar!—I forgot—I have cut. I'll never bet another guinea.

Mil. You do for a hundred?

Har. Done!

Mil. Done, done! ha, ha, ha!

Har. Pshaw!

Gol. What a cake!

Mil. But you'll go?

Har. No.

Mil. Yes, you will. Come, come, the match is begun! every body is there! the Frenchman is the first player in the world!

Har. It's a noble exercise.

Mil. Ay! Cato himself delighted in it.

Har. Yes, it was much practised by the Romans.

Gol. The Romans! who are they?

Har. Ha, ha, ha!

Mil. Ha, ha, ha!—Will you go, or will you not, Harry?

Har. I can't, Jack. My conscience won't let me!

Mil. Pshaw! Zounds, if we don't make haste, it will be all over!

Har. Do you think it will?—No—I won't—I must not.

Mil. [Taking hold of him.] Come along, I tell you.

Har. No.

Mil. They have begun!

Gol. Have they?—I'm off!

Mil. [Struggling with HARRY.] What folly!—come along.

Har. No, I will not.

Mil. [Leaving him and going.] Well, well, if you're so positive—

Har. Stay, Jack; stay—I'll walk up the street with you, but I won't go in.

Mil. Double or quits the hundred that you won of me last night you do!

Har. I don't for a thousand!
 Mil. No, no; the hundred.
 Har. I tell you I won't. I won't go in with you.
 Mil. Done for the hundred!
 Har. Done, done! [Ereunt.]

SCENE II.—*The Parlour of the Tennis Court.—*
Markers discovered engaged with rackets and balls.

Sheriff's Officer, two Followers, and one of the
 Markers.—[Shout.]

Marker. Hurrah!

Officer. Pray, is Mr. Milford in the court?

Marker. I'll bet you gold to silver the Frenchman
 loses! hurrah! [Exit.]

Enter MR. SMITH, from the court.

Mr. S. He is not there.

Officer. Are you sure?

Mr. S. The crowd is very great, but I can neither
 see him nor any of his companions.

Officer. Then he will not come.

Mr. S. I begin to hope so!

Officer. [Examining his writ.] "Middlesex to
 wit—one thousand pounds—Dornton against John
 Milford."

Mr. S. You must take none but substantial bail.
 [Shout.] What a scene.

Officer. He will not be here.

Mr. S. Heaven send! [Shout.]

Enter GOLDFINCH, and a Marker, running across.

Gol. Is the match begun?

Marker. The first game is just over.

Gol. Who lost?

Marker. The Frenchman.

Gol. Hurrah!

Marker. Hurrah.

Gol. Damn the Mounseers!—That's your sort.

[Exit into the court.]

Mr. S. That's one of his companions. I begin to
 tremble. [Aside.] Stand aside! Here they both
 come!

Officer. Which is he?

Mr. S. The second. [Shout.]

Enter HARRY DORNTON and MILFORD, in haste.

Har. I hear them! I hear them! Come along!

Mil. Ha, ha, ha!—Harry!—You would not go!
 —You were determined. [Shout.]

Har. Zounds! Come along!

[Exit in haste, MILFORD following him, laughing.]

Officer. [Stopping him.] A word with you, sir, if
 you please.

Mil. With me? Who are you? What do you
 want?

Officer. You are my prisoner.

Mil. Prisoner! Damnation! Let me go.

Officer. I must do my duty, sir.

Mil. Here, here; this is your duty.

[Taking out his purse.]

Mr. S. [Advancing.] It must not be, sir.

Mil. Mr. Smith!—What! at the suit of Dornton?

Mr. S. Yes, sir. 'Tis your own fault. Why do
 you lead his son to these places? He heard you
 were to bring him here.

Mil. Furies! Marker! [To a Servant passing.]
 Tell Harry Dornton to come to me instantly.

Ser. Yes, sir. [Exit.—Shout.]

Mil. Zounds! Let me but go and see the match!

Mr. S. You must not, sir.

Enter Marker.

Mil. [To another Marker.] Marker!

Mar. Sir!

Mil. Who wins?

Mar. The Frenchman has the best on't.

Mil. Tell Harry Dornton I am here in trouble.
 Desire him to come this moment.

Mar. Very well, sir.

[Exit.—Shout.]

Mil. [To the Officer.] I'll give you ten guineas
 for five minutes!

Mr. S. Take him away, sir.

Officer. You must come along, sir.

Mil. [To a Marker, returning.] Have you told
 him?

Mar. He can't come, sir.

Mil. Very well, Harry! Very well! [To the
 second Marker.] Well, sir?

Mar. He would not leave the court for a thou-
 sand pounds. [Exit.]

Officer. Come, come, sir. [To his two Attendants.]
 Bring him along!

Mil. Hands off, scoundrels! [Shout.] Fiends!

[Ereunt.]

SCENE III.—*The House of Mr. Silky.—A Room
 of Business.*

SILKY discovered, and JACOB entering.

Sil. Well, Jacob! Have you been?

Jac. Yes, sir.

Sil. Well, and what news? How is he? Very
 bad?

Jac. Dead, sir.

Sil. Dead?

Jac. As Deborah!

Sil. [Aside.] I'm a lucky man! Are you sure
 he is dead, Jacob?

Jac. I saw him with my own eyes, sir.

Sil. That's right, Jacob! I'm a lucky man! And
 what say the people at the hotel? Do they know
 who he is?

Jac. Oh yes, sir! He was rich! A gentleman in
 his own country!

Sil. And did you take care they should not know
 you?

Jac. To be sure, sir! You had given me my
 lesson.

Sil. Ay, ay, Jacob! That's right!—You are a
 fine boy! Mind me, and I'll make a man of you!
 And you think they had heard nothing of his having
 called on me?

Jac. Not a word.

Sil. [Aside.] It was a lucky mistake!—Well,
 Jacob! Keep close! Don't say a word, and I'll
 give you—I'll give you a crown.

Jac. You promised me a guinea, sir.

Sil. Did I, Jacob! did I? Well, well! I'll give
 you a guinea! But be close. Did you call at the
 Widow Warren's?

Jac. Yes, sir.

Sil. And will she see me?

Jac. She desires you will be there in an hour.

Sil. Very well, Jacob. Keep close! Not a word
 about the foreign gentleman, or his having been
 here a week ago, or his being taken suddenly ill
 and dying! [Aside.] It is a lucky stroke! Close,
 Jacob, my boy!

Jac. But give me the guinea, sir!

Sil. What now, Jacob?

Jac. If you please, sir. You may forget—

Sil. Well, there, Jacob; there! You'll be a rich
 man, Jacob! a cunning fellow! I read it in your
 countenance, Jacob! Close, Jacob, and then—

Jac. Perhaps you'll give me another guinea?

Sil. Well said, Jacob! you'll be a great man. Mind what I say to you, and you'll be a great man! [*Knocking.*] Here's somebody coming! go, Jacob! close!

Jac. And another guinea?

Sil. This is a lucky stroke!

Enter GOLDFINCH.

So, Mr. Goldfinch! what do you want?

Gol. Money—a thousand pounds directly.

Sil. Fine talking, Mr. Goldfinch! money's a scarce commodity! times are ticklish!

Gol. Tellee I must have it.

Sil. Give me but good security, and you know I'm your friend.

Gol. Yes; good security and fifty per cent.!

Sil. Why look you there now! for all you know, the last annuity I had of you, I gave a full hundred more than was offered by your friend Aaron, the Jew.

Gol. My friend? your friend! you collogue together!

Sil. Hear you now! for all you know I have always been your friend—always supplied you with money, have not I? and, when I saw you running to ruin, I never told you of it, did I? I was willing to make all things easy!

Gol. Easy enough! you have pretty well eased me!

Sil. There is your companion, Jack Milford, I shall be a heavy loser by him!

Gol. Ah! it's all up with poor Jack! he's fixed at last!

Sil. What do you mean?

Gol. Old Dornton has sent the Nab-man after him!

Sil. And arrested him?

Gol. Yes, he's touched!

Sil. Jacob!

Enter JACOB.

Run as fast as you can to my good friend, Mr. Strawshoe, the attorney, and tell him to take out detainers for all the debts I have bought up against Mr. Milford; make haste!

Jac. Yes, sir.

Gol. I thought you were Jack Milford's friend, too!

Sil. So I am, Mr. Goldfinch! but I must provide for my family.

Gol. Come, come!—The bit! tellee I want the coal, directly! Sale at Tattersall's to-morrow morning! three pot eight o' brood mares, with each an Eclipse colt! would not lose 'em for all Lombard-street—so will you let me have the bit?

Sil. Dear, dear! I tell you I can't, Mr. Goldfinch.

Gol. Then some other Jew must.

Sil. Jew! hear you! hear you! this is to be the friend of an ungrateful spendthrift! Calls me Jew! I, who go to morning prayers every day of my life, and three times to tabernacle on a Sunday!

Gol. Yes! you cheat all day, tremble all night, and act the hypocrite the first thing in the morning.

[*Going.*]

Sil. Nay, but stay, Mr. Goldfinch! stay! I want to talk to you! I have a scheme to make a man of you!

Gol. What! bind me 'prentice to an usurer.

Sil. Pshaw! you are in pursuit of the Widow Warren?

Gol. Well.

Sil. Now what will you give me, and I'll secure her to you?

Gol. You?

Sil. I.

Gol. Which way?

Sil. I have a deed in my power,—I won't tell you what, but I have it, by which I can make her marry the man I please, or remain a widow all her life; and that I am sure she will never do if she can help it.

Gol. You a deed?

Sil. Yes, I.

Gol. Show it me.

Sil. Not for twenty thousand pounds!—Depend upon me, I have it! I tell you I'm your friend, and you shall have her; that is, on proper conditions.—If not Mr. Goldfinch, you shall not have her.

Gol. Indeed, old Judas; well, what are your conditions?

Sil. I find the late alderman died worth a hundred and fifty thousand pounds!

Gol. Ah!

Sil. Every farthing, Mr. Goldfinch! and my conscience tells me that, risk and character and all things considered, I must come in for my thirds.

Gol. Your conscience tells you that!

Sil. Yes, it does, Mr. Goldfinch;—fifty thousand is a fair price.

Gol. For the soul of a miser.

Sil. If you'll join me, say so.

Gol. Fifty thousand.

Sil. Not a farthing less! What, will there not be a hundred thousand remaining?

Gol. Why, that's true!—It will cut a fine dash!

Sil. To be sure it will! Come with me; I'll draw up a sketch of an agreement. After which we must fight cunning. The widow is a vain, weak woman.—You must get her written promise.

Gol. Written?

Sil. Under her own hand; with a good round penalty in case of forfeiture.

Gol. Well said, old one.

Sil. Not less than twenty thousand pounds! A jury would grant half.

Gol. Damme, you're a good one!

Sil. That would secure something, and we would snack!

Gol. Damme, you're a deep one!

Sil. Ah, ha, ha, ha! Do you think I am, Mr. Goldfinch?—Signed on a stamp!

Gol. You know a thing or two!

Sil. Ah, ha, ha, ha! Do you think I do, Mr. Goldfinch?

Gol. You can teach 'em to bite the bubble.

Sil. Ah, ha, ha, ha! You joke, Mr. Goldfinch, you joke!

Gol. But the devil will have you at last.

Sil. Lord forbid, Mr. Goldfinch! Don't terrify me! I hate the devil, Mr. Goldfinch; indeed I do. I hate the name of him. Heaven keep me out of his fiery clutches!

Gol. No: he has you safe enough. Bait his trap but with a guinea, and he is sure to find you nibbling.

Sil. Don't talk about the devil, Mr. Goldfinch! Pray don't! But think about the widow: secure her.

Gol. I must have the coal, though, this evening.

Sil. Don't lose a moment, Mr. Goldfinch.

Gol. Must not lose the Eclipse colts!

Sil. Pshaw, Mr. Goldfinch, think less of the colts and more of the widow! Get her promise in black and white.

Gol. Tellee I must have 'em.

Sil. All will then be safe.

Gol. Must have 'em.

[*Ereunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The House of the Widow Warren.*

Enter JENNY and SOPHIA.

Jen. Oh, Miss! I have got something for you.

Sop. Something for me! What is it? What is it?

Jen. [*Holding her hand behind her.*] What will you give me?

Sop. Oh, I'll give you—[*Feeling in her pocket.*] La, I've got no money! But I'll give you a kiss and owe you sixpence.

Jen. No. A shilling without the kiss.

Sop. Well, well, a shilling.

Jen. There then.

[*Giving her a small parcel.*]
Sop. La! What is it? [*Reads.*] "To Miss Sophia Freeclove." And such a beautiful seal! It's a pity to break it. [*Opening the paper.*] La! Nothing but a plum-cake!

Jen. Is that all?

Sop. [*Considering.*] Ecod!—Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! I do think—As sure as sixpence, it is!—It is!—

Jen. Is what?

Sop. Oh la, it is!

Jen. What's the matter with the girl?

Sop. Ecod, Jenny, it is the most curious plum-cake you ever saw.

Jen. I see nothing curious about it.

Sop. [*Kneeling.*] Oh, but you shall see! Give me a knife!—Oh, no, that will spoil all!—Look you, Jenny, look!—Do but look! [*Breaks open the cake, and finds a valentine enclosed.*] Ha, ha, ha, ha! I told you so! The sweet, dear—[*Kisses it.*] Did you ever see such a plum-cake in your whole life, Jenny?—And look here! [*Opening the valentine.*] Oh, how beautiful!—The shape of a honey-suckle!—What should that mean?—And two doves cooing! But here!—Here's the writing:

"The woodbine sweet and turtle dove

Are types of chaste and faithful love.

Ah! were such peace and truth but mine,

I'd gladly be your Valentine!"

[*Repeating.*] Were such peace and truth but mine! La, now, Mr. Dornton, you know they are yours.

Jen. So, so! Mr. Dornton sends you valentines, Miss!

Sop. Oh, yes, Jenny! He is the kindest, sweetest, handsomest gentleman!

Jen. You must give me that valentine, Miss.

Sop. Give it you?

Jen. Yes; that I may show it your mamma.

Sop. Indeed! but don't you think it! I would not give you this tiny bit of paper,—no, not for a diamond as big—as big as the whole world—And, if you were to take it from me, I'd never love you, nor forgive you, as long as I live.

Jen. Oh! but indeed, Miss, I'm not obliged to keep secrets for nothing.

Sop. Nay, Jenny, you know I am very good to you. And here!—Here! Don't tell 'ma, and I'll give you this silver thimble.

[*Exit JENNY.*—SOPHIA retires.

Enter Widow WARREN and SULKY.

Wid. You are a very shocking person, Mr. Sulky! the wild man of the woods broke loose!

Do return to your keeper, good ourang-outang; and don't go about to terrify children.

Sul. I tell you, madam, Mr. Milford is arrested.

Sop. My brother?

Sul. Locked up at a bailiff's in the next street.

Sop. Oh, dear!

Wid. And pray, now, what is that to me?

Sul. Madam!

Wid. I am not arrested.

Sul. Would you were

Wid. Oh, the savage!

Sul. The pitiless only should feel pain. The stony-hearted alone should be enclosed by walls of stone.

Sop. Don't be cross with ma', sir; I'm sure she'll release my brother

Wid. You are sure, minikin!

Sop. Yes, ma'; for I am sure no soul on earth would suffer a fellow-creature to lie and pine to death, in a frightful dark dungeon, and fed with bread and water.

Sul. Your late husband recommended the payment of his son's debts.

Wid. Recommended?

Sul. Yes.

Wid. But leaving it to my own prudence.

Sul. More's the pity.

Wid. Which prudence I shall follow.

Sul. It will be the first time in your life—You never yet followed prudence, you always ran before it.

Sop. Nay, come, dear ma'; I am sure you have a pitiful heart; I am sure you could not rest in your bed if my poor brother was in prison.

Wid. Hold your prattle, child.

Sop. Ah, I'm sure you'll make him happy, and pay his debts.

Wid. Why, Jenny!

Sul. You won't?

Enter JENNY.

Sop. La, dear sir, have patience—

Sul. You are an angel; [*To SOPHIA.*] And you are—[*To WIDOW.*] [*Exit.*]

Sop. Nay, pray, sir, do stay! [*Exit, following.*]

Wid. I am glad the monster is gone; he is a very intolerable person.—Pray, Jenny, how did it happen that Mr. Dornton went away without seeing me?

Enter Servant and SILKY.

Ser. Mr. Silky, madam.

Wid. Leave us, Jenny. [*Exit JENNY.*] So, Mr.

Silky.—What is this very urgent business of yours?

Sil. Are we safe, madam? Will nobody interrupt us; nobody overhear us?

Wid. No, no.—But what is the meaning of all this caution?

Sil. Carefully drawing the will from his pocket.] Do you know this hand-writing, madam? [*Both sit.*]

Wid. Ah!—It is my poor old dear man's, I see.

Sil. You have heard of a will he left in France?

Wid. Pshaw! Will, indeed! He left no will.

Sil. Yes, he did, madam:

Wid. I won't believe it! He loved me too well to rob me of a single guinea! Poor simple soul! I was his darling!

Sil. His darling, madam?—With your permission, I will just read a single clause, in which his darling is mentioned! Look, madam; it is the alderman's hand! [*Reads.*] "But, as I have sometimes painfully suspected the excessive affection which my said wife, Winifred Warren, professed for me during my de-

cline, and that the solemn protestations she made never to marry again, should she survive me, were both done with sinister views, it is my will that, should she marry, or give a legal promise of marriage, written or verbal, that she shall be cut off with an annuity of six hundred a year; and the residue of my effects in that case to be equally divided between my natural son, John Milford, and my wife's daughter, Sophia Freelove."

Wid. Six hundred a year! An odd dotard! brute! monster! I hate him now as heartily as when he was alive! But pray, sir, how came you by this will?

Sil. Why it was odd enough! and yet easy enough: My name is Silky, madam—

Wid. Well?

Sil. And you know the executor's name is Sulky—

Wid. Well?

Sil. The gentleman that delivered it only made a mistake of a letter, and gave it to Mr. Silky instead of Mr. Sulky.

Wid. And where is that gentleman?

Sil. Ah, poor man—He is dead.

Wid. Dead?

Sil. And gone.—

Wid. And does Mr. Sulky know of this will being delivered?

Sil. Not a syllable; it's all close and smooth.

Wid. So much the better—Come, give it me, and—

Sil. Excuse me there, madam; I can't do that.

Wid. Why so?

Sil. My conscience won't let me; I must provide for my family.

Wid. And pray what provision is this will to make for your family, Mr. Silky?

Sil. Why, madam, I have a proposal.—You know the power of your own charms.

Wid. Which, I believe, is more than you do, Mr. Silky—

Sil. Hah; don't say so, madam;—Don't say so; Would I were a handsome, rich, and well-born youth:—But you know Mr. Goldfinch?—Ah, ha, ha, ha; I could tell you a secret!

Wid. What, that he is dying for me, I suppose?

Sil. Ah?—So smitten!—Talks of nothing else!

Wid. And is that any secret, think you?

Sil. The alderman, I find, died worth more than a plun and a half—

Wid. Well?

Sil. I have talked the matter over with my friend, Mr. Goldfinch, and he thinks it but reasonable, that for a secret of so much importance, which would almost sweep the whole away, I should receive one third

Wid. Fifty thousand pounds, Mr. Silky?

Sil. I can't take less.

Wid. Why you are a greater rogue than even I thought you!

Sil. Lord, madam, it's no roguery; it's only a knowledge of the world; a young husband with a hundred thousand pounds, or poor six hundred a year without any husband.

Wid. You are a very shocking old miser, Mr. Silky; a very repulsive sort of a person; what heart you had is turned to stone; you are insensible of the power of a pair of fine eyes; but I have made a conquest that places me beyond your reach—I mean to marry Mr. Dornton.

Sil. [Rising.] What! old Mr. Dornton, madam?

Wid. [Rising.] Old Mr. Dornton, man! I never saw the figure in my life; no. The gay and gallant

young Mr. Dornton; the pride of the city, and the lawful monarch of my bleeding heart.

Sil. Ha, ha, ha! young Mr. Dornton.

Wid. So you may take your will and light your fires with it; you will not make a penny of it any other way. Mr. Sulky, the executor, is Mr. Dornton's partner, and when I marry Mr. Dornton he will never inflict the absurd penalty.

Sil. Ha, ha, ha! no, madam! when you marry Mr. Dornton, that he certainly never will! but, if any accident should happen to prevent the match, you will then let me hear from you?

Wid. Lord, good man! don't mention the horrid idea! do leave me to my delightful meditations! I would indulge in soft sensibility and dreams of bliss; and not be disturbed by dead men's wills, or the sordid extortions of an avaricious old rogue!

Sil. Very well, madam! the secret for the present remains between ourselves. You'll be silent for your own sake! only remember, ha, ha, ha! if you should want me, I live at number forty. My name is on the door. Ha, ha, ha! Mr. Dornton! good morning, madam! [Going.] Mr. Dornton! ha, ha, ha! you'll send if you should want me?

[Exit laughing.
Calling.]

Wid. Jenny!

Enter JENNY.

Jen. Ma'am.

Wid. As I was saying, Jenny, pray how did it happen that Mr. Dornton went away without seeing me?

Jen. Indeed, ma'am, I don't know.

Wid. Cruel youth.

Jen. I'm sure, ma'am, I wonder how you can like him better than Mr. Goldfinch?

Wid. Mr. Goldfinch is very well, Jenny; but Mr. Dornton; oh! incomparable.

Jen. I am sure, ma'am, if I was a rich lady, and a handsome lady, and a fine lady, like you, I should say Mr. Goldfinch for my money.

Wid. Should you, Jenny? Well, I don't know.

Gol. [Without.] Tellee I must see her.

Wid. As I live, here he comes;—he is such a boisterous person? How do I look, Jenny?

Jen. You had better go up to your toilette for a minute.

Wid. That smooth-tongued extortioner has put me into such a flutter.—Don't let him go, Jenny.

Jen. Never fear, ma'am.

Wid. I'll not stay too long.

[Exit.]

Enter GOLDFINCH, his clothes dirty.

Gol. Here I am—all alive.

Jen. Dear; what's the matter?

Gol. Safe and sound; fine kick-up!

Jen. Have you been thrown?

Gol. Pitched five-and-twenty feet into a ditch—souse.

Jen. Dear me!

Gol. Pretty commence;—no matter—limbs whole—heart sound—that's your sort!

Jen. Where did it happen?

Gol. By-road—back of Islington—had them tight in hand, too—came to short turn and a narrow lane—up flew a damned dancing-master's umbrella—bounce—off they went—road repairing—wheelbarrow in the way—crash—out flew I—whiz—fire flashed—lay stunned—got up—looked foolish—shafts broke—Snarler and Blackguard both down—Black-and-all-black paying away—pannels smashed, traces cut, Snarler lamed.

Jen. Terrible!

Gol. Damned mad!—cursed a few, cut up Black-and-all-black, horsewhipped Tom, took coach, and drove here like a devil in a whirlwind.

Jen. 'Tis very well your neck's not broke.

Gol. Little stiff—no matter—damn all dancing-masters and their umbrellas!

Jen. You had better have been here, Mr. Goldfinch. You stand so long, shilly shally, that you'll be cut out at last. If you had but a licence now in your pocket, I'd undertake to have you married in half an hour.

Gol. Do you think so?

Jen. Think! I'm sure on't.

Gol. Damme, I'll post away and get one—must not lose her; the game's up, if I do!—must have her!—be true to me, and I'll secure you the hundred. I'll be back from the Commons in a smack.

[*Exit JENNY.*]

Enter the Widow WARREN.

Gol. Ah, widow! here am I!

[*Runs to her, kisses her, and dirties her clothes.*]

Wid. I protest, Mr. Goldfinch!—was ever the like!

Gol. Never mind, brush off—I'm the lad!—been to Hatchet's—bespoke the wedding-coach.

Wid. But—Sir—

Gol. Pannels stripe painted—hammer-cloth fringed—green and white—curtains festooned—patent wheels—silver furniture—all flash—light as a band-box—trundle and spin after my grays like a tandem down hill—pass—show 'em the road—whurr—whizz—gig—that's your sort!

Wid. It will be superb!

Gol. Superb! Tellee it will be the thing!—the go—the stare—the gape—the gaze!—the rich widow and the tight one!—there they go—that's your sort—I'm the boy that shall drive you.

Wid. Pardon me, Mr. Goldfinch; if a certain event were, by the wise disposition of Providence, to take place, I should think proper to drive.

Gol. You drive! If you do, damn me.

Wid. Sir!

Gol. I'm christened and called Charles!—Charles Goldfinch—the knowing lad that's not to be had—winter and summer—fair weather and foul—low ruts or no ruts—never take a false quarter. No, no, widow—I drive—hayit—ah! ah!—get on—St—St—touch Whitefoot in the flank—tickle Snarler in the ear—cut up the Yelper—take out a fly's eye—smack, crack—that's your sort!

Wid. I assure you, Mr. Goldfinch, you entertain very improper suppositions concerning—

Gol. Go for the licence. [*Going.*]

Wid. Nay, but surely, Mr.—

Gol. Go for the licence—resolved—taken it here.

[*Pointing to his forehead.*]

Wid. If retrospect and—and affection threw no other obstacles in the way—yet the—the world—prudence.

Gol. The world!—prudence!—damn the world—damn prudence.

Wid. Oh but, sir—

Gol. The world nor nobody else has nothing to do with neither your prudence nor mine—we'll be married immediately—

Wid. Immediately, Mr. Goldfinch? I—

Gol. What, you won't?

Wid. Nay, Mr. Goldfinch—I—do not—absolutely renunciate—but I—wish—

Gol. It was over—know you do—go for the licence—

Wid. Pray dear Mr. Goldfinch—

Gol. Go for the licence, I tellee.

Wid. Only a word—

Gol. To the wise—I'm he—go for the licence—that's your sort. [*Exit.*]

Wid. Mr. Goldfinch—I declare—

[*Exit, following.*]

SCENE II.—Dornton's House.

Enter Mr. DORNTON and Mr. SMITH.

Dor. Still the same hurry, the same crowd, Mr. Smith?

Mr. S. Much the same, sir: the house never experienced a day like this; Mr. Sulky thinks we shall never get through.

Dor. Is Milford taken?

Mr. S. Yes, sir.

Dor. Unprincipled prodigal; my son owes his ruin to him alone. But he shall suffer.

Mr. S. My young master's tradesmen are waiting.

Dor. Bid them come in. [*Exit Mr. SMITH.*] All my own fault, my own fond folly: denied him nothing, encouraged him to spend; and now—

Re-enter Mr. SMITH, followed by upwards of twenty tradesmen.

Mr. S. This way, gentlemen.

Dor. Zounds, what an army!—a vile, thoughtless profligate.

Enter CLERK.

Clerk. [To Mr. DORNTON.] You are wanted in the counting-house, sir.

Dor. Very well. I'll be with you in a moment, gentlemen—abandoned spendthrift!

[*Exit, followed by Mr. SMITH.*]

First T. I don't like this! what does this mean?

Second T. Danger!

Third T. He has been a good customer—none of your punctual paymasters, that look over their accounts.

First T. Oh, a different thing! nothing to be got by them—always take care to affront them.

Second T. Perhaps, it is a trick of the old gentleman, to inspect into our charges.

Third T. I don't like that: rather hear of any tax than of taxing my bill.

First T. Humph! tradesmen begin to understand these things, and allow a reasonable profit.

Second T. Can't have less than fifty per cent. for retail credit trade!

Third T. To be sure not; if a man would live in style, and have a fortune, as he ought.

First T. Hush! mind—all devilish hard run.

Omnes. Certainly.

First T. Not a guinea in the house; to-morrow's Saturday—hem!

Re-enter Mr. DORNTON.

Dor. Your servant, gentlemen, your servant.—Pray how happens it that you bring your accounts in here?

First T. We received notice, sir.

Dor. You have none of you any demands upon me

First T. Happy to serve you, sir.

Second T. We shall be glad of your custom, sir.

Omnes. All, all!

Dor. And do you come expecting to be paid?

First T. Money, sir, is always agreeable!

Second T. Tradesmen find it a scarce commodity!

Third T. Bills come round quick!

Fourth T. Workmen must eat!

Second T. For my part, I always give a gentleman, who is a gentleman, his own time.

Dor. I understand you! And what are you, sir, who seem to stand apart from the rest?

Hosier. A hosier, sir. I am unworthy the company of these honest gentlemen, who live in style. I never affront a punctual paymaster, not I; and, what they will think strange, I get more by those who do look over their bills than those who do not!

First T. Humph! [*Aside.*]

Second T. Blab! [*Aside.*]

Third T. Shab! [*Aside.*]

Dor. And what may be the amount of your bill, sir?

Hosier. A trifle, for which I have no right to ask.

Dor. No right! what do you mean?

Hosier. Your son, sir, made me what I am; re-deemed me and my family from ruin; and it would be an ill requital of his goodness to come here, like a dun, at such a time as this; when I would rather, if that could help him, give him every shilling I have in the world.

Dor. Would you? would you? You look like an honest man! But what do you do here, then?

Hosier. Mr. Dornton, sir, knew I should be unwilling to come, and sent me word he would never speak to me more if I did not; and, rather than offend him, I would even come here on business like this.

Dor. [*Shakes him by the hand.*] You are an honest fellow! an unaccountable!—and so Harry has been your friend?

Hosier. Yes, sir: a liberal-minded friend; for he lent me money, though I was sincere enough to tell him of his faults.

Dor. Zounds, sir! how came you to be a weaver of stockings?

Hosier. I don't know, sir, how I came to be at all; I only know that here I am.

Dor. A philosopher!

Hosier. I am not fond of titles, sir; I'm a man.

Dor. Why, is it not a shame, now, that the soul of Socrates should have crept and hid itself in the body of a stocking-weaver? Give me your bill.

Hosier. Excuse me, sir.

Dor. Give me your bill, I tell you! I'll pay this bill myself.

Hosier. I cannot, must not, sir.

Dor. Sir, I insist on— [*All press forward.*]

Enter HARRY DORNTON.

So, sir; why have you assembled these people, into whose debt you have dishonestly run, wanting the power to pay: and who have as dishonestly trusted you, hoping to profit exorbitantly by your extravagance?

Har. Oh, sir, you don't know them? They are a very complaisant, indulgent kind of people. Are not you, gentlemen?

First T. Certainly, sir.

Omnes. Certainly.

Har. Be kind enough to wait a few minutes without, my very good friends. [*Exeunt Tradesmen.*]

Mr. Williams— [*Takes his hand.*]

Hosier. Sir— [*Exit.*]

Dor. How dare you introduce this swarm of locusts here? How dare you?

Har. Despair, sir, is a dauntless hero.

Dor. Have you the effrontery to suppose that I can or shall pay them? What is it you mean?

Har. To let you see I have creditors.

Dor. Cheats! bloodsuckers!

Har. Some of them: but that is my fault. They must be paid.

Dor. Paid!

Har. The innocent must not suffer for the guilty.

Dor. You will die in an almshouse!

Har. May be so; but the orphan's and the widow's curse shall not meet me there.

Dor. Harry! Zounds! Paid! Whom do you mean to rob?

Har. My name is Dornton, sir.

Dor. Are you not—

Har. Yes, sir.

Dor. Quit the room. Begone.

Har. You are the best of men, sir, and I—But I hate whining. Repentance is a pitiful scoundrel, that never brought back a single yesterday. Amendment is a fellow of more mettle. But it is too late. Suffer I ought, and suffer I must. My debts of honour discharged, do not let my tradesmen go unpaid.

Dor. You have ruined me!

Har. The whole is but five thousand pounds.

Dor. But?—The counter is loaded with the destruction you have brought upon us all.

Har. No, no—I have been a sad fellow, but not even my extravagance can shake this house.

Enter Mr. SMITH.

Mr. S. Bills are pouring in so fast upon us we shall never get through!

Har. What? What?

Mr. S. We have paid our light gold so often over, that the people are very surly.

Dor. Pay it no more! Sell it instantly for what it is worth, disburse the last guinea, and shut up the doors!

Har. [*To Mr. SMITH.*] Are you serious?

Mr. S. Sir!

Har. Are you serious, I say! Is it not some trick to impose upon me?

Mr. S. Look into the shop, sir, and convince yourself! If we have not a supply in half an hour, we must stop. [*Exit.*]

Har. [*Wildly.*] My father! sir! [*Turning away.*] Is it possible? Disgraced! Ruined! In reality ruined! By me? Are these things so?

Dor. Harry! how you look. You frighten me.

Har. It shall be done.

Dor. What do you mean!—Calm yourself, Harry.

Har. Ay! by heaven!

Dor. Hear me, Harry.

Har. This instant.

Going.

Dor. Harry!

Har. Don't droop! [*Returning.*] Don't despair! I'll find relief. [*Aside.*] First to my friend—He cannot fail. But if he should!—Why ay, then, to Magæra! I will marry her, in such a cause, were she fifty widows and fifty furies!

Dor. Calm yourself, Harry.

Har. I am calm! Very calm. It shall be done.—Don't be dejected—You are my father—You were the first of men in the first of cities—Revered by the good and respected by the great—You flourished prosperously!—But you had a son—I remember it.

Dor. Why do you roll your eyes, Harry?

Har. I won't be long away.

Dor. Stay where you are, Harry. [*Seizing his hand.*] All will be well. I am very happy.—Do not leave me. I am very happy. Indeed I am, Harry.—Very happy.

Har. Heaven bless you, sir. You are a worthy gentleman. I'll not be long.

Dor. Hear me, Harry. I am very happy

Enter MR. SMITH.

Mr. S. Sir, shall we send to the Bank for a thousand pounds' worth of silver?

Har. No, scoundrel!

[*Exit.*]

Dor. Harry! Harry! I am very happy. Harry Dornton—I am very happy! Very happy.

[*Exit MR. SMITH, following.*]

SCENE III.—*The House of Mr. Silky.*

Enter MR. SILKY and JACOB.

Sil. Mr. Goldfinch not called yet, Jacob?

Jac. No, sir.

Sil. Nor any message from the widow?

Jac. No, sir.

[*Knocking.*]

Sil. See who knocks, Jacob. [*Exit JACOB.*] I dare say it is one or t'other. They must come to me at last.

Enter HARRY DORNTON, in haste, following JACOB.

Har. Are you sure he is at home?

Jac. He is here, sir.

[*Exit.*]

Har. Mr. Silky—

[*Panting.*]

Sil. Ah! my dear Mr. Dornton, how do you do? —[*Both sit.*] I hope you are very well. I am exceedingly glad to see you! This call is so kind, so condescending. It gives me infinite pleasure.

Har. Mr. Silky, you must instantly grant me a favour.

Sil. A favour! What is it? How can I serve you? I would run to the world's end.

Har. You must exert your whole friendship!

Sil. Friendship, sir? Say duty! 'Twas you that made a man of me! I should have been ruined, in the Bench, I know not where or what, had you not come forward and supported me at the critical moment. And now I can defy the world.

Har. Hear me! I know you can.

Sil. Oh yes. The sum you lent me, a lucky speculation, five years of continual good fortune, and other little lifts, have made me—I won't say what. But your father, and perhaps another or two excepted,—I say perhaps, I'll show my head with the proudest of 'em.

Har. Why, then, I am a fortunate man.

Sil. To be sure you are. How can I serve you? —What can I do? Make me happy.

Har. You can rescue me from phrenzy.

Sil. Can I?—I am proud! Infinitely happy! —What? How? I am a lucky fellow! Tell me which way?—Where can I run? What can I do?

Har. [*Hesitating*] The request is serious—trying.

Sil. So much the better! So much the better! Whom could I serve, if not you?—You! The son of the first man in the city!

Har. You mistake!

Sil. I don't! You are, you are! Dornton and Co. may challenge the world, the house of Hope perhaps excepted.

Har. Woful mistake!

Sil. Pooh!

Har. Our house is in danger of stopping payment.

Sil. Sir! [*Rises.*] Stop payment!

Har. My follies are the cause.

Sil. [*Turning away.*] Stop payment!

Har. I have not been used to ask favours—but—

Sil. Stop payment!

Har. [*Rises.*] What means this alteration in your countenance?

Sil. Oh dear no! Ha, ha, ha! Not in the least. Ha, ha, ha! I assure you, I, I, I—

Har. I have told you our situation. Yourself

and two other friends must jointly support my father by your credit, to the amount of fifty thousand pounds. Mark me!—Must!

Sil. Fifty thousand pounds, Mr. Dornton! Fifty thousand pounds! Are you dreaming? Me? Fifty thousand pounds? Me? Or half the sum? Or a fifth of the sum? Me?

Har. Prevaricating sound—Hear me, sir!

Sil. Yes, sir.

Har. I must be calm. Are you not a—I say—sir—You have yourself informed me of your ability, and I must insist. Observe, sir! I insist on your immediate performance of this act of duty!

Sil. Duty, and fifty thousand pounds! Are you mad, Mr. Dornton? Are you mad? Or do you think me mad?

Har. I think you the basest of wretches.

Sil. Nay, Mr. Dornton, I would do anything to serve you—Anything, I protest to heaven! Would go anywhere, run—

Har. Of my errands, wipe my shoes! Any dirty menial office that cost you nothing. And this you call showing your gratitude?

Sil. Is it not, Mr. Dornton?

Har. And will you give no help to the house?

Sil. Nay, Mr. Dornton—

Har. After the favours you have been for years receiving, the professions you have been daily making, and the wealth you have by these means been hourly acquiring—will you not, sir?

Sil. Nay, Mr. Dornton—

Har. Will you not, sir?

Sil. Don't hurt a poor old man! I can't!

Har. [*Throwing him from him*] Scoundrel! [*Exit.*]

Sil. Bless my heart! Stopp'd payment!—The house of Dornton!—Fifty thousand pounds!—I declare I am all of a tremble. Jacob!

Enter JACOB.

Have we any bills on the house of Dornton?

Jac. I have just been examining the books, sir.—We have bills to the amount of—

Sil. How much? How much? A thousand pounds?

Jac. Three, sir.

Sil. Three?—Three thousand? Bless my heart!

Jac. We heard the news the very moment after young Mr. Dornton came in.

Sil. Run, pay the bills away.

Jac. Where, sir?

Sil. Anywhere! Anybody will take 'em! Run with them to my dear friend, Mr. Smallware: it is too far for him to have heard of the crash. Begone! Don't leave him. Give my very best respects to him. He will oblige me infinitely. Fly! And Jacob—Make haste, go to the clearing-house, and get it whispered among the clerks. Then, if there are any of Dornton's bills to be bought at fifty per cent. discount, let me know. I will buy up all I can. [*Exit JACOB.*] It's a safe speculation—I know the house—there must be a good round dividend.

[*Exit.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The House of the Widow Warren.*

Enter JENNY, followed by HARRY DORNTON, half drunk.

Har. Away, Handmaid of Hecate. Fly!

Jen. Lord, sir, you don't mean as you say?

Har. Will you begone, Cerberca? Invite my goddess to descend in a golden shower, and suddenly relieve these racking doubts.

Jen. Goddess! I knew who you meant—Miss Sophy.

Enter WIDOW.—Exit JENNY.

Wid. Mr. Dornton!

Har. Widow! Here am I. Phaeton the second hurled from my flaming car. I come burning with fierce desires, devoutly bent on committing the deadly sin of matrimony. May these things be? Speak, my saving angel.

Wid. Nay, but—Dear Mr. Dornton—

Har. Do not imagine, amiable widow, that I am mad. No, no, no! Only a little flighty—Left my father furiously, drank three bottles of Burgundy frantically, flew in amorous phrenzy to the attack, and will carry the place or die on the spot! Powder and poison await my choice; and let me tell you, sweet widow, I am a man of my word. So you'll have me, won't you?

Wid. Oh, Mr. Dornton—

Har. Why, you would not see my father perish, would you? And me expire? would you?

Wid. Am I so very cruel?

Har. Then say yes!—Yes, or—Pistols—Daggers—Cannon-balls!

Wid. Yes, sir; yes, yes!

Har. Hold, fair widow! Kind widow, hold! Be not rash. I am the veriest villain.—Avoid me!—A ruined—But that were indeed a trifle—My father? Him! him have I ruined! Heard you that? Bring forth your hoards. Let him once more be himself, and bid me kiss the dust.

Wid. [*Aside.*] Elegant youth!

Har. And wilt thou, widow, be his support? Wilt thou?

Wid. Cruel question. How can I deny?

Har. Immortal blessings be upon thee! My father—

Wid. Will be all rapture to hear—

Har. Ah, ha, ha, ha! You don't know my father. A strange, affectionate—That loves me—Oh! He—And you see how I use him—you see how I use him! But no matter.—Tol de rol—We'll be married to-night.

Wid. Oh, fie!

Har. Ay, my Madona! To-night's the day. The sooner the better. 'Tis to rescue a father, blithesome widow. A father! To save him have I fallen in love. Remember—Sin with open eyes, widow—Money—I must have money. Early in the morn, ere counters echo with the ring of gold, fifty thousand must be raised.

Wid. It shall, Mr. Dornton.

Har. Why, shall it? Shall it? Speak again, beautiful vision, speak! Shall it?

Wid. Dear Mr. Dornton, it shall.

Har. Remember! Fifty thousand the first thing in the morning.

Wid. And would not a part this evening—?

[*Coquetting.*

Har. What sayest thou? Oh, no!—Who!—Thousands—

Wid. I have a trifling sum.

Har. How much?

Wid. Six thousand—

Har. Six?

Wid. Which I meant to have disposed of, but—

Har. No, no! I'll dispose of it, dear widow.

[*Kisses her.*] I'll dispose of it in a twinkling. Doubt not my gratitude—Let this and this—

[*Kissing.*]
Wid. Fie! You are a sad man. But I'll bring you a draft.

Har. Do, my blooming widow! Empress of the golden isles, do.

Wid. But, remember, this trifle is for your own use.

Har. No, my pearl unparalleled! My father! My father's. Save but my father, and I will kiss the ground on which thou treadest, and live and breathe but on thy bounty!

At least till time and fate shall means afford
Somewhat to perform, worthy of man and me.

Enter JENNY, peeping.

Jen. Sir!

Har. Ah, ha! my merry maid of May!

Jen. I suppose you are waiting to see Miss Sophy, now you have got rid of the old lady.

Har. Got rid of the old lady? Thou brazen pin-placer! thou virgin of nine-and-twenty years' occupation! No! I have not got rid of the old lady! the old lady! The old lady is to be my blooming, youthful bride! and I, happy youth, am written and destined in the records of eternity her other half. Heigho!

Jen. Lord, sir, what rapturation:—but stay a little, and I'll tell Miss Sophy her mamma wants her, here; so then—Hush! [*Retires.*]

Re-enter the Widow WARREN.

Wid. Here's the draft.

Har. Thanks, my Sultana!—this halcyon night the priest, pronouncing conjurations dire—

Wid. Fie! I won't look at you.

Har. Ay, to night we'll marry; shall we not?

[*Sitting down and coquetting.*

Enter SOPHIA, skipping, but stops short on seeing them.

Har. To-night shall be a night of wonder; and we'll love like—[*Aside.*]—like Darby and Joan.

Wid. [*Languishing.*] I shall hate you intolerably. [*SOPHIA advances on tip-toe.*]

Har. Hey for the parson's permission! Hey, my sublime widow.

Wid. To steal thus upon one at an unguarded moment.

Har. But here first let me kneel, and thus to Ceres pay—

[*Going to kiss her hand, meets the eye of SOPHIA.*

Sop. [*Coming between them with bursting trepidation, taking the valentine from her bosom, and presenting it.*] There, sir.

Wid. Ah!

Sop. There, sir—oh, pray, sir, take it, sir.

Wid. Why, minikin—

Sop. I request, sir. I desire, sir.

Har. [*Declining it.*] Tol de rol—

Sop. [*Tearing the paper, and throwing it away.*]

Why then, there, sir—and there, sir—and there, there, there, sir!

Wid. Poor minikin! I declare she is jealous.

Sop. [*Her sobs rising.*] And I'll—I'll—wri-i-i-ite to my—to my grandma-a-a directly—

Wid. Fie, child!

Sop. And I'll go do-o-own—into Glo-o-oster-shire—

Wid. Go up to your chamber, child.

Sop. And I'll tell my grandma-a what a false, base, bad man you are; and she shall ha-a-ate you, and despise you; and I'll ha-a-ate you, and despise you myself.

Wid. Poor thing.

Sop. And moreover I'll hate and despise all mankind! and for your sake—I'll live and die a maid.

Wid. Yes, child, that I dare be sworn you will.

Har. Widow! I'm a sad fellow! don't have me.—I'm a vile fellow. Sophy, you are right to despise me; I am going to marry your mother.

Sop. I'll go down into Glo-o-o-stershire—I wo' on't live in such a false-hearted city. And you ought to be ashamed of yourself, ma', to make yourself so ridiculous.

Har. No, no, sweet Sylph, it is my fault! all my fault.

Wid. [*Enraged.*] Be gone, miss.

Har. Sweet widow! Gentle widow!—I've sold myself, Sophy: six thousand pounds is the earnest-money paid down, for the reptile Harry Dornton.—I love you, Sophy

Wid. How, Mr. Dornton?

Har. I do, by heaven! take back your money, widow. [*Offering the draft.*] I'm a sad scoundrel.

Sop. You are a base, faithless man,—you know you are. And you are a pitiless woman, a merciless woman, for all you are my own mother, to let my poor brother Milford go to be starved to death in a dark dungeon.

Har. Milford in prison?

Sop. Yes, sir; arrested by your cruel, old, ugly father! I'm sure he is ugly, though I never saw him in my life—I'm sure he is an ugly, hideous, ugly monster. [*Exit.*]

Har. [*Rising.*] Is this true, widow?

Wid. [*Rising.*] Sir—

Har. Arrested by my father?—squandering her money on a ruined reprobate, and won't release her husband's son.

Wid. Nay but, dear Mr. Dornton—

Har. I'll be with you again presently, widow! presently, presently.

Wid. To-night, you know, Mr. Dornton—

[*Exit HARRY.*]

Enter JENNY.

Jen. Mr. Goldfinch is coming up, ma'am.

Wid. I have no time to waste with Mr. Goldfinch. I'll presently send him about his business. Mr. Dornton talks, I don't know how, Jenny. Says it must be to-night.

Enter GOLDFINCH

Gol. Well, widow?

Wid. Not so free, sir!

Jen. [*Aside to GOLDFINCH.*] Have you got the license?

Gol. No.

Jen. No!

Gol. No—been to Tattersall's.

Jen. And not for the license?

Gol. Tellee I've been to Tattersall's!

Jen. Ah! it's all over!

Gol. Made sure of the Eclipse colts!—must not lose 'em.

Jen. [*Aside.*] Stupid booby!

Wid. What is your present business, sir?

Gol. My business? Ha, ha, ha! that's a good one! I'll tell you my business—

[*Approaching with open arms.*]

Wid. Keep your distance, sir.

Gol. Distance, widow? No; that's not the way. I should be double distanced if I did.

Wid. Were you indeed a man of deportment and breeding—

Gol. Breeding?—Look at my spurs.

ACT. DRAMA.—NOS. 45 & 46.

Wid. Had you but the manner, the spirit, the— But no, you are no gentleman—

Gol. Whew! no gentleman? [*Claps on his hat.*] Damme, that's a good one.—Charles Goldfinch, no gentleman?—Ask in the box-lobby! inquire at the school. [*In a boxing attitude.*]

Wid. Sir, you are a tedious person: your company is troublesome.

Gol. Turf or turnpike, keep the best of cattle—Walk, trot, or gallop—Run, amble, or canter—Laugh at everything on the road—Give 'em all the go-by.—Beat the trotting butcher!—Gentleman!—That's your sort!

Jen. [*Aside to GOLDFINCH.*] Follow me. [*Exit.*]

Wid. I beg, sir, I may not be intruded upon with you or your horse-jockey jargon any more. [*Exit.*]

Gol. Here's a kick-up—dish'd again—I knew I should have no luck—started badly in the morning—damn all dancing-masters and their umbrellas!

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*An Apartment in the House of a Sheriff's Officer.*

Enter HARRY DORNTON, with an Officer.

Har. Despatch, man! despatch! Tell Jack Milford I can't wait a moment.—Hold—write an acquittal instantly for the thousand pounds. But say not a word to him of my intention.

Offi. A thousand, sir; it is almost five thousand!

Har. Impossible!

Offi. Here are detainers already lodged to that amount.

Har. Five thousand?

Offi. Must I write the acquittal for the sum total?

Har. No—yes, write it, however. Have it ready. Early to-morrow morning it shall all be paid.

Offi. In the meantime there may be more detainers.

Har. Damnation! What shall I do?—Run, send him!—and do you hear, a bottle of champagne and two rummers. Rummers, mind!—Not a word to him! [*Exit Officer.*] Five thousand?—And more detainers!

Enter Officer, with a bottle and glasses, MILFORD following.

Mil. Mr. Dornton!

Har. [*Lying on a table.*] How now, Jack! What's your wonder? I can't stay a moment with you, but I could not pass without giving you a call. Your hand, my boy, cheer up.

Mil. Excuse me, sir.

Har. Why, Jack!—Pshaw! cast away this gloom and be—Honest Jack Milford! You are now in tribulation; what of that? Why, man, the blessed sun himself is sometimes under a cloud. Wait but till to-morrow.—Where is the wine! [*Fills the rummers.*] Come, drink and wash away grief. 'Sblood, never look frosty and askance, man, but drink, drink, drink.

Mil. Sir! I am not disposed to drink.

Har. Here's confusion to all sorrow and thinking!—I could a tale unfold—But won't afflict you—I must fly—Yet I can do no good to-night—Hurrah! Jack! Keep up your spirits! Be determined, like me!—I am the vilest of animals that crawl the earth—Yet I won't flag!—I'll die a bold-faced villain.—I have sold myself—Am disinherited—Have lost—Ah, Sophia!—Hurrah, Jack!—Keep it up.—Round let the great globe whirl! and whirl it will, though I should happen to slide from its surface into infinite nothingness—Drink, my noble soul!

Mil. Your mirth is impertinent, sir.

Har. So it is, Jack—Damned impertinent. But ruin is around us, and it is high time to be merry.

Mil. Sir? I must inform you that, though I have been betrayed by you, and imprisoned by your father, I will not be insulted.

Har. Betrayed by me?

Mil. Ay, sir; I have had full information of your mean arts. It was necessary I should be out of the way, that your designs on Mrs. Warren might meet no interruption.

Har. [*Gets off the table.*] Pshaw! Good day, Jack, good day. [*Going*]

Mil. And pray, sir, inform your father I despise his meanness, and spurn at his malice.

Har. [*Darting back to MILFORD.*] Jack Milford—Utter no blasphemy against my father. I am half mad! I came your friend—

Mil. I despise your friendship.

Har. That's as you please. Think all that is vile of me. I defy you to exceed the truth.—But utter not a word against my father.

Mil. Deliberately, pitifully malignant! Not satisfied with the little vengeance he himself could take, he has sent round to all my creditors.

Har. 'Tis false.

Mil. False!

Har. A vile, eternal falsehood.

Enter Officer, with papers and writs.

Offi. Gentlemen, did you call?

Har. Leave the room, sir.

Offi. But—

Har. We are busy, sir.

Offi. I thought—

Har. I tell you we are busy, and must not be interrupted. [*Exit Officer.*] Mr. Milford, you shall hear from me immediately. [*Exit.*]

Mil. What were those papers? Surely I have not been rash! Nobody but his father could have brought my creditors thus on me all at once. He seemed half drunk or half frantic: said he was ruined, disinherited. Talked something of tomorrow. What could the purport of his coming be?

Enter Officer.

Well, sir?

Offi. Here is a note, sir.

Mil. From whom?

Offi. The young gentleman.

Mil. [*Reads.*] "I understand you are at liberty." How! at liberty! [*Officer bows.*] "I shall walk up to Hyde-park: you will find me at the ring at six. Exactly at six." At liberty!

Offi. Your debts are all discharged.

Mil. Impossible! Which way? By whom?

Offi. Why, sir—that is—

Mil. No hesitation, but tell me by whom.

Offi. Sir—I thought I perceived some anger between you and the young gentleman?

Mil. Ask no questions, sir: make no delays. Tell me who has paid my debts? Tell me the truth. Consequences you do not suspect depend upon your answer.

Offi. I perceive, sir, there has been some warmth between you; and, though the young gentleman made me promise silence and secrecy—

Mil. What, then, it was Mr. Dornton? [*Officer bows.*] Madman! what have I done! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*The House of Dornton.*

Enter HARRY DORNTON, followed by Mr. SMITH.

Har. And the danger not yet past?

Mr. S. Far from it. Mr. Sulky has twice brought us supplies, and is gone a third time.

Har. Brave spirit! He would coin his heart! My father supports it nobly.

Mr. S. He is anxious only for you.

Har. Well, well. Ha, ha, ha! Tol-lol—I'll bring him relief. Comfort him, assure him of it. Ay, hear me, heaven, and—To-night is too late, but to-morrow all shall be well—excellent well.

Mr. S. You will marry the widow.

Har. Have you heard? Ay, boy, ay—We'll marry. I will go and prepare her; we'll marry early in the morning, that all may be safe. I have told her the truth. She knows all—Why, ay, [*Looking at his watch.*] The proctor's, the lawyer's, the widow's, and—[*Starts.*]—at six!—the ring!—at six!—Fiends! Who can say what may—What, leave my father to perish? I'll not go! though all hell should brand me for a coward, I'll not go. Mr. Smith, take care of my father. Mark me, I recommend my father to you. [*Exit.*]

Enter Mr. DORNTON.

Dor. Where is Harry? Did not I hear his voice?

Mr. S. He is this moment gone, sir.

Dor. Gone!—where?

Mr. S. Do you not suspect where, sir?

Dor. Suspect! What? Speak!

Mr. S. To the Widow Warren's.

Dor. For what purpose?

Mr. S. To marry her.

Dor. Marry! The Widow Warren!

Mr. S. And save the house by her fortune.

Dor. Generous Harry! Noble, affectionate boy! I'd perish first!

Mr. S. He seems very resolute. He has already had six thousand pounds of her.

Dor. Marry her! I shall go mad! Where is Mr. Sulky?

Mr. S. He is just returned. I hear him in the counting-house.

Dor. Tell him I wish to speak to him. [*Exit Mr. SMITH.*] Harry Dornton and the Widow Warren! I shall die in Bedlam!

Enter Mr. SULKY, with a pen in his hand.

Are we safe, Mr. Sulky?

Sul. For to-day, perhaps.

Dor. What bank have we to begin to-morrow?

Sul. I can't tell: I fear not thirty thousand.

Dor. Mr. Sulky, you—you—you—have this day shown yourself an active partner, and a sincere friend.

Sul. Humph.

Dor. I have long esteemed you! I esteem you more and more.

Sul. Humph.

Dor. My son, Harry—You are a very good man, Mr. Sulky; a compassionate man, though you don't look so.

Sul. Humph.

Dor. 'Tis pity to see so noble a youth—I am sure you would not wish him any harm, Mr. Sulky. I am sure you would not.

Sul. Whom?

Dor. Harry Dornton. Would you? Would you? Would you, Mr. Sulky?

Sul. A kind question.

Dor. Nay, I did not mean to be unkind, Mr. Sulky; you know I did not. Shall we not venture one step more to save him?

Sul. Save! Impossible! Ruin only can reform him. Total ruin!

Dor. You mistake, Mr. Sulky. His own misfortunes little affected him, but mine. He is struck to the heart! I know him.

Sul. So do I.

Dor. Struck to the heart. I'm sure on't. He'll be a good man! A great man!

Sul. Humph.

Dor. You know the Widow Warren, Mr. Sulky?

Sul. Don't you?

Dor. I never saw her in my life. I hear she is full forty, her manners absurd, her character cruel, and her morals—

Sul. Bad enough.

Dor. Six thousand pounds at this moment is a great sum. I own it. But do you think I ought not to venture?

Sul. Venture what!

Dor. To—to take it from our Bank.

Sul. For what?

Dor. For—for the—the relief of Harry Dornton.

Sul. What you please! Take all! What is it to me?

Dor. Nay, but, Mr. Sulky, you surely don't see the thing in the right light?

Sul. I can starve like the rest!

Dor. Very well, Mr. Sulky! Very well! I perceive you can be interested, and—and—

Sul. And what?

Dor. Very well, Mr. Sulky! Very well!

Sul. I can stare bankruptcy in the face as steadfastly as you can.

Dor. Ay, ay, no doubt! The world is all alike! I am an old fool, and so shall live and die!

Sul. Why do you ask my advice? Take the money! Empty the coffers! Pour it all into his hat! Give him guineas to play at chuck-farthing, and bank bills to curl his hair!

Dor. Very well, Mr. Sulky! Friendship, generosity, a sense of justice! Oh, it's all a farce!

Sul. Humph.

Dor. [*Rings.*] Very well, sir! Very well!

Enter Servant.

Is the carriage ready?

Ser. It's at the door, sir.

[*Exit.*

Dor. So, Mr. Sulky, you would see him married to this widow, to whom you have so often as well as now given the worst of characters, rather than incur a little more risk for your friend?

Sul. Marry!

Dor. Yes, marry!

Sul. Whom?

Dor. The Widow Warren, I tell you.

Sul. Harry Dornton!

Dor. Yes, Harry Dornton!

Sul. When? Where?

Dor. Immediately! With unexampled affection, to save me, who am old and worthless, he would devote his youth, his great qualities, and his noble heart, to all the torments which such a marriage and such a woman can inflict!

Sul. Take the money!

Dor. Are you serious, Mr. Sulky?

Sul. Take the money! Away! Begone! I would indeed starve, inchmeal, rather than he should marry her!

Dor. Mr. Sulky, you are a worthy man, a true friend!

Sul. Curse compliments! Make haste! [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Widow Warren's.*

Enter SOPHIA and JENNY.

Jen. So, Miss! Here's your mamma just coming down.

Sop. Is she dressed?

Jen. Oh yes!—I have decorated her out like any king's coach-horse!

Sop. It's very well.

Jen. With her ribands and ringlets stuck about and dangle-ating down her back; and all her—

Sop. It's very well. It's all very well. But it will be no wedding.—

Jen. [*Aside.*] I hope not.

Sop. He told her to her face that he loved me, and offered to give her the money back. He'll never have her. And, if he does, I don't care. I know I shall die broken-hearted, but I don't care, I'll tell all to my dear grandma, for I'll not stay in this wicked city. No! he shan't see me pine away. I know my ghost will haunt him; but I can't help it. I never wished him any harm, and had he but been true-hearted and have waited for me, I would—but it's no matter.—He shan't see a tear that I shed, nor hear the least sigh that I heave.

Enter the Widow WARREN.

Jen. Well, ma'am—I declare you're a picture—

Wid. Do you think I look tolerably, Jenny?

Shall I do execution? What is the matter, child?

Sop. Mark my words, he'll never have you.

Wid. Poor thing!

Sop. He never will. [*Knocking.*

Wid. Run, Jenny, see who it is. [*Exit JENNY.*

Go up to your chamber, child.

Sop. No, I will stay here.

Wid. Begone to your chamber, I say, miss.

Sop. Beat me, if you please; kill me, but I will not.

Re-enter JENNY.

Jen. Here's an elderly gentleman, ma'am, asks to speak to you.

Wid. Will you begone, miss?

Sop. Since it is not he, I don't want to stay. I only want to look him in the face once more. [*Exit.*

Wid. How is he dressed?

Jen. In gray, ma'am.

Wid. In gray?

Jen. Yes, ma'am.

Wid. In dark gray?

Jen. Yes, ma'am.

Wid. Does he look like a parson, Jenny?

Jen. Why, ma'am, he's a soberly, snug, jobation-looking man enough.

Wid. Let him be shown in. [*Exit JENNY.*] I dare say it is the divine

Enter JENNY and Mr. DORNTON.

Dor. Your humble servant, madam!

Wid. Sir, your very most humble servant.

Dor. I presume you are unacquainted with me?

Wid. I believe I can penetrate, sir—

Dor. Can you, madam?

Wid. [*Holding her fan before her face.*] You—You come on the—part of—young Mr. Dornton?

Dor. I do.

Wid. [*Aside.*] It is the parson?—[*Aloud.*] Would you be so indulgent as to be seated, sir?

Dor. Excuse me, madam!

Wid. Would you be pleased to take any refreshment, sir?

Dor. Madam!

Wid. A morsel of seed-cake, a French biscuit, a bit of orange-loaf, a glass of Constantia, or a jelly? I know these little cordial comforts are agreeable consolations to gentlemen of your cloth.

Dor. Cloth!

Wid. No offence, I hope! I participate in them myself.

Dor. Hem! No doubt.

Wid. You are acquainted with Mr. Dornton?

Dor. Why—Yes—I am, I believe, one of his oldest acquaintance.

Wid. Then I dare say you have a great regard for him?

Dor. Hem!—Yes—I—had a—sort of a friendship for him even before he was born.

Wid. Sir!—Oh—you are intimate with the family!

Dor. Yes—yes, madam!

Wid. And know his father?

Dor. Hem—Why—Though I have kept him company from the day of his birth to this very hour, they tell me I don't know him yet!

Wid. Ay, indeed! is he so odd?

Dor. Sometimes—To my great regret, I have sometimes found him a very absurd old gentleman!

Wid. I am sorry for it?—Because, as I am soon to become—hymeneally—his intimate—relation—I—!

Dor. You would wish for a sensible indulgent—papa.

Wid. It's natural, sir.

Dor. Ha! I dare not say too much in his favour.

Wid. Nay, though I have a vast—hum—ha—regard for young Mr. Dornton—I own I have no great predilection of opinion for the father!

Dor. Nor he for you, madam!

Wid. Do you think so?

Dor. I am sure so!

Wid. I warrant, sir, he is, as you say, a very precise acrimonious old gentleman!

Dor. I said no such thing, madam!

Wid. Ah! a little caution, sir, to be sure, becomes gentlemen of your cloth.

Dor. Cloth again!—I don't know what you mean by my cloth! but Mr. Dornton, madam, is little older than yourself; nor does he think himself half so repugnant.

Wid. Sir!

Dor. Madam!—I beg pardon!—I—

Wid. [Knocking.] Oh! here, I dare say, comes the bridegroom!

Dor. [Aside.] My curs'd vivacity! I can never tell her, after this, who I am. [Retires.]

Enter HARRY DORNTON.

Wid. Oh, you rover!

Har. Well, my kind Widow! My loving, compassionate widow! I am come post haste to cast myself once more on your bounty.

Wid. Hush!

Har. To entreat instant commiseration, and aid!

Wid. Hem! Hem!

Har. I have not a minute to spare!

Wid. [Whispers.] He's here! He's come! A waspish, tetchy!—Hem!—[Aloud.] Your friend has been here some time, Mr. Dornton!

Har. My friend! What friend?

Wid. Your friend, the clergyman.

[Pointing to Mr. DORNTON.]

Har. Clergyman! [Turns and sees his father close at his elbow.] My father!

Wid. His father!

Dor. Well, Harry, why do you look so blank? I am glad you are here. Your coming, and the mutual sincerity with which this lady and I have just spoken our sentiments, will save all circumlocution.—At present we understand each other.

Wid. Sir—I—

Dor. Oh, madam, never retract. Let us continue the like plain honest dealing—

Wid. But—sir—Mr. Dornton's affection—

Dor. Ha, ha, ha! Affection, madam!—

Har. Sir—

Dor. Harry, I know your motives. Will never forget them. But the cause of them has ceased.

Har. Sir, beware! No false compassion! Remember not the vile reprobate that was your son. I spurn at the existence that is coupled with your misery.

Dor. Harry, our danger is over.

Har. Are you—are you serious?

Dor. Mr. Sulky is a worthy man! His rich uncle is dead, and has left him sole heir. Our books, too, have been examined, and exceed our best hopes.

Har. My—

Dor. Here is your money, madam. [Offering it.]

Har. My father saved! Tol-de-rol!

Wid. Nay, but—Mr. Dornton!—sir—[Weeping.]

Dor. I must beg you will take it—

Har. Rejoice, Widow! Rejoice! Sing, Shout! Tol-de-rol!

Wid. I do not want the money, sir. Filthy money—And as to what I said, though you have arrested Mr. Milford—

Har. Ha! [Pausing and looking at his watch.]

Wid. I am sorry—I beg your pardon—And, if Mr. Dornton—

Dor. Why don't you speak, Harry? Where are you going? Come back, Harry!—Stay, I say!

Har. I cannot stay! I must fly! My honour is at stake! [Exit.]

Dor. His honour! His honour at stake!—Here, here, madam! [Offering money.]

Wid. Nay, sir—

Dor. 'Sdeath, madam, take your money. [Exit.]

Wid. Cruel usage! Faithless men.—Blind! Stupid! I'll forsake and forswear the whole sex!

Enter JENNY.

Jen. Ma'am! ma'am! Mr. Goldfinch, ma'am!

Wid. Hay! Mr. Goldfinch! Was that what you said, Jenny? Where?

Jen. Below, ma'am. I persuaded him to come up, but he is quite surly.

Wid. Oh! He is coming. Well, I think I will see him—Yes—I think I will.

Jen. I always told you, ma'am, Mr. Goldfinch for me.

Wid. Did you?

Jen. But he says he will have your written promise this very night, or never speak to you more. I hear him. Law, ma'am, you had better give a few touches—Hereabout—Your eyes will have double the spirit and fire.

Wid. Will they?

[Exit.]

Enter GOLDFINCH

Gol. Where's the dowager?

Jen. Hush! Mind what I said to you—It is too late now for a licence, so be sure get the promise—Don't finch!

Gol. Me finch? Game to the backbone!

Jen. Hush!

Re-enter the Widow WARREN.

Gol. Here I am once more, Widow.

Wid. Ah, rambler!

Gol. Are you cured of the tantrums?

Wid. Nay, Mr. Goldfinch—

Gol. Must I keep my distance?

Wid. Unkind!

Gol. Am I a gentleman now?

Wid. Killing!

Gol. Look you, Widow, I know your tricks. Skittish! Won't answer to the whip! Run out of the course! Take the rest.—So give me your promise.

Wid. My promise!

Gol. Signed and sealed.

Wid. Naughty man. You shan't; I won't let you tyrannize over a palpitating heart.

Gol. Palpi—What does she say?

Wid. Go, intruder.

Gol. Oh! what, you won't?

Wid. I'll never forgive you

Gol. I'm off.

Wid. Cruel man!

Gol. I'm off.

Wid. Mr. Goldfinch!

Gol. I'm off—

Wid. You shall have the promise!

Gol. Oh, ho! Why then I pull up—

Wid. Barbarous youth! Could you leave me?—But I must send to Mr. Silky.

Gol. No, no! Let me have the promise directly! I'll go myself to Silky.

Wid. Will you, Mr. Goldfinch?

Gol. Will I not? Take a hack, mount the box—Hayit!—Scud away for the old scoundrel! I'm a deep one—Know the course every inch! I'm the lad for the widow! That's your sort!

Wid. Saucy man! I'll be very angry with you.

Gol. Soon be back.

Wid. Adieu! Fly swiftly, ye minutes!

Gol. But I must have the promise first.

Wid. I will go and write it. Come, dissembler, come!

Gol. She's an old courser; but I knew I should take her at the double. *[Exit.]*

Enter MILFORD.

Mil. So, Charles; where's the widow?

Gol. The widow's mine!

Mil. Your's?

Gol. I'm the lad! All's concluded—Going post haste for old Silky.

Mil. Silky, did you say?

Gol. Am to pay the miserly rascal fifty thousand pounds down. But mum! That's a secret.

Mil. You are raving.

Gol. Tellee he has her on the hip; she can't marry without his consent.

Mil. But why?

Gol. Don't know. The close old rogue won't tell—Has got some deed, he says—Some writing.

Mil. Indeed!

Gol. Yes—but it's a secret! I shall be a higher fellow than ever, Jack! Go to the second spring meeting—Take you with me—Come down a few to the sweaters and trainers—The knowing ones—The lads—Get into the secret—Lay it on thick—Seven hundred to five—Favourite against the field!—Done!—I'll do it again!—Done!—Five times over—ditto repeated!—Done, done!—Off they go!—Winner lays by—Pretends to want foot—Odds rise

[Exit.]

high! Take 'em—Winner whispered lame—Lags after—Odds higher, and higher. Take 'em—Creeps up—Breathes 'em over the flat—Works 'em up hill—Passes the distance-post—Still only second—Betting chair in an uproar!—Neck to neck!—Lets him out—Shows him the whip—Shoots by like an arrow—Oh, damme, a hollow thing! That's your sort. *[Exit.]*

Mil. Fifty thousand to Silky for his consent, because of some instrument, some writing?—If it should be the—It must—By heaven it must. *[Exit.]*

SCENE II.—*The Ring in Hyde Park.*

Enter HARRY DORNTON, looking at his watch.

Har. How long must I wait? I see nothing of Milford—I'll cut off that bailiff's ears if he has betrayed me.

Enter Mr. DORNTON.

Dor. So, Harry!

Har. My father again.

Dor. What do you do here, Harry?

Har. Sir—I want air.

Dor. So do I.—A pretty dance you have led me. What brought you hither?—Where's the money you had of the Widow? Where's the money, Harry?

Har. Gone, sir.

Dor. Gone!

Har. Most of it.

Dor. And your creditors not paid? *[Pause.]* And your creditors not paid?

Har. No, sir.

Dor. I suspected—I foreboded this! He has been at some gaming-house, lost all, quarrelled, and come here to put a miserable end to a miserable existence! Oh, who would be a father?

Enter Waiter.

Waiter. Pray—sir—Is your name Dornton?

Dor. It is.

Waiter. Then I am right—Mr. Milford, sir, has sent me with this note. *[Exit.]*

Har. It is for me, sir!

Dor. How do you know, Harry?

Har. Sir, I am certain!—I must beg—

Dor. This is no time for ceremony!—*[Reads.]*—“Dear Harry, forgive the provocation I have given you; forgive the wrongs I have done your father”—Me!—“I will submit to any disgrace rather than lift my hand against your life—I would have come and apologized even on my knees, but am prevented—” “J. MILFORD.”

Why, Harry!—What?—What is this?—Tell me—Tell me. Is it in paying Milford's debts you have expended the money?

Har. It is, sir

Dor. But how had he wronged me?—Why did you come here to fight him?

Har. Sir—He—he spoke disrespectfully of you.

Dor. *[Taking his son's hand.]* Harry!

Har. *[Taking his father's hand.]* My father!

Dor. Harry! Harry!

Har. Dear sir, let us fly to console poor Milford!

Dor. What you will, Harry! Do with me what you will—Oh, who would not be a father! *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE III.—*The House of the Widow Warren.*

Enter MILFORD and Mr. SILKY.

Mil. That fool, Goldfinch, himself informed me, sir, that Silky is to receive fifty thousand pounds for his consent!

Sul. Fifty thousand! Zounds! Why, then, the old scoundrel must have got possession of the will.

Mil. Which is indubitably meant to be destroyed. Goldfinch is just returned with Silky. They are now with the widow; all in high glee, and are coming up here immediately, no doubt to settle the business in private.

Sul. What can be done?

Mil. We must hide ourselves somewhere, and spring upon them.

Sul. I hate hiding! It's deceit, and deceit is the resource of a rascal.

Mil. But there is no avoiding it. We cannot get legal assistance in time. Here are two closets—Do you go into one, and I'll shut myself up in the other. We shall hear what they are about, and can burst upon them at the proper moment.

Sul. Well, if it must be so—But it's a vile, paltry refuge!

Mil. I hear them coming! Make haste.

[*Ereunt into the closets.*]

Enter SILKY, WIDOW, and GOLDFINCH.

Sil. Ha, ha, ha! I told you, madam, I should hear from you when you wanted me! I knew it must come to that. But you are a lucky man, Mr. Goldfinch! and I'm a lucky man! Ay, and you are a lucky woman, too, madam! We are all in luck.

Gol. Ay, damme, old one, you have been concerned in many a good thing in your time.

Sil. Ah, ha, ha, ha, ha! To be sure I have! I must provide for my family, Mr. Goldfinch.

Wid. It is indeed a fortunate event! Do you not participate my raptures, Mr. Goldfinch?

Gol. To be sure—it's a deep scheme; it's knowing a thing or two! Ha, old one! Pigeoning the greenhorns.

Sil. All so safe, too; so snug! I am so pleased, and so happy! It's all our own! Not a soul will know of it but our three selves.

Gol. Oh, yes—One more, old one.

Sil. Ay! Who? Who?

Gol. Your father—Beelzebub.

Sil. Lord! Mr. Goldfinch, don't terrify me!

Wid. To be sure, it must be owned you are a shocking old rogue, Mr. Silky; but there is no doing without you. So make haste with your deeds and your extortions; for really we should be very glad to be rid of your company—

Sil. Well, well, I'm ready; I'll not long interrupt your amorous haste. I am a man of business. I expected how it would be, and have a legal instrument here, ready drawn up by my own hand; which, when it is signed and sealed, will make all safe.

Wid. But where is the will?

Sil. [All three sit at a table.] Oh, I have it. First, however, let us be secure. [Locks the chamber doors; is going to read, but looks round, sees the closet doors, and locks them too.]

Gol. You're an old trader in sin! There's no being too deep for you.

Sil. Ah, ha, ha, ha! Do you think so, Mr. Goldfinch?

Gol. But I should like to see you on your death-bed! [A blow from one of the closets.]

Sil. Bless my soul! What's that?

Gol. Zounds! Odd enough. I believe he's coming for you before your time.

Wid. It was very strange.

Sil. I declare I am all of a tremble!

Wid. Come, come, let us get the shocking business over.—Where is the will?

Gol. Don't shake so, man!

Sil. Well, well; first sign the bond. [Widow and GOLDFINCH going to sign, another knock heard.] Lord have mercy upon me!

Gol. I smell sulphur.

Wid. Save me, Mr. Goldfinch

Sil. The candles burn blue!

Gol. Pshaw! Zounds, it's only some cat in the closet!

Sil. I heard it in both the closets.

Gol. Why, then, there are two cats! Come, I'll sign. [They sign the bond.]

Sil. Where's the promise?

Gol. Here it is. [Laying it on the table.]

Sil. And here is the will, which, that all may be safe, we will immediately commit to the flames. [Is going to burn it at the candle. Knocking at each of the doors. SILKY starts, drops one candle, and over-returns the other.] Lord have mercy upon us!

Gol. My hair stands on end.

Wid. [Knocking at closets and doors.] Save me, Mr. Goldfinch! Protect me! Ah! [Shrieks.]

[SILKY and MILFORD burst open the closets, and seize on the bond and promise; then open the chamber doors; enter JENNY with lights, and SOPHIA, HARRY DORNTON, and Mr. DORNTON.]

Sop. Dear ma', what's the matter?

Sul. Where is the will? [SILKY snatches it up.] Give it me, you old scoundrel! Give it me this instant, or I'll throttle you! [Wrests it from him.]

Mil. So, gentlemen! you are a pretty pair of knaves.

Sul. And you are a very worthy lady.

Wid. Don't talk to me, man!—Don't talk to me! I shall never recover my senses again. [Retires.]

Har. What has happened, gentlemen? How came you all locked up together?

Dor. Are you here, Mr. Silky?

Sul. Yes; there's the honest, grateful, friendly Mr. Silky! who would betray his friends, plunder the living, and defraud the dead, for the ease of his conscience, and to provide for his family.

Gol. Old one! You're done up.

Sul. And here is the girlish old coquette, who would rob her daughter and leave her husband's son to rot in a dungeon, that she might marry the first fool she could find.

Gol. Widow, you are dished! [SILKY examines the will.] Lost your last chance!

Dor. A broken gamester, nurtured in idleness, ignorance, and dissipation, whose ridings, racings, and drivings are over, and whose whole train of horses, dogs, curricles, phaetons, and fooleries must come to the hammer, immediately, is no great loss.

Sop. Oh, la!

Dor. I knew your father, sir: 'tis happy for him that he is dead. If you will forsake these courses and apply to trade—

Gol. Damn trade! Whose for the spring meeting? Cross 'em and wind 'em! Seven to five, you don't name the winner! I'm for life and a curricule! A cut at the caster, and the long odds!—Damn trade! The four aces, a back hand, and a lucky nick! I'm a deep one? That's your sort! [Exit.]

Sil. And now, madam—

Wid. Keep off, monster! You smell of malice, cruelty, and persecution.

Sul. No, madam: I smell of honesty! A drug you nauseate, but with which you must forcibly be dosed!—I have glanced over the will, and find I have the power.

Wid. Let me go, goblin!—You are a hideous

person, and I hate the sight of you. Your breast is flint! flint! unfeeling gorgon, and I abominate you.

Sop. Nay, you are a kind, good, cross old soul; and I am sure you will forgive my poor ma'. We ought all to forget and forgive. Ought not we, Mr. Dornton?

Har. Do you hear her, sir? [To DORNTON.]

Dor. Harry has told me of your innocent, pure, and unsuspecting heart—I love you for having called me an ugly monster.

Sop. [To HARRY.] La, Mr. Dornton, how could you—

Sul. Harry—Give me your hand—You have a generous and a noble nature. But your generosity would have proved more pernicious than even your dissipation. No misfortunes,—no, not the beggary and ruin of a father, could justify so unprincipled a marriage.

Dor. And now, [To SULKY.] my friend.

Mil. My father!

Har. My—

Sul. Whoo! if you wish to get another word from me to-night, have done. [Turning to SILKY.] I hate fawning.

Sil. Ah, Mr. Sulky, you will have your humour.

Sul. The indiscriminating generosity of this young man supported you in your day of distress; for which, serpent-like, you turned to sting your preserver.

Sil. Ah, you will have your humour.

Sul. Yes; and it is my humour to see that your villainy shall be exposed in its true colours. Hypocrisy, falsehood, and fraud, are your familiars. To screen your avarice, you made it believed that this gentleman had been the cause of lodging the debtors, and had done the dirty work of which even you were ashamed. But the creditors shall receive their full demand.

Dor. The proposal is just. Listen to that worthy man; and, if you can, be honest with a good grace. Everything will then be readily adjusted, and I hope to the satisfaction of all parties.

THE END.

A TALE OF MYSTERY;

A MELODRAMA, IN TWO ACTS,

BY THOMAS HOLCROFT.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

BONAMO
ROMALDI
STEPHANO
MONTANO
MICHELLI
FRANCISCO

SELINA
FIAMETTA

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Gothic Hall in the House of Bonamo, a table, pen, ink, paper, and chairs.*

Enter SELINA and FIAMETTA.

Sel. You seem hurried, Fiametta.

Fiam. Hurried, truly! yes, yes, and you'll be hurried too.

Sel. I?

Fiam. Fine news!

Sel. Of what kind?

Fiam. A very bad kind. The Count Romaldi—

Sel. What of him?

Fiam. Is coming.

Sel. When?

Fiam. This evening.

Sel. Heavens! what can he want?

Fiam. Want? he wants mischief. We all know he wants you to marry his son, because you're a rich heiress.

Sel. Surely, my uncle will never consent?

Fiam. Your uncle and all Savoy fear him.

Bona. [*Without.*] Fiametta!

Fiam. I am here, sir.

Bona. [*Without.*] But I want you here!

Fiam. Lord, sir, I am busy.

Sel. Go, run to my uncle.

Fiam. It's a shame that he should not think of marrying you to his own son, when he knows how dearly you love each other.

Sel. It is the excellence of my dear uncle's heart that disdains the appearance of self-interest.

Fiam. So, rather than be blamed himself, he'll make you and I and every body miserable! But I'll talk to him.

Bona. [*Without.*] Fiametta, I say.

Fiam. Coming! He shall hear of it. I'm in the proper cue. He knows I'm right, and I'll not spare him. [*Exit.*]

Enter STEPHANO, with his fowling-piece, net, and game.

Sel. Why are you so late, Stephano? I had a thousand alarms.

Steph. Forgive me, dear Selino; the pursuit of game led me too far among the mountains.

Sel. Do you know—

Steph. What?

Sel. I almost dread to tell you. Count Romaldi is coming.

Steph. Romaldi!

Sel. I shudder when I recollect the selfishness of his views, and the violence of his character.

Steph. Add, the wickedness of his heart.

Enter BONAMO and FIAMETTA.

Fiam. I tell you again, sir, it is uncharitable, it is cruel, it is hard-hearted in you to give any such orders.

Bona. And I tell you they shall be obeyed. Have not I a right to do as I please in my own house?

Fiam. No, sir, you have no right to do wrong any where.

Steph. What is the dispute, sir?

Fiam. He has ordered me to turn the poor Francisco out of doors; because, forsooth, the house is not large enough to hold this Count Romaldi.

Sel. Think, my dear uncle, how grateful and kind is his heart.

Steph. And that he is a man of fortune.

Bona. Folly and misfortune are twins: nobody can tell one from the other. He has got footing here, and you seem all determined he shall keep it.

Sel. I own I am interested in his favour: his manners are so mild.

Steph. His eye so expressive.

Sel. His behaviour so proper.

Fiam. I'll be bound he is of genteel parentage!

Bona. Who told you so?

Fiam. Not he, himself, for certain: because poor creature, he is dumb. But only observe his sorrowful looks. What it is I don't know, but there is something on his mind so—

Bona. You are a fool!

Fiam. Fool or not, I have served you faithfully these three-and-twenty years; so you may turn me out of doors at last, if you please.

Bona. I!

Fiam. Yes; for if you turn Francisco out, I'll never enter them again.

Bona. You certainly know more concerning this man?

Fiam. Since it must be told, I do.

Bona. Then speak.

Fiam. It is quite a tragedy.

Bona. Indeed! let us hear.

Fiam. It is now seven or eight years ago, when, you having sent me to Chambery, I was coming home; it was almost dark; everything was still; I was winding along the dale, and the rocks were all as it were turning black; of a sudden I heard cries; a man was murdering; I shook from head to foot; presently the cries died away; and I beheld two bloody men, with their daggers in their hands, stealing off under the crags at the foot of the hill. I stood like a stone, for I was frightened out of my wits! So I thought I heard groans; and, *afraid* as I was, I had the sense to think they must come from the poor murdered creature. So I listened, and followed my ears, and presently I saw this very man—

Sel. Francisco?

Fiam. Weltering in his blood! To be sure I screamed and called loud enough; for what could I do by myself? So presently my cries were heard: and honest Michelli, the miller, with his man, came running.

Bona. I now remember the tale. The poor man recovered, and every body praised Michelli.

Fiam. So they ought; he is an honest good soul! What then, sir, can you suppose I thought, when, about a week ago, I again saw Francisco's apparition standing before me; making signs that he was famished with hunger and thirst. I knew him at once; and he soon bethought himself of me. If you had seen his clasped hands, and his thankful looks, and his dumb notes, and his signs of joy at having found me! While I have a morsel he shall never want. I'll hire him a cottage; I'll wait upon him; I'll work for him; so turn him out of doors, if you have the heart.

Steph. Fiametta, you wrong my father.

Bona. I'll hear his story from himself.

Fiam. He can't speak.

Bona. But he can write.

Fiam. I'll warrant him. I'm sure he's a gentleman.

Bona. Bring him here: if he prove himself an honest man, I am his friend.

Fiam. I know that, or you should be no master of mine. *[Erit.]*

Steph. His kind attentions to Selina are singular.

Sel. Every morning I find him waiting for me with fresh gathered flowers; which he offers with such modest yet affectionate looks.

FIAMETTA returns with FRANCISCO.

Bona. Come near, friend. You understand his gestures, Fiametta; so stay where you are.

Fiam. I intend it.

Bona. *[Aside.]* He has a manly form; a benevolent eye! Sit down, sir. Leave us, my children.

[Francisco suddenly rises, as STEPHANO and SELINA offer to go; brings them back, and entreats by signs that they may remain.]

Bona. Since he desires it, stay. There are pen, ink, and paper; when you cannot answer by signs, write; but be strict to the truth.

[Francisco, with dignity, points to heaven and his heart.]

Bona. Who are you?

[FRANCISCO goes to a table, sits and writes; and STEPHANO, standing behind him, takes up the paper and reads the answers.]

Fran. "A noble Roman!"

Bona. Your family?—

Fran. *[Gives a sudden sign of Forbear! and writes.]* "Must not be known."

Bona. Why?

Fran. "It is disgraced."

Bona. By you?

Fran. *[Gesticulates.]*

Fiam. *[Interpreting.]* No, no, no!

Bona. Who made you dumb?

Fran. "The Algerines."

Bona. How came you in their power?

Fran. "By treachery."

Bona. Do you know the traitors?

Fran. *[Gesticulates.]*

Fiam. He does, he does!

Bona. Who are they?

Fran. "The same who stabbed me among the rocks."

Bona. Name them.

Fran. *[Gesticulates.]* "Never!"

Bona. Are they known by me?

Fiam. *[Interpreting.]* They are, they are!

Bona. Are they rich?

Fran. "Rich and powerful."

Bona. Astonishing! Your refusal to name them gives strange suspicions. I must know more: tell me all, or quit my house.

Enter PIERO.

Pier. Count Romaldi, sir.

[FRANCISCO starts up, struck with alarm.]

Steph. So soon!

Bona. Shew him up.

Pier. He's here.

[ROMALDI suddenly enters, as FRANCISCO is attempting to pass the door; they start back at the sight of each other.—FRANCISCO leaves the room.]

Bona. What is all this! Where is he gone? Call him back, Fiametta.

[Exeunt FIAMETTA and STEPHANO.]

Rom. At length, my good friend, I am here. I have long promised myself the pleasure of seeing you. Your hand. How hearty you look! And your lovely niece! Her father's picture.

Bona. Rather her mother's.

Rom. My son will adore her. In two days I expect him here. I have serious business to communicate.

Sel. *[To BONAMO.]* Permit me to retire, sir.

Bona. Go, my child; go.

Sel. *[Aside.]* Grant, oh merciful heaven, I may not fall a sacrifice to avarice! *[Erit.]*

Bona. And now your pleasure, count?

Rom. Nay, I imagine, you can guess my errand. You know my friendship for my son; who, let me tell you, is your great admirer. The care you have bestowed upon your niece, her education, mind, and manners, and the faithful guardian you have been, both of her wealth and person, well deserve praise.

Bona. If I have done my duty, I am greatly fortunate.

Rom. She is a lovely young lady; and you are not ignorant of my son's passion; to which your duty towards your niece must make you a friend. I therefore come, with open frankness, to propose their union.

Bona. And I, with equal candour, must tell you, I can give no answer.

Rom. No answer!

Bona. Your rank and wealth make the proposal flattering; but there is a question still more serious.

Rom. What can that be?

Bona. One which my niece only can resolve.

Rom. Inexperience like hers should have no opinion.

Bona. How, my lord! Drag the bride, by force, to that solemn altar, where, in the face of heaven, she is to declare her choice is free?

Rom. Mere ceremonies.

Bona. Ceremonies! Bethink yourself; lest marriage become a farce, libertinism a thing to laugh at, and adultery itself a finable offence!

Rom. Ay, ay; you are a moralist; a conscientious man. Your son is reported to have designs on Selina.

Bona. My lord!

Rom. No anger: I speak as a friend. Her fortune is tempting; but you disdain to be influenced. The wealth and rank of our family—

Bona. Surpass mine. True: still my niece, I say, must be consulted.

Rom. Indeed! Then my alliance, it seems, is refused?

Bona. By no means; I have neither the right to refuse nor to accept. If Selina—

Re-enter SELINA, with a letter.

Sel. [*Presenting it to BONAMO.*] From the unfortunate Francisco.

Rom. What, that strange fellow I met as I came in?

Sel. [*Aside.*] He knows his name!

Rom. I forgot to ask how he got admittance here?

Sel. I should hope, my lord, there would always be some charitable door open to the unfortunate!

Rom. I addressed your uncle, lovely lady.

Bona. When you came in, he was relating his adventures, which have been strange.

Rom. And are you, my friend, simple enough to believe such tales?

Sel. What tales, my lord?

Bona. The proofs are convincing! the mutilation he has suffered; the wounds he received, not a league from hence; and the—

Rom. Did he name—

Bona. Who? The monsters that gave them?—No; but they are not unknown to him.

Rom. That—that is fortunate.

Bona. I was amazed to learn—

Rom. What?

Bona. That they are rich and powerful. But I forget: the story can have no interest for you.

Rom. You mistake: I—my feelings are as keen as yours.

Bona. But what has he written?

[*Offers to open the letter.*]

Rom. If you will take my advice, you will not read. Doubtless he has more complaints, more tales, more favours to request. Be kind and hospitable; but do not be a dupe.

Bona. Of which, I own, there is danger.

Rom. [*Seizing the letter.*] Then let me guard you against it.

Sel. [*After watching ROMALDI, snatches the letter back.*] This letter, my lord, was given in charge to me; I promised to bring an answer; and I respectfully intreat my uncle will read it.

Bona. Well, well. [*Reads.*] "Friend of humanity, should I remain, the peace of your family might be disturbed. I therefore go; but earnestly

intreat you will neither think me capable of falsehood nor ingratitude—Wherever I am, my wishes and my heart will be here.—Farewell." He shall not go.

Rom. Why not? He owns the peace of your family may be disturbed.

Bona. Fly, Selina; tell him I require, I request him to sleep here to-night, that I may speak with him to-morrow.

Rom. [*Aside.*] That must not be.

Sel. Thanks, my dear uncle! you have made me happy. [*Exit.*]

Enter PIERO.

Bona. What now, Piero?

Pier. Signior Montano is below.

Rom. [*Aside.*] Montano!

Bona. I'm very glad of it, for I wanted his advice. The best of men!

Pier. Please to come up, sir.

Rom. With your permission, I will retire.

Enter MONTANO.

Mon. I beg pardon, good sir, but—

[*MONTANO sees ROMALDI, at which he starts with terror and indignation.*]

Can it be possible!

Rom. Sir!

Mon. You here!

Rom. Not having the honour of your acquaintance, I know not why my presence should please or displease you.

Mon. [*After a look of contempt at ROMALDI, addresses BONAMO.*] Good night, my friend; I will see you to-morrow. [*Exit.*]

Bona. Nay, but signior! Signior Montano! Are the people all mad? Fiametta!

Fiam. [*Without.*] Sir!

Bona. Run, overtake him; and say I must speak with him. Excuse me for going.

Rom. Why in such haste? I have heard of this Montano: a credulous person; a relator of strange stories.

Bona. Signior Montano credulous! There is not in all Savoy a man of sounder understanding. Good night, my lord; I will send your servant: that door leads to your bed-room. Call for whatever you want; the house is at your command. [*Exit.*]

Rom. What am I to think? How act? The arm of Providence seems raised to strike!—Am I become a coward? shall I betray, rather than defend myself? I am not yet an idiot.

Enter MALVOGLIO.

Mal. Your lordship seems disturbed?

Rom. Francisco is here.

Mal. I saw him.

Rom. And did not your blood freeze?

Mal. I was sorry.

Rom. For what?

Mal. That my dagger had missed its aim.

Rom. We are in his power.

Mal. He is in ours.

Rom. What are your thoughts?

Mal. What are yours, my lord?

Rom. Guess them.

Mal. Executioners!

Rom. Infamy!

Mal. Racks!

Rom. Maledictions!

Mal. From all which a blow may yet deliver us.

Enter SELINA, who hides behind a door.

Rom. 'Tis a damning crime!

Mal. Were it the first.

Rom. Where is he to sleep?

Mal. There! [*Pointing to a chamber.*]

Sel. They mean Francisco! The monsters!

Rom. Obstinate fool! since he will stay—

Mal. He must die.

Sel. The monsters!

Rom. I heard a noise.

Mal. He's coming.

Rom. Let us retire and concert—

Mal. Then, at midnight—

Rom. When he sleeps—

Mal. He'll wake no more!

[*Ereunt.*]

[*FIANETTA enters, with FRANCISCO and a lamp, which she places on a table. She points to his bed-room, then curtsies and retires, he returning her kindness. He seats himself as if to write; rises, takes the lamp, looks round with apprehension; goes to the chamber-door of ROMALDI, starts away with horror, recovers himself, again places the lamp on the table, and sits down to write. The door of ROMALDI's chamber opens; MALVOGLIO half appears, watching FRANCISCO; but as he turns, again retires.*]

Enter SELINA, who gently pulls FRANCISCO's sleeve; she starts; but seeing her, is satisfied.

Sel. [*In a low voice.*] Dare not to sleep! I will be on the watch! Your life is in danger! [*Exit.*]

[*FRANCISCO, greatly agitated, draws a pair of pistols, lays them on the table, and seats himself.*]

Enter ROMALDI and MALVOGLIO.

Rom. [*To MALVOGLIO.*] Watch that entrance. [*To FRANCISCO.*] Wretched fool! Why are you here?

[*FRANCISCO starts up, seizes the pistols, points them towards ROMALDI and MALVOGLIO, and commands the former, by signs, to read the paper on the table.*]

Rom. [*Reads.*] "Repent; leave the house. Oblige me not to betray you. Force me not on self-defence." Fool! do you pretend to command? [*Throws him a purse.*] We are two. Take that, and fly.

[*FRANCISCO, after a look of compassionate appeal, spurns it from him; and commands them to go.*]

Rom. [*Aside to MALVOGLIO.*] I know him! he will not fire.

[*They draw their daggers; he at first avoids them; at length they each seize him by the arm, and are in the attitude of striking, when the shrieks of SELINA bring BONAMO, STEPHANO and Servants.*]

Sel. Uncle! Stephano! Murder!

[*ROMALDI and MALVOGLIO, at hearing the noise behind, quit FRANCISCO, and feign to be standing on self-defence.*]

Bona. What mean these cries? What strange proceedings are here?

Sel. They are horrible.

Bona. Why, my lord, are these daggers drawn against a man under my protection?

Rom. Self-defence is a duty. Is not his pistol levelled at my breast?

Bona. [*To FRANCISCO.*] Can it be?

[*FRANCISCO inclines his head.*]

Bona. Do you thus repay hospitality?

Sel. Sir, you are deceived: his life was threatened.

Rom. Madam—

Sel. I fear you not! I watched, I overheard you!

Bona. Is this true?

Rom. No.

Sel. By the purity of heaven, yes! Behind that door, I heard the whole; Francisco must quit the house, or be murdered!

Rom. [*To BONAMO.*] I expect, sir, my word will not be doubted.

Bona. My lord, there is one thing of which I cannot doubt: the moment you appeared, terror was spread through my house. Men's minds are troubled at the sight of you: they seem all to avoid you. Good seldom accompanies mystery; I therefore now decidedly reply, to your proposal, that my niece cannot be the wife of your son; and must further add, you oblige me to decline the honour of your present visit.

Rom. Speak the truth, old man, and own you are glad to find a pretext to colour refusal, and gratify ambition. Selina and Stephano; you want her wealth, and mean in that way to make it secure. But, beware! Dare to pursue your project, and tremble at the consequences! To-morrow, before ten o'clock, send your written consent; or dread what shall be done

[*Ereunt ROMALDI and MALVOGLIO.*]

Bona. Dangerous and haughty man! But his threats are vain; my doubts are removed; Selina shall not be the victim of mean precaution and cowardly fears. I know your wishes, children. Let us retire. [*To his Servants.*] Make preparations for rejoicing: early to-morrow, Stephano and Selina shall be affianced.

[*They kneel.*]

Steph. My kind father!

Sel. Dearest, best of guardians!

Bona. Francisco shall partake the common happiness.

Fiam. Dear, dear! I sha'n't sleep to-night.

[*Ereunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A beautiful garden and pleasure grounds, with garlands, festoons, love devices, and every preparation for a marriage festival.*

First and Second Gardeners. PIERRO and his companions; all busy.

Pier. Come, come; bestir yourselves! The company will soon be here.

First Gard. Well; let them come: all is ready.

Pier. It has a nice look, by my fackins!

First Gard. I believe it has! thanks to me.

Pier. Thanks to you!

Second Gard. And me.

Pier. And you? Here's impudence! I say it is thanks to me.

F. and S. Gard. You, indeed?

Pier. Why, surely, you'll not have the face to pretend to deny my incapacity?

F. Gard. Yours?

S. Gard. Yours?

Pier. Mine, mine!

Enter STEPHANO.

Steph. What is the matter, my honest friends?

F. Gard. Why, here's Mr. Piero pretends to dispute his claim to all that has been done.

S. Gard. Yes; and says every thing is owing to his incapacity.

F. Gard. Now I maintain the incapacity was all my own. [To STEPH.] Saving and excepting yours, sir.

S. Gard. And mine.

F. Gard. Seeing you gave the first orders.

Pier. But wasn't they given to me, sir? Did'n't you say to me, Piero, says you—

Steph. Ay, ay; each man has done his part: all is excellent, and I thank you kindly. Are the villagers invited?

Pier. Invited! They no sooner heard of the wedding than they were half out of their wits! There will be such dancing and sporting! Then the music! Little Nanine, with her hurdy-gurdy; her brother, with the tabor and pipe; the blind fiddler, the lame piper, I and my Jew's harp! such a band!

Steph. Bravo: order every thing for the best.

Pier. But *who* is to order? Please to tell me that, sir?

Steph. Why, you.

Pier. There; [To his companions.] Mind! I am to order! Mark that!

Steph. You shall be major-domo for the day.

Pier. You hear. I am to be—do—drum-major for the day.

Steph. Selina is coming. To your posts.

[*They hurry each to his garland, and conceal themselves by the trees and bushes.*]

Enter BONAMO, SELINA, and FIAMETTA.

Bona. Vastly well, upon my word!

Sel. I fear, Stephano, you have slept but 'ittle?

Bona. Sleep, indeed! He had something better to think of. Come, come; we'll breakfast here in the bower. Order it, Fiametta.

Fiam. Directly, sir.

[*She goes, and returns with the servants; aiding them to arrange the breakfast table.*]

Bona. How reviving to age is the happiness of the young! And yet—thou hast long been an orphan, Selina; it has more than doubled thy fortune, which was great at my brother's sudden death. Would thou hadst less wealth, or I more!

Sel. And why, my dear uncle?

Bona. Evil tongues—this Romaldi—

Steph. Forget him.

Sel. Would that were possible! his menace—before ten o'clock—oh! that the hour were over.

Bona. Come, come; we'll not disturb our hearts with fears. To breakfast, and then to the notary. I forgot Francisco; why is he not here?

Sel. Shall I bring him?

Bona. Do you go, Fiametta.

Fiam. Most willingly.

Bona. Come, sit down. [*They seat themselves.*]

[*PIERO peeps from behind a shrub. STEPHANO gives a gentle clap with his hands, and the peasants all rise from their hiding-places, and suspend their garlands in a picturesque group, over BONAMO, SELINA, and STEPHANO.*]

Pier. What say you to that now?

Bona. Charming! charming!

Pier. I hope I am not made a major for nothing.

Bona. [To FRANCISCO, who enters with FIAMETTA.] Come, sir, please to take your seat.

Pier. [To STEPH.] Shall the sports begin?

Steph. [*Gives an affirmative sign.*]

Pier. Here, dancers! pipers! strummers! thrummers! to your places. This bench is for the band of music—mount.

[*Dancing commences. In the midst of the rejoicing the clock strikes; the dancing suddenly ceases.*]

Enter MALVOGLIO.

[*The company start up; FRANCISCO, STEPHANO, SELINA, and BONAMO express terror. The peasants alarmed and watching: the whole, during a short pause, forming a picture.*]

MALVOGLIO then presents a letter to BONAMO, and retires. BONAMO opens the letter and reads.

Bona. Oh, shame! dishonour! treachery!

Steph. My father!

Sel. My uncle!

Fiam. What treachery?

Fran. [*Attitude of despair.*]

Bona. No more of love or marriage! no more of sports, rejoicings, and mirth.

Steph. Good heavens!

Sel. My guardian! my friend! my uncle!

Bona. I am not your uncle.

Sel. Sir!

Steph. Not?

Bona. She is the child of crime! of adultery.

[*A general surprise; the despair of FRANCISCO extreme.*]

Step. 'Tis malice, my father!

Bona. Read.

Steph. The calumny of Romaldi!

Bona. Read.

Steph. [*Reads.*] "Selina is not your brother's daughter. To prove I speak nothing but the truth, I send you the certificate of her baptism."

Bona. 'Tis here—authenticated. Once more read.

Steph. [*Reads.*] "May the 11th, 1584, at ten o'clock this evening was baptized Selina Bianchi, the daughter of Francisco Bianchi."

Fran. [*Utters a cry, and falls on the seat.*]

Sel. Is it possible? my father!

Fran. [*Opens his arms, and SELINA falls on his neck.*]

Steph. Amazement!

Bona. Sinful man! not satisfied with having dishonoured my brother, after claiming my pity, would you aid in making me contract a most shameful alliance? Begone! you and the offspring of your guilt.

Steph. Selina is innocent.

Fran. [*Confirms it.*]

Bona. Her father is—a wretch! Once more begone.

Fran. [*During this dialogue had held his daughter in his arms: he now rises with a sense of injury, and is leading her away.*]

Bona. Hold, miserable man.—[To himself:] Houseless—pennyless—without bread—without asylum—must she perish because her father has been wicked? [To FRANCISCO.] Take this purse, conceal your shame, and, when 'tis empty, let me know your hiding place.

Fran. [*Expresses gratitude, but rejects the purse.*]

Sel. Spare your benefits, sir, till you think we deserve them.

Bona. Poor Selina!

Steph. What say you, sir?

Bona. Nothing—let them begone.

Sel. Stephano! farewell.

Steph. She shall not go! or—I will follow.

Bona. And forsake your father! ungrateful boy! [To FRANCISCO.] Begone, I say. Let me never see you more. [To the peasants.] Confine that frantic youth.

[STEPHANO endeavours to force his way to SELINA; FIAMETTA embraces her; and by gesture reproaches BONAMO, who persists, yet is

tormented by doubt. STEPHANO escapes, and suddenly hurries SELINA forward, to detain her; after violent efforts, they are again forced asunder.

SCENE II.—*The House of Bonamo.*

BONAMO, STEPHANO brought on by the Peasants, who then leave the room.

Bona. Disobedient, senseless boy!

Steph. Selina! give me back Selina, or take my life!

Bona. Forbear these complaints.

Steph. She is the woman I love.

Bona. Dare you—

Steph. None but she shall be my wife.

Bona. Your wife!

Steph. To the world's end I'll follow her!

Bona. And quit your father? Now, when age and infirmity bend him to the grave?

Steph. We will return to claim your blessing.

Bona. Stephano! I have loved you like a father; beware of my malediction.

Steph. When a father's malediction is unjust, Heaven is deaf.

Enter FIAMETTA.

Fiam. Very well! It's all very right! But you will see how it will end!

Bona. [To STEPH.] I no longer wonder, Count Romaldi should advise me to drive such a wretch from my house.

Fiam. Count Romaldi is himself a wretch.

Bona. Fiametta!—

Fiam. I say it again: a vile, wicked wretch! and has written—

Bona. The truth. The certificate is incontestible.

Fiam. I would not for all the world be guilty of your sins.

Bona. Woman!

Fiam. I don't care for you; I loved you this morning; I would have lost my life for you; but you are grown wicked.

Bona. Will you be silent?

Fiam. Is it not wickedness to turn a sweet innocent helpless young creature out of doors; one who has behaved with such tenderness; and leave her at last to starve? Oh, it is abominable!

Bona. Once more, hold your tongue.

Fiam. I won't! I can't! Poor Stephano! And do you think he'll forbear to love her? If he did, I should hate him! But he'll make his escape. You may hold him to-day, but he'll be gone to-morrow. He'll overtake and find his dear forlorn Selina; and they will marry, and live in poverty; but they will work, and eat their morsel with a good conscience; while you will turn from your dainties with an aching heart!

Bona. For the last time, I warn you.

Fiam. I know the worst: I have worked for you all the prime of my youth; and now you'll serve me as you have served the innocent, wretched Selina; you'll turn me out of doors. Do it! But I'll not go till I've said out my say: so I tell you again, you are a hard-hearted uncle, an unfeeling father, and an unjust master! Every body will shun you! You will dwindle out a life of misery, and nobody will pity you; because you don't deserve pity. So now I'll go, as soon as you please.

Enter Signior MONTANO.

Mon. What is it I have just heard, my friend? Have you driven away your niece?

Bona. She is not my niece.

Mon. 'Tis true.

Fiam. How?

Mon. But where did you learn that?

Bona. From these papers.

Mon. Who sent them?

Bona. Count Romaldi.

Mon. Count Romaldi is—a villain.

Fiam. There! there!

Steph. You hear, sir!

Fiam. I hope I shall be believed another time.

Bona. Silence, woman!—By a man like you, such an accusation cannot be made without sufficient proofs.

Mon. You shall have them. Be attentive.

Fiam. I won't breathe! A word sha'n't escape my lips. [They press round MONTANO.

Mon. Eight years ago, before I had the honour to know you, returning one evening after visiting my friends, I was leisurely ascending the rock of Arpennaz—

Fiam. So, so! The rock of Arpennaz! You hear! But I'll not say a word.

Mon. Two men, wild in their looks, and smeared with blood, passed hastily by me, with every appearance of guilt impressed upon their countenances.

Fiam. The very same! Eight years ago! The rock of Arpennaz! The—

Bona. Silence!

Fiam. I'll not say a word. Tell all, sir; I am dumb.

Mon. They had not gone a hundred paces before he who appeared the master staggered and fell. I hastened to him: he bled much, and I and his servant supported him to my house. They said they had been attacked by banditti; yet their torn clothes, a deep bite which the master had on the back of his hand, and other hurts appearing to be given by an unarmed man, made me doubt. Their embarrassment increased suspicion, which was confirmed next day by Michelli, the honest miller of Arpennaz; who, the evening before, near the spot from which I saw these men ascend, had succoured a poor wretch, dreadfully cut and mangled.

Fiam. It's all true! 'Twas I! I myself! My cries made Michelli come! Eight years—

Bona. Again?

Fiam. I've done.

Mon. I no longer doubted I had entertained men of blood, and hastened to deliver them up to justice; but, when I returned, they had flown, having left a purse, and this letter.

Bona. 'Tis the hand of Romaldi.

Mon. Imagine my surprise and indignation yesterday evening, when I here once more beheld the assassin! I could not disguise my emotion; and I left you with such abruptness to give immediate information. The archers are now in pursuit; I have no doubt they will soon secure him, as they have already secured his accomplice.

Steph. Malvoglio?

Mon. Yes, who has confessed—

Steph. What?

Mon. That the real name of this pretended Romaldi is Bianchi.

Bona. Just heaven! Francisco's brother!

Mon. Whose wife this wicked brother loved. Privately married, and she pregnant, Francisco put her under the protection of his friend here in Savoy.

Steph. My uncle! His sudden death occasioned the mystery.

Mon. But the false Romaldi decoyed Francisco into the power of the Algerines, seized his estates, and, finding he had escaped, attempted to assassinate him.

Fiam. Now are you convinced? He would not 'peach his brother of abomination! I told you Francisco was an angel! but, for all you know me so well, I'm not to be believed.

Bona. You are not to be silenced.

Fiam. No; I'm not. Francisco is an angel, Selina is an angel, Stephano is an angel: they shall be married, and all make one family; of which, if you repent, you shall be received into the bosom.

Bona. Pray, good woman, hold your tongue.

Fiam. Repent, then! Repent! [*Distant thunder.*]

Bona. I do repent!

Fiam. Then I forgive you. [*Sobs.*] I won't turn you away. You're my master again.

[*Kisses his hand, and wipes her eyes.*]

Bona. But where shall we find Selina, and—

Fiam. Oh, I know where!

Steph. Do you?

Fiam. Why, could you think that—Follow me! Only follow me. [*Exeunt.—Thunder.*]

SCENE III.—*A wild mountainous country. A rude wooden bridge; a mill-stream; the Miller's house; a stone or bank to sit on.—Thunder, lightning, &c.*

Enter ROMALDI from the rocks, disguised as a peasant.

Rom. Whither fly? Where shield me from pursuit, and death, and ignominy? My hour is come! The fiends that tempted, now tear me. [*Thunder.*] The heavens shoot their fires at me! Save! Spare! Oh spare me! [*Falls on the bank.*]

After a pause, he raises his head. Thunder. He again falls on his face. The storm gradually abates. A distant voice "Holloa!" He half rises, starts, and runs from side to side, looking and listening. Voice again, "Holloa!"

Rom. They are after me! Some one points me out! No den, no cave, can hide me! [*Looking the way he came.*] I cannot return that way, I cannot. It is the place of blood! A robbed and wretched brother! 'Tis his blood, by which I am covered! Ay! There! There have I been driven for shelter! Under those very rocks! Oh, that they would open! Cover me, earth! Cover my crimes! Cover my shame! [*Falls.*]

Enter MICHELLI on the bridge.

Mich. 'Tis a fearful storm! One's very heart shrinks! It makes a poor mortal think of his sins—and his danger.

Rom. [*Rises.*] Danger! What?—Is it me?

[*Listening.*]

Mich. [*Descending.*] Every thunder-clap seems to flash vengeance in his face!

Rom. I am known; or must be!—Shall I yield? or shall I—[*Points his pistol at MICHELLI, then shrinks.*]—More murder!

Mich. At such terrible times, a clear conscience is better than kingdoms of gold mines.

Rom. [*Hesitating whether he shall murder or not.*] How to act?

Mich. [*Perceiving ROMALDI, who conceals his pistol.*] Now, friend.

Rom. Now, miller!

Mich. You look—

Rom. How do I look?

Mich. I—What have you there?

Rom. Where?

Mich. Under your coat.

Rom. [*Shewing his hands.*] Nothing.

Mich. Something is the matter with you.

Rom. I am tired.

Mich. Come in, then, and rest yourself.

Rom. Thank you! Thank you!

Mich. Whence do you come?

Rom. From—the neighbourhood of Geneva.

Mich. Did you pass through Sallancha?

Rom. Sallancha? Why do you ask?

Mich. You have heard of what has happened?

Rom. Where?

Mich. There! At Sallancha! One Count Romaldi—

Rom. What of him?

Mich. Do you know him?

Rom. I—How should a poor—

Mich. Justice is at his heels. He has escaped; but he'll be taken. The executioner will have him! At least I hope so.

Rom. Ay?

Mich. As sure as you are here.

Rom. [*Aside.*] All men hate me! Why should I spare him?

Mich. I saved the good Francisco.

Rom. You? Was it you?

Mich. I.

Rom. Then—live.

Mich. Live?

Rom. To be rewarded.

Mich. I'd have done the same for you.

Rom. Live—live!

Mich. I will, my friend, as long as I can; and when I die, I'll die with an honest heart.

Rom. Miserable wretch!

Mich. Who?

Rom. That Count Romaldi.

Mich. Why ay!—Unless he is a devil, he is miserable indeed. He'll be taken; for, look, yonder are the archers. [*They cross the bridge.*]

Rom. What then? Where is Romaldi?

Mich. How should I know?

Rom. [*Aside.*] Does he dissemble? They are here! I am lost! [*Retires.*]

Enter Archers.

Mich. Good day, worthy sirs.

Exempt. Honest miller, good day. We are in search of Count Romaldi, whom we are to take, dead or alive. Do you know his person?

Mich. No.

Rom. Thanks, merciful heaven!

Exempt. [*Reads.*] "Five feet eight, &c., with a large scar on the back of the right hand."

Rom. [*Thrusting his hand in his bosom.*] 'Twill betray me!

Exempt. 'Twas a bite! The wretch Malvoglio has deposited that good Francisco is the brother of the vile Romaldi.

Mich. How!

Exempt. And that Francisco, tho' robbed, betrayed and mutilated, has endured every misery, and lived in continual dread of steel or poison, rather than bring this monster to the scaffold.

Mich. But, he'll come there at last!

Exempt. We are told, he is among these mountains.

Mich. Oh, could I catch him by the collar!

Exempt. Should you meet him, beware: he's not unarmed.

Mich. There is no passing for him or you by this valley after the storm, the mountain torrents are falling. You must go back.

Exempt. Many thanks. We must lose no time.

Mich. Success to you. *Exeunt Archers.*

Rom. Death! Infamy! Is there no escaping?

Mich. The day declines, and you look—

Rom. How?

Mich. Um—I wish you looked better. Come in; pass the evening here: recover your strength and spirits.

Rom. [Holding out his hand.] You are a worthy man.

Mich. I wish to be. [Feeling ROMALDI's hand, after shaking.] Zounds! What? Hey?

Rom. A scar—

Mich. On the back of the right hand!

Rom. I have served. A hussar with his sabre gave the cut.

Mich. Humph! it may be.

Rom. It is.

Mich. At least it may be; and the innocent—

Rom. Ay! might suffer for the guilty.

Mich. Rather than that—I will run all risks. I am alone; my family is at the fair, and cannot be home to-night. But you are a stranger; you want protection—

Rom. I do indeed!

Mich. You shall have it. Come. Never shall my door be shut against the houseless wretch.

[Exit into house.]

[FRANCISCO and SELINA approach the bridge, he points to the Miller's house. She testifies joy, and admiration of the Miller. They descend, he carefully guiding and aiding her. The Miller comes out, sees FRANCISCO, and they run into each other's arms.]

Mich. Welcome! A thousand times welcome!

Sel. Ten thousand thanks to the saviour of my father!

Mich. Your father, sweet lady?

Sel. Oh yes! discovered to me by his mortal enemy.

Mich. The monster Romaldi?

Sel. Alas!

Mich. For your father's sake, for your own sake. welcome both.

Rom. [At the door.] I heard my name!

Mich. [Leading them to the door.] Come. I have a stranger—

Sel. [Seeing ROMALDI.] Ah!

[FRANCISCO falls back, and covers his eyes with agony.]

Mich. How now?

[ROMALDI retires.]

[FRANCISCO putting his hand towards her mouth, enjoins her silence with great eagerness. MICHELLI, by making signs of biting his right hand, asks FRANCISCO if it be ROMALDI. FRANCISCO turns away without answering. MICHELLI denotes his conviction it is ROMALDI, and hastily ascends to cross the bridge in search of the Archers; FRANCISCO entreats him back in vain. ROMALDI enters from the house, presenting his pistol. FRANCISCO opens his breast for him to shoot if he pleases. SELINA falls between them.]

Rom. No! Too much of your blood is upon my head! Be justly revenged: take mine!

[ROMALDI offers the pistol, which FRANCISCO throws to a distance, and entreats him to fly by the valley.—ROMALDI signifies the impossibility, and runs distractedly from side to side; then, after FRANCISCO and SELINA's entreaties, ascends to cross the bridge. Met at the edge of the hill by an Archer, he is driven back; they struggle on the bridge. The Archer's sword taken by ROMALDI; who, again attempting flight, is met by several Archers. ROMALDI maintains a retreating fight. FIAMETTA, BONAMO, STEPHANO, MONTANO, and Peasants follow the Archers. FRANCISCO and SELINA several times throw themselves between the assailants and ROMALDI. When the combatants have descended the hill, ROMALDI's foot slips, he falls, and FRANCISCO intervenes to guard his body. The Archers prepare to shoot and strike with their sabres; when the entreaties and efforts of FRANCISCO and SELINA are renewed. The Archers forbear for a moment, and FRANCISCO shields his body.]

Sel. Oh, forbear! Let my father's virtues plead for my uncle's errors!

Bona. We all will entreat for mercy; since of mercy we all have need: for his sake, and for our own, may it be freely granted!

DEAF AND DUMB;

OR, THE ORPHAN PROTECTED:

AN HISTORICAL DRAMA, IN FIVE ACTS,

BY THOMAS HOLCROFT.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

JULIO
DARLEMONT
ST. ALME
FRANVAL
DE L'EEVE
DUPRE
DOMINIQUE
PIERRE
PHILIPPE
ETIENNE
CHARLES.

MADAME FRANVAL
MARIANNE
CLAUDINE
Servants.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Room in the Palace of Harancour.—
A whole-length portrait of a boy hangs in the
centre of the room.*

Enter DUPRE and PIERRE.

Dup. Don't you be so inquisitive.

Pie. Don't you be so surly.

Dup. I won't be tormented.

Pie. Come, come, Dupré; fellow-servants should be communicative, and tell one another everything that passes in the family.

Dup. And, if they did, woe betide some families.
Pie. Dupré, what is the meaning of all this mystery?

Dup. Why do you nail your eyes on me thus? I won't be wormed and sifted. What is it you want to pick out of me?

Pie. I want to know the meaning of your private interviews with my master's father: admitted to his closet, doors locked, cautionings—whisperings. Take care, take care; I have my suspicions.

Dup. Suspicions! of what?

Pie. Of no good, I promise you.

Dup. Why, what do you suspect?

Pie. To be plain with you, that you are aiding and abetting your old master to make his son, my young master, miserable: in short, you are making a match for him with the first President's daughter, against his will.

Dup. Oh! is that all you know?

Pie. All! and isn't that enough?

Dup. Yes—no; I could almost wish the whole world knew—Ah! [*Looking at the portrait.*]

Pie. Knew what? How you fix your eyes on that—

Dup. Do I?

Pie. Yes; you never pass through the room without pausing on that portrait.

Dup. Not half an hour ago, I saw him start from his frame, and stand before me.

Pie. What do you mean? Are you crazy?

Dup. I believe, it was only a dream. Perhaps he lives.

Pie. Lives! what lives? Why, look, man, 'tis but a picture.

Enter DARLEMONT.

Dar. How now? What are you doing?

Pie. Only looking at this picture, sir.

Dar. That picture! and why are you looking at it?

Pie. By Dupré's account, it ought to be a miracle; he says, he saw it start from its frame, and stand before him.

Dar. Fellow!

Pie. Why, didn't you say so, Dupré?

Dar. Begone! [*Exit PIERRE.*] Are you mad, Dupré?

Dup. Almost, I am.

Dar. How dare you hint at what must be eternally concealed?

Dup. Dare? The sinner dreads no tyrant but his own conscience.

Dar. Let that portrait be removed.

Dup. No, that it never shall be.

Dar. Ha!

Dup. Frown on: there it shall remain, and daily haunt us.

Dar. Again this insolence? Remember, villain, that you are my slave.

Dup. I do; and I remember, too, that you are mine: accomplices in guilt are, of necessity, the slaves of each other.

Dar. I must contain myself. [*Aside.*] I see, I see, Dupré, that neither my gifts, nor my promises, have satisfied you; however, I have been thinking of you: leave me. You will soon find that you are not forgotten.

Dup. I wish I were; but you and I can never be forgotten; even in the grave we shall be remembered, only to be cursed, despised, and hated. [*Exit.*]

Dar. Must I hold wealth, reputation, nay, life itself, perhaps, at the disposal of this dotard? His slave! While he spoke it, audacious as the reptile toad, he dared to fix his brazen eyes upon me. Let him accuse. Am I not Darlemont, possessor of the fortune and the power of Harancour? Where is the man who will venture to support his accusation?

Re-enter PIERRE.

Besides, my son's marriage with the President's daughter will, I hope—Why are you loitering there?

Pie. Sir, I am only waiting till my master comes in.

Dar. What, is he abroad so early? Something disturbs him.

Pie. Yes, sir; indeed, something or other seems to disturb every soul in the house. [*Going.*]

Dar. What's that you say? Come hither, Pierre; you know the deference due to your master's father; be faithful, and you shall profit by it. I must have no prying—mark me, no babbling; talk not of me, nor my affairs. As for Dupré, at times, you see, he raves; he has lost his senses; he grows old.

Pie. In your service, sir.

Dar. And, therefore, what would be punished in another, I overlook in him. Pay no regard to his wanderings, except, observe me, should you think them extraordinary, to inform me of them;—me alone, no other, not even my son; I have my reasons; which are not for you to inquire into. Obey me, and depend on my bounty. [*Exit.*]

Pie. Your bounty? Humph! that may be well enough; but the devil take your pride. A few years ago, this grand signior was but a petty merchant; and now—

Enter ST. ALME.

St. A. Was not that my father?

Pie. Yes, sir; you seem as much ruffled as he was.

St. A. My soul is on the rack; yet, I am resolved: this hated marriage never can, never shall take place. No; never, never will I renounce thee, my lovely Marianne!

Pie. Then, sir, you must renounce your father's favour and fortune.

St. A. Unfeeling prejudice! Is she not the daughter of a man, whose memory is honoured and beloved? The sister of a man of virtue and of talents—of Franval, the most renowned advocate of Toulouse?

Pie. True, sir; but his talents are the only dependence of her and her mother.

St. A. While my father was but a merchant, he would have thought himself honoured by my marriage with the daughter of the Seneschal Franval; but, since he has inherited the estates of his nephew and ward, the unhappy Count of Harancour, his nature seems changed; and he now listens only to the dictates of his ambition.

Pie. Ah! the old servants of the family often

talk of the young Count of Harancour; they say, he had the misfortune to be deaf and dumb.

St. A. 'Tis true, he had. Poor boy! my father took him to Paris about eight years ago, in hopes that this affliction might be removed; and, whether improper medicines were administered to him, or that his constitution sunk under the efforts for his cure, I know not; but there, in a short time, he died in the arms of Dupré, who accompanied my father on this journey.

Pie. That's the secret; now I no longer wonder, that I so often catch Dupré gazing on that picture of the young Count.

St. A. Do you? 'Tis only natural in him: this youth was the last remaining branch of an illustrious family, which Dupré had long faithfully served. My poor Julio! He once saved my life; how bravely he exposed himself for me! Never, never will his image quit my heart. I see him at the moment of his departure; dumb as he was, his form spoke moving eloquence; every look was so affectionate, every action so expressive! Dear, dear, lamented Julio! he crushed me into his very heart, as if he had foreknown, and would have told me, that that embrace was to be our last. Ah! were he now alive, I should enjoy his tender and endearing friendship; and my father, less opulent, would not then oppose my union with Marianne.

Pie. But you say, sir, you have never yet told this lady that you love her; how, then, do you know what her thoughts of you may be?

St. A. I cannot mistake them: our mutual tremours when we meet; my faltering voice, her downcast eyes; and other thousand, thousand delicious proofs of sympathizing thoughts.

Pie. You know best, sir; but, for my part, I should wish for more substantial proofs; besides, her mother—

St. A. Born of a noble family, is, if possible, more haughty than my father; but her son has a complete empire over her affections: he is my friend; he cannot but have discovered that I love his sister; and, as our intimacy daily strengthens, I must presume that he approves my pretensions.

Dom. [*Without.*] I'll just deliver my message myself.

Pie. Hush! here comes their gossiping footman, old Dominique. Now, sir, if you wish to know the lady's real sentiments, only let me set his tongue running, and he will tell you, in his own chuckling, talkative way, all that he sees and hears.

Enter DOMINIQUE.

Ha! Good morning, friend Dominique. What brings you to our house?

Dom. Good day, good day, friend! So, sir! [*To St. ALME.*] you're an early stirrer. Ha, ha, ha, ha! I saw you just now, I saw you; ha, ha, ha!

St. A. Saw me?

Dom. Yes, I did; pacing backwards and forwards, under my young lady's window; ha, ha, ha!

St. A. I was only taking the morning air, I do assure you, Dominique.

Dom. Ha, ha, ha!

Pie. Ha, ha, ha! What do you mean, Dominique?

Dom. Why, that I'd take the morning air myself, old as I am, if I hoped to see a young, blooming, lovely—ha, ha, ha!—But, no, fast as a church; she was up till two o'clock this morning practising the song that somebody made on her recovery.—Ha, ha, ha! and at last went to bed, I dare say, only to dream of the author—ha, ha, ha!

St. A. Your frankness and good humour forbid dissimulation; yes, Dominique, I adore your charming mistress.

Pie. Ay, that he does; the more's his misfortune.

Dom. Misfortune! and pray, sir, why so?

Pie. Because I can see very well, and so do you too, Dominique, that your young lady does not care a straw for my master.

Dom. You can see it, can you? Lord! what a clear-sighted wiseacre thou art! Ha, ha, ha!

St. A. Why, Dominique, do you believe she loves me?

Dom. No, I don't believe it; I know it. Why, there was, in the first place—

St. A. Ay, Dominique—

Pie. Let him go on, sir. Well, but let us hear what proofs?

Dom. Proofs! a thousand. Why, when she was recovering from her last illness, and I told her how you had called to inquire after her—"Did he come himself, Dominique?" says she—"and did he come often?" "Every minute in the day, ma'am," says I. "And did he look concerned?" "Ma'am," says I, "he looked charmingly: his eyes were as red as a ferret's; his cheeks as white as a sheet; he looked like a perfect ghost; a sweet lover-like figure, indeed, ma'am." "I think I'm better," says she, "Dominique: I'm a great deal better: I'm sure I shall soon be well." Ha, ha, ha! true love is your best doctor.

Pie. O, lord! and is this all you know?

Dom. No, sir; it is not all I know, nor half I know. She gave me such a scolding about you, to'other day!

St. A. About me?

Dom. Yes; she was painting away at her little desk, and took no notice of my coming in, to put the room to rights; so I crept softly on tip-toe towards her; and, peeping over her shoulder,—I love to detect the sly rogues—what should I behold, but the picture of a young gentleman.

St. A. What young gentleman?

Pie. Yes; what young gentleman?

Dom. What young gentleman? "How like it is!" says I, pop, at once, without thinking of it. "Like!" says she, starting up—"Like whom? Do you think it is like my brother?" "Your brother! Like a certain person, called Captain St. Alme, to be sure!" "St. Alme?" says she, pouting, and vexed a little—"I desire, Dominique,"—you know her way—"I desire you won't say any such thing; I beg and desire you won't." And away she went, blushing as red as a rose, but all the while hiding somebody carefully in her bosom; ha, ha, ha! But, Lord, I stand chattering here—

St. A. Thank you, thank you, Dominique; you have made me happy beyond measure.

Dom. I knew I should. Doesn't care a straw for my master! Ha, ha, ha! I knew very well I should make you happy: I love to make people happy, and to be happy myself. But I must not forget my errands. [*Takes out a paper.*] What with my old mistress, and my young mistress, and my master—[*Going.*] O, Lord! he sent me here to tell you that he wants to speak with you. Now, don't you blab one word of all this, for your life; these girls have such freaks and vagaries! though they're in love over head and ears, and can't conceal it a moment, yet they expect other folks to be blind, and see nothing at all of the matter. [*Going.*]

St. A. Pray, say, I'll wait on your master, Dominique.

Dom. To be sure; you'll wait on my master, because you expect to see my young mistress. Ha, ha, ha! O, the turnings and twinings of your true lovers! Yes, yes; she hid the picture in her fair bosom; I warrant, as near as she could to her heart! Ha, ha, ha! [*Exit.*]

St. A. Now, Pierre, is there any cause for doubt?

Pie. I think not, sir.

St. A. And would my father tear me from her? Never! Run to the President's; inquire when I may have the honour of seeing him. [*Exit PIERRE.*] I'll go to Franval's, avow to him my passion for his sister, and openly declare myself to her in her brother's presence. If I obtain their consents, I'll instantly wait on the President, acquaint him with my love for Marianne, make him refuse me his daughter, and thus, strike at once at the very root of my misfortunes. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*A Square in the city of Toulouse. On one side the Palace of Harancour, on the other the house of Franval; bridge, church, &c.*

Enter THEODORE and DE L'EPEE over the bridge. —THEODORE expresses by signs that he recollects the spot they are in.

De L'E. This warm emotion, this sudden change in all his features, convinces me that he recollects this place. Hadst thou the use of speech! [*THEODORE, looking round him, observes a church, and gives signs more expressive of his knowing the place.*] It is, it must be so: and am I then at length arrived at the period of my long and painful search? [*THEODORE now sees the Palace of Harancour; he starts, rivets his eyes to it, advances a step or two, points to the statues, utters a shriek, and drops breathless into the arms of DE L'EPEE.*] Ah, my poor wronged boy, for such I'm sure you are, that sound goes to my very heart! He scarcely breathes! I never saw him so much agitated. There, there! Come, come! Why was a voice denied to sensibility so eloquent? [*THEODORE makes signs with the utmost rapidity, that he was born in that palace; that he lived in it when a child; had seen the statues; come through the gate, &c. &c.*] Yes; in that house was he born: words could not tell it more plainly. The care of heaven still wakes upon the helpless. [*THEODORE makes signs of gratitude to DE L'EPEE, and fervently kisses his hands.*] *DE L'EPEE explains that it is not to him, but to heaven, that he ought to pay his thanks. THEODORE instantly drops on his knee, and expresses a prayer for blessings on his benefactor.* *DE L'EPEE, bareheaded, bows.* O, thou, who guidest at thy will the thoughts of men; thou, by whom I was inspired to this great undertaking; O, power omnipotent! deign to accept the grateful adoration of thy servant, whom thou hast still protected, and of this speechless orphan, to whom thou hast made me a second father! If I have uprightly discharged my duty; if all my love and labours for him may dare to ask a benediction; vouchsafe to shed its dew on this forlorn one, and let his good be all my great reward! [*DE L'EPEE raises THEODORE, and embraces him.*] We must proceed with caution, and first, to learn who is the owner of this house. [*THEODORE is running to knock at the gate; DE L'EPEE stops him, &c.*]

Enter PIERRE.

Pie. Well, that President is the best natured gentleman—

De L'E. O, here comes one that may, perhaps,

instruct me. [*Signs to THEODORE to attend.*] Pray, sir, can you tell me the name of this square?

Pie. [*Aside.*] Strangers, I perceive. It is called St. George's-square, sir. [*Looking at THEODORE.*]

De l'E. Thank you, sir. Another word: do you know this superb mansion?

Pie. [*Observing DE l'EPEE and THEODORE more closely.*] Know it! I think I ought; I have lived here these five years.

De l'E. That's fortunate. And you call it—

Pie. [*Aside.*] Plaguy inquisitive. A few years ago it was called the Palace of Harancour.

De l'E. Of Harancour?

Pie. But, at present, it belongs to a gentleman of the name of Darlemont. [*Observing THEODORE.*]

'Tis odd! He seems to talk by signs. Is he dumb?

[*During the above dialogue, THEODORE examines the gateway, pillars, arms, &c. of the Palace of Harancour, and explains to DE l'EPEE his recollection of the various objects.*]

De l'E. And who is this gentleman of the name of Darlemont?

[*THEODORE now turns his face fairly towards PIERRE.*]

Pie. 'Gad, how like it is! Sir? Who is he?

De l'E. Yes; I mean, what is his rank, his profession?

Pie. [*Still looking at THEODORE.*] Profession! He has no profession, sir; he's one of the richest men in Toulouse. [*Looking at THEODORE.*] One might almost swear it. Your servant, sir; I'm wanted. [*Aside.*] Very odd, all these questions. [*Looking at THEODORE.*] The strongest likeness I ever saw in my life. [*Exit PIERRE into the Palace.*]

De l'E. Ay, my friend; you little know the motive of my questions. There's not a moment to be lost. This house, that once belonged to so distinguished a family; this Darlemont, the present possessor of it; every circumstance relating to it, must be publicly known in Toulouse. I'll instantly away, seek out some lodging, and then—But, for fear it should escape me—[*Writes in a note-book.*] Harancour—Darlemont. [*THEODORE, as DE l'EPEE writes, runs to him with eager curiosity; DE l'EPEE presses him in his arms.*] Yes, my poor mute Theodore, if you belong to parents who can feel, no doubt, they still lament your loss; and will, with transport, hail your return:—If, as I fear, you are the victim of unnatural foul play, grant me, Providence, to unmask and confound it! So men shall have another proof, that every fraud will soon or late be detected, and that no crime escapes eternal justice.

[*Exit DE l'EPEE, over the bridge, leading THEODORE, who looks back at the Palace of Harancour, &c.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Franval's Library.*—*A library table, with books, parchments, vase with flowers, &c.*

FRANVAL discovered, re-reading.

Fran. I shall never be happy, till I have accomplished this task. To reconcile mistaken friends, is an employment as useful to society, as it is honourable to my profession.

Enter MARIANNE, with a basket of flowers.

Mar. Good morning, brother.

Fran. [*Rises.*] Good morning, Marianne.

Mar. Late and early, always at your studies.

Fran. The causes which a lawyer is expected to undertake are frequently so disguised, either by the passions, or the arts of men, that, if he is honest, he cannot consider them too attentively.

Mar. Ah! your's must often be a painful employment.

Fran. 'Tis odious, indeed, to witness villainy; but then to justify the innocent, is the noblest and most gratifying duty of man.

Mar. True; it is sweeter to the soul than these flowers to the sense.

[*She takes the flowers out of the vase, and puts those which she has brought into their place.*]

Fran. Every morning fresh odorous flowers, and a kind kiss from my dear sister. [*He kisses her.*] My thoughts must be clear and pure. Ah! Marianne, delightful as these gifts are to me, I have a young friend to whom they would be still more precious.

Mar. What do you mean, brother?

Fran. Nay, I would not make you blush. [*He leads her forward, and looks steadfastly in her face.*] Sister!

Mar. [*With a downcast look.*] Brother!

Fran. Your presents are sweet; your affections sweeter; yet both want of their true value, while you deny me your confidence.

Mar. Nay!

Fran. Besides, Marianne, you may as well frankly own it; for your heart is too innocent and simple to wear disguise gracefully.

Mar. Pray, forbear!

Fran. And why this hesitation? Do not the noble qualities of St. Alme make him worthy any woman's love?

Mar. I—I—believe they do.

Fran. I won't speak of his person—

Mar. Which is elegance itself.

Fran. I won't speak of his countenance—

Mar. Which is all comeliness and candour.

Fran. But, for his heart and understanding—

Mar. They are excellent and generous, indeed!

Fran. What woman but must be happy with such a husband?

Mar. So I have often thought! [*Sighing.*]

Fran. In a word, Marianne, he loves you.

Mar. Why do you think so?

Fran. Every look declares it.

Mar. Ah! I'm afraid to trust to looks.

Fran. Are you so? At last, Marianne, you're caught. You own, then, that you love him in return?

Mar. Oh! [*Hides her face in his bosom.*]

Enter ST. ALME, hastily.

Fran. My friend, you come at a lucky moment. You seem disturbed; is anything the matter?

St. A. Never stood I so much in need of your friendship. [*Takes FRANVAL's hand.*]

Mar. Heavens!

Fran. Explain yourself.

Mar. I'll leave you. [*Going.*]

St. A. No; stay a moment—I entreat you, stay. My father, Franval, my father!

Fran. What of him?

St. A. His dreadful menaces still sound in my ears; and wherefore were they uttered? Because I cannot second his ambition. Had he required my blood, my life, I would have given them willingly; but to renounce her I love, the tenderest and first affections of my soul!

Mar. Ah!

St. A. Cruel parents! You cannot look with our eyes; you cannot feel with our hearts! Are we your children, only to become your victims?

Fran. Be calm, and tell me what has passed.

St. A. My father has this morning informed me, that the marriage I have so much dreaded, must take place within these three days. "Three days!" I exclaimed. "No, sir; never, never." This reply, which burst from the very bottom of my wounded heart, roused his displeasure into a rage too violent for all my excuses or prayers to pacify: he insisted on my instantly giving him a reason for my peremptory refusal. Hoping the name of her I adore might disarm his fury, I at once declared, that my affections were irrevocably devoted to—

Fran. To whom? Speak out.

St. A. To your sister.

Mar. Me!

St. A. [Throwing himself at her feet.] Forgive my rashness! Yes, to you; 'tis you alone I love, and ever, ever shall; and, might I hope—

Mar. [Raising him.] What said your father?

St. A. Embarrassed at first, and overpowered with confusion, he acknowledged your worth and beauty; but added, that he had disposed of me elsewhere, and enjoined me to forget you. "Sooner forget to live!" At this, his wrath redoubled: he reprobated my audacious disobedience; threatened me with his malediction; and forbade me ever again to enter his presence, but with repentance and submission.

Mar. Alas!

St. A. My whole frame shuddered while he spoke; yet I felt my heart revolt against this tyranny. Banished the bosom of a father, I come to find refuge in the arms of a friend.

Fran. [Embracing him.] Of a friend, my dear St. Alme, whose first advice to you is to calm this over eager sensibility; and to remember, that a parent is to be respected, even under his mistakes.

St. A. Ah! were the heart of Marianne but mine!

Fran. Of that you are secure.

Mar. O, brother!

St. A. Am I so blessed? Am I, indeed?

Fran. And why disseemble what will alleviate his sufferings? [To MARIANNE.]

Mar. And why reveal what may increase our misery?

St. A. O, no; since that I am blessed, obstinate and stern as my father is, I shall subdue, I shall soften his inflexibility; and he will hereafter rejoice in the happiness of his children. But I forget: I must away.

Fran. Whither are you hurrying?

St. A. To the President's; I cannot now tell you more. We shall have every thing to hope, if I can prevail on him to countenance my project. I shall—I will! Secure of thy heart, my lovely Marianne, what can I not perform? [Exit.]

Fran. St. Alme! My friend! Hear me one moment.

Mar. I tremble, lest his ardent temper should precipitate him into—

Enter DOMINIQUE, with books under his arm.

Dom. Sir, your mother desires to know whether you choose to have breakfast in your study.

Fran. By all means; as she pleases.

Mar. You have not been to pay her your respects this morning. [DOMINIQUE lays the books on the desk, and places a breakfast table, chairs, &c.

Fran. Come, let us wait on her. Cheer up, Marianne; all will go well yet.

Mar. You are very good, brother. But, you should not have told.

[Exeunt FRANVAL and MARIANNE.]

Dom. I'm tired to death already. I verily believe, I have walked five miles this morning. Let me see that I have done all my errands though, or Madame Franval will be telling me I begin to grow old, and good for nothing. [Looks over a paper.] "Cards of invitation to the Prior and the Countess of—;" both delivered. "Books from the library;" there they are. "Go to the lawyer, and desire him to stop proceedings against the poor officer, the money being ready to discharge the debt;" paid by my good master to save an unfortunate family from prison. Ha, ha, ha! O, stop! Ah! "And as I return, to leave six crowns with—" sent by my young mistress, Marianne, to the widow of the late porter of the palace of Harancour—That's because she's a favourite of Captain St. Alme's. How the poor soul did bless and pray for her lovely benefactress! Ha, ha, ha! I am tired; but it's a pleasure to go on such errands. Ha, ha, ha! They're coming. [Exit, and returns with the breakfast, which he places on the table, and exit.]

Enter Madame FRANVAL, leaning on FRANVAL's arm, and MARIANNE.

Mad. F. Yes, my son, there are few families in Toulouse, more ancient than our's; and though but an advocate, I trust that you will shew yourself worthy of the name of Franval.

Fran. My employment, madam, is an honour to all who exercise it properly. [They sit; MARIANNE prepares the breakfast.]

Mad. F. The office of seneschal had been, I may say, for ages held by your ancestors; at the death of your father, I was obliged to sell it, and the degradation cuts me to the soul.

Fran. Yet, madam, this very circumstance has stimulated me to attain by my own talents that consideration in the world, for which I should otherwise, in all probability, have stood indebted merely to accident and prejudice.

Enter DOMINIQUE.

Dom. A letter for you, madam. [Gives Madame FRANVAL a letter.] The servant waits for an answer.

Mad. F. Have you been on those messages?

Dom. Yes, madam.

Mad. F. [Reading.] "Darlemont!" What occasion can Darlemont have to write to me?

Fran. Darlemont!

Mad. F. [Reads.] "Madam, I take the freedom of addressing myself to you, in claim of the most sacred rights"—[To DOMINIQUE.] You may leave us. [Exit DOMINIQUE.] [Reads.] "Sacred rights of a father." What does he mean? [Reads.] "Rights of a father: my son loves your daughter." Indeed! [Reads.] "I met him this moment, and he assures me that his love is returned." [They all rise.]

Fran. Go on, madam; I beseech you, go on.

Mad. F. [Reads.] "Be assured their union never can take place." Ha, ha, ha! No, sir; be assured their union never can take place.

Mar. What will become of me?

Mad. F. [Reads.] "I therefore trust you will forbid him your house; and no longer encourage him to contemn and brave the authority of a father."

DARLEMONT.' Encourage! I encourage! Insupportable insolence!

Fran. Be calm, I beg you, madam.

Mad. F. Who told this petty trader, this gentleman of yesterday, that I should dream of an alliance with his mushroom family? What! have his riches made him forget the disparity of our births? Daughter, I cannot believe this of you. I hope, son Franval, after such an insult, you will no longer honour this St. Alme with your notice. As for the father, should he ever—Yes, he shall have an answer. [*Sits down to write.*]

Enter DOMINIQUE.

Dom. Sir, a stranger desires to speak with you.

Fran. A stranger?

Dom. Yes, sir; a very good-looking gentleman desires to see you; I believe he's a clergyman.

Fran. Desire him to walk in. [*Exit DOMINIQUE.*]

Mad. F. [*Reading the letter with vexation.*] "Their union never can take place." Ha, ha, ha!

Mar. My dreams of happiness are ended.

Fran. Madam, the gentleman comes: if you please, we'll consider the letter another time.

Mad. F. [*Rising.*] No; I won't honour him with an answer at all.

Enter the ABBE DE L'EPÉE and DOMINIQUE.

Dom. Walk in, sir; pray walk in. [*Exit.*]

De l'E. [*Salutes the ladies, then FRANVAL.*] I presume, sir, you are Monsieur Franval?

Fran. At your service.

De l'E. Could you favour me with a few moments' conversation?

Fran. Very willingly. May I take the liberty of asking who—

De l'E. I am from Paris; my name is De l'Epée.

Fran. De l'Epée! The instructor of the deaf and dumb? [*De L'EPÉE bows.*] Madam—sister—you see before you one who is an honour to human nature.

De l'E. Sir! [*Bows. The ladies salute De L'EPÉE.*]

Fran. How often have I admired you as the dispenser of the most valuable gifts of heaven!

De l'E. Then have I been fortunate, indeed, in applying myself to you.

Fran. How can I serve you?

De l'E. By aiding me to redress the injured. Your high reputation, sir, has brought me hither, in order to communicate to you an affair of the utmost importance.

Mad. F. Daughter, we'll retire.

De l'E. If you have time to listen, ladies, pray stay. It is my earnest wish to interest every virtuous and feeling heart in the cause I have undertaken.

Mad. F. If we have your leave, sir.

Fran. Be seated, pray sir. [*They sit.*]

De l'E. Perhaps you will think my story tedious; yet I must be particular.

Mar. How interesting an appearance! [*Aside.*]

Fran. Pray, proceed.

De l'E. This, then, is my business. About eight years ago, a boy, deaf and dumb, found in the dead of night on the Pont Neuf, was brought to me by an officer of the police. From the meanness of his dress, I supposed him of poor parents, and undertook to educate and provide for him.

Fran. As I know you have done for many others.

De l'E. I soon remarked an uncommon intelligence in his eyes; a well-mannered ease and assurance in his behaviour; and, above all, a strange and sorrowful surprise in his looks, whenever he ex-

amined the coarseness of his cloathing. In a word, the more I saw, the more I was convinced, that he had been purposely lost in the streets. I gave a public, full, minute description of the unhappy foundling; but in vain. Few will claim interest in the unfortunate.

Fran. Ah! few indeed!

De l'E. Placed among my scholars, he profited so well by my lessons, that he was, at last, able to converse with me by signs, rapid almost as thought itself. One day, as we were passing the high court of justice, a judge alighted from his carriage. The sight gave Theodore (for so I called him) an emotion, violent and instant. The tears ran down his cheeks in torrents, while he explained to me, that, when a child, a man who often wore similar robes of purple and ermine had been accustomed to caress, and take him in his arms. Observe: another time, a grand funeral passed us in the streets; I watched the various changes in his colour, and learned that he had himself, long ago, followed the coffin of the very person, by whom he had been thus fondly caressed. I could not be mistaken. I concluded, that he was probably the orphan heir of some chief magistrate, purposely turned adrift in a strange and populous city; defrauded, robbed, and even fortunate enough, to have escaped with life.

Mar. Poor youth!

De l'E. These strong presumptions redoubled all my hope and zeal. Theodore grew every day more and more interesting. He confirmed to me many circumstances of his story. Yet, how proceed in his behalf? He had never heard his father's name, he neither knew his family, nor the place of his birth. Well, sir, some months ago, as we went through the Barriere d'Enfer, observing a carriage stopped and examined, the recollection suddenly struck him, that this was the very gate through which he entered Paris, and that the chaise, in which he travelled with two persons, whom he well remembered, had, in this very spot, been thus visited. I see—I see it in your eyes—you anticipate my firm persuasion, that he came from some city in the south of France, of which, in all likelihood, his father had been the chief magistrate.

Fran. For heaven's sake, sir, go on!

De l'E. Finding all my researches ineffectual, I resolved at last to take my pupil with me, and traverse, in person, and on foot, the whole of the south of France. We embraced each other, invoked the protection of heaven, and set forward. After a journey, long, fatiguing, almost hopeless, we this morning, blessed be the Divine Providence! arrived at the gates of Toulouse.

Fran. Good heavens!

De l'E. He knew the place, he seized my hand, uttered wild cries of joy, and led me quickly, here and there, through various quarters of the city. At length, we arrived at this square; he stopped, pointed to the mansion opposite your door, shrieked, and senseless dropped into my arms.

Fran. The palace of Harancourt?

De l'E. Yes; and from the inquiries I have already made, I am convinced that my boy is the lawful heir of that family; and that his inheritance has been seized by his guardian and maternal uncle—Darlemont.

Mad. F. I don't doubt it. O, the wretch! [*She rises.*]

De l'E. To you, sir, I have been directed; to your talents; to your virtue; and to you, in the names of justice and humanity, I now address my-

self for aid. Earth, heaven, and all the blessings it can promise, will second my petition. O, let the voice of irresistible truth be raised in his behalf! Let not a noble orphan, denied the precious bounties of nature, and quickened by these privations into ten-fold sensibility—let him not, I conjure you, let him not fall the victim of the ambitious and the base.

Fran. Sir, could I have listened to a tale like this unmoved, I were unworthy the form and name of man. [*To Mad. F.*] If ever I were truly proud of my profession, madam, it is at this moment, when I am called upon to assault the powerful, and defend the helpless. [*To DE L'E.*] Sir, the faculties of life, body, and soul, while I possess them, shall be employed to serve him.

Mad F. Thank heaven! I shall see him reduced to his original insignificance at last.

Mar. Ah! poor St. Alme! Brother—

Fran. I don't forget St. Alme. Sir, I must now acquaint you, that this Darlemont is the father of my dearest friend. Delicacy, duty, require me to try persuasion, gentleness, and every milder method; should these fail with him, I shall be driven to expose his guilt, and publicly compel him to restore the rights which, I have cause to fear, he has so unaturally usurped. Where is your pupil?

De l'E. I left him at our lodgings; and his anxiety, no doubt, makes my absence seem long.

Fran. Dear sir, why didn't you bring him with you?

Mar. How impatient I am to see him!

Fran. Let me beg that you will use us like old friends, and accept apartments here.

De l'E. I am afraid—

Mad. F. Not, I hope, to do us pleasure and an honour?

De l'E. It is impossible to resist such goodness. Madam, I obey. [*DE L'EEPE and FRANVAL talk together.*]

Mad. F. Come, Marianne, we'll go and prepare for our young guest. Yes, yes, you shall have an answer; my son shall be your correspondent. Come, Marianne. [*Exit.*]

Mar. Brother, remember your friend. Your servant, sir. [*To DE L'EEPE.*] [*Exit.*]

Fran. Yes, sir; we shall have great difficulties to encounter in our way: the wealth and influence of Darlemont are formidable; his temper daring, haughty, and obstinate. Yet, in the First President, we have so upright and wise a judge to hear us, that, if truth and justice are on our side, our triumph is certain.

De l'E. I rely entirely on you. Let the result of our inquiry be what it may, to have done my duty, will be my consolation; and to have known you, sir, my recompense. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—The same Room in the Palace of Harancour.

Enter DARLEMONT, followed by PHILIPPE and ETIENNE, to whom he gives his hat and cane, and they retire.

Dar. My life is one continued scene of terror and disappointment. This undutiful, this headstrong boy! to refuse the match I had provided for him!

Thus to thwart my long-laboured plan for our security! But let the rebel dread the consequence of his disobedience.

Enter PIERRE.

Now, sir, where is your master?

Pie. I don't know, sir; but, indeed, I am very much afraid—

Dar. Afraid! Of what? Speak.

Pie. That he'll soon lose his senses, poor gentleman!

Dar. Blockhead!

Pie. He had such a wild look, when you turned away from him in the street just now. Do, good sir, pardon my boldness; do take this wedding into a little consideration.

Dar. Silence! Who were they you were chattering with so busily in the square, about an hour ago?

Pie. In the square? O! they were strangers.

Dar. How came they to examine and point at this house so often?

Pie. I don't know, sir; but one of them asked me whose that fine house was, and I said it had been the palace of Harancour.

Dar. You said?

Pie. Yes, sir; but that now it belonged to—

Dar. Babbling dunce!

Pie. I beg your pardon, sir; if I had been a babbler, I should have staid with them; but, no; I got away as fast as I could, that they might ask me no questions about you, sir.

Dar. About me! And why should you fear any questions being asked about me?

Pie. I'm sure, I don't know, sir.

Dar. Don't know! Tell me this moment, who put that thought into your head?

Pie. Upon my life, sir, you frighten me out of my wits! Why, sir, it was—

Dar. Who, who was it?

Pie. It was you yourself, sir, who ordered me not to talk of you, nor your affairs, to any body.

Dar. Well; and pray, what passed between them?

Pie. They kept that to themselves. They seemed to me to talk by signs.

Dar. By signs! Why talk by signs?

Pie. I can't tell, sir; only I guess that the young gentleman was dumb.

Dar. Dumb?

Pie. He surely was; at least I thought so.

Dar. Dumb! 'tis false.

Pie. No, indeed; you'll find it true, I believe, sir. *Dar.* Impossible. Was it the youth, do you say, that was dumb?

Pie. Yes, sir, the boy; and I was the more sorry for him somehow, because he is so very like—

Dar. Like whom?

Pie. So very like that picture of the young Count. And so—

Dar. And so! And what so? Officious fool! isn't the boy dead?

Pie. So I have heard, sir.

Dar. Heard, reptile! Do you dare to doubt, sir?

Pie. I, sir? No. Only this morning Dupré said that, perhaps, he was still alive.

Dar. When did he say so?

Pie. While we were looking at the picture.

Dar. Flames devour the picture! [*Aside.*] Let that picture be removed into my apartment.

Pie. Yes, sir. So I thought, if it should happen to be him, it might turn out to be a lucky discovery.

My master, thinks I—

Dar. Go; send them to remove that picture.

Pie. Yes, sir. It's very odd, all this. [*Exit.*]

Dar. Here I am countermined again. That picture I had painted at the moment of my departure, in order to impress an opinion of my affection for this boy, and so prevent suspicion. My very precautions work towards my detection.—Like the picture!—Dumb! No, no; it can't be. And yet—

Enter DUPRE, with a paper in his hand.

Now, sir; who sent for you? What want you here?

Dup. I come to unburthen a loaded conscience.

Dar. I'm busy; and can't be troubled.

Dup. I come to—[*Holding out a letter.*]

Dar. Did you hear me? I'm busy.

Dup. Sir, sir, you waste your anger on me: you have laid a crime on my soul, that annihilates the duties and distance of my calling: I cast off the servant, and assume the man.

Dar. What is it you mean by this insolence?

Dup. First, sir, please to take back the annuity you have sent me.

Dar. [*Snatching the paper.*] Take back! Is it not yet sufficient? I thought it beyond your hopes. Your conscience knows its price.

Dup. No, sir; you wrong me; 'twas when I had no conscience that I had a price.

Dar. Liar! You come to practise on me. You tattle! Gossip of sworn secrets! Perjuror—Go—point, and pretend to start at pictures—pernicious dotard! Conscience! 'tis false! No; 'tis to wring my purse, you act remorse, and feign this pity for a thing who, say the best, was but an idiot—an automaton.

Dup. Of me, sir, think what you will; I have deserved it; but in behalf of that injured youth, I must retort the falsehood.

Dar. You?

Dup. I.—Though speech and hearing were denied him, yet nature recompensed him with a mind that glowed with intelligence, and a heart that ran over with benevolence. And you, sir—is your heart so deadened by the injuries you have done him, that you forget it was this idiot saved the life of that most excellent young man, your only son? Did not Julio—regardless of danger to himself, and thoughtful only for St. Aline—when the fierce wolf had fastened on his throat, did he not bravely rend asunder his bloody jaws, receiving in his own arm a wound, so deep and dangerous, that the scar could never be effaced?

Dar. Silence, I charge you!

Dup. When I call to mind his infancy, his pretty looks, his fond kisses when I have borne him in my arms—and think how I yielded, weak and wicked as I was, to your temptations, and abandoned him to perish—poor helpless babe!—in a wide unpitied world—I could call for curses on my head, proclaim my guilt, and take delight in the abhorrence and punishment, with which men enraged, and the just laws, would pursue me to destruction!

Dar. Hence, raving visionary! The serpent that stung the friend that fostered him, paid with his life the forfeit of his ingratitude. [*Puts his hand on his sword.*] Coward, beware! Shall my honour stand in danger from your treachery?

Dup. Treachery has never entered my mind. Julio is gone, and the crime cannot be repaired; yet, the sincere repentance of a servant might claim respect from that master, who, after a blameless life of forty years, had seduced him to villainy.

Dar. Villainy!

Dup. My part was impious villainy: what yours

was—ask of the vexing thoughts that nightly take watch on the pillow of the wicked.

Dar. Urge me no further. Lectured by my slave!—a worm that crawls at the mercy of my foot! Because I have forborne, presume thou that I dare not strike? Hence! Here, take thy recompense: [*Offering him the paper.*] be thankful, and obedient; guard thy lips, or—

Dup. No; vile as you think me, my silence is not to be bought; my silence shall not be pensioned. Hitherto you are safe. Don't let your insult drive me to disclose you.

Dar. Here, here; and have done. [*Offering him the paper.*]

Dup. You are deceived. I was bribed, not by your gold, but by the wild vanity of sharing your confidence, your familiarity; and becoming, instead of him you call your slave, your friend.

Dar. Such you might have been.

Dup. No: there can be no friendship in guilt—'tis my doom to live in dread of you, and of my own reflections—'tis your's, to know that your honour and life are in the keeping of a man stung in conscience, distracted in mind; and by yourself rendered a wretch, infamous, and never more to be trusted. [*Exit.*]

Dar. Indeed! Do you grow so fast on us? Prevention or treachery—his life or mine. And shall I hesitate? A single blow will give me peace. Whither am I going? Peace! No, no, 'tis false: peace dwells only with innocence: yet to be led—exposed—a public malefactor—help heaven! shield me from the frenzy of these thoughts! [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*Franval's Study, as before.*

Enter MARIANNE.

Mar. Where can Dominique loiter all this while? When I told him, too, how anxiously I should wait for his return! My dear father valued his honest simplicity of heart: and he has lived among us so long, and so familiarly indulged, that he treats me with as little ceremony, as if he were guiding me in my leading-strings again. Ah! poor fellow! here he comes, quite out of breath. I beg his pardon—

Enter DOMINIQUE.

Well, my good, dear Dominique, have you seen St. Aline?

Dom. I was coming to tell you, ma'am. No, ma'am, he has not been at home since.

Mar. Unlucky! Never did I wish so earnestly to see him.

Dom. Lord, Lord, what a pity! Where is he? Where can he be? Ha, ha, ha! If he did but know how you are fretting about him, he'd fly on the wings of love—

Mar. I had forgot—Did you go to the poor widow?

Dom. Yes, true, ma'am; and gave her your present. Ha, ha! poor Claudine! she kissed the crowns because they had touched your hand; and blessed your sweet name a thousand and a thousand times.

Mar. Surely, you did not tell her that it came from me?

Dom. Lord, ma'am! I couldn't help it. To be sure, nobody, though I say it myself, can keep a secret better than I can; but, then—ha, ha! poor soul!—she begged, and prayed, and laughed, and cried: ha, ha! I reckon she'll be here in a minute to thank you.

Mar. I can't see her, Dominique. I'm too much disturbed. I'm not—It was very wrong, indeed.

Dom. Well, then, she sha'n't come. And yet, why should you be so ashamed of doing good? I'm sure, virtue should have somebody to shew it a little countenance now-a-days. Ah, poor Claudine! times are sadly changed with her since her good man, Blaise, was porter at the palace of Harancour. She wanted for nothing then. Ah! when Count Julio died, his uncle, Darlemont, turned away all the old servants; and, but for the charity of his son, I believe some of them might have starved, poor things! He has been very good to Claudine, too, and would have done more, but for fear of his father

Mar. Yes; the father is unlike the son.

Dom. Unlike! The one is as proud as the—and the other as mild as a May morning. O, he'd make an admirable master for one, he would: an excellent head of a family; and, above all, a most charming spouse. Don't you think so, ma'am?

Mar. Yes; I believe the woman of his choice—

Dom. That's done. His choice is made.

Mar. I've heard he's to be married to the great heiress, the President's daughter.

Dom. So have I.

Mar. Have you?

Dom. Yes. Ha, ha, ha! But he won't have her.

Mar. Dominique!

Dom. Lord, ma'am! you know very well, he loves somebody else.

Mar. [*Agitated.*] Are the apartments ready for our two guests?

Dom. I can do that in a minute, ma'am. Yes, yes, he—

Mar. Go, go; make haste; they are expected instantly. Go.

Dom. Well, well, I'm gone. [*Aside.*] No, never can make her own it. Ah! you cunning little hypocrite! Ha, ha! a girl in love is for all the world like the moon in a cloudy night; now out, now in: this moment clear as the day; and the next you're all in the dark again. [*Exit.*]

Mar. One would think that this old man took a pleasure in tormenting me. If this scholar of De l'Épée's should prove to be Count Julio, and recover the possessions he has been deprived of, St. Alme would then be only the equal of my fortune, and his father no longer, perhaps, see any distance between us. Ah! flattering Hope, you are too forward.

SONG.

(Written by M. G. Lewis, Esq.)

What, tho' Fate forbids me offer
Golden gifts from Fortune's store;
All I have to Love I proffer,
Fortune cannot offer more.

What, tho' bright the jewell'd treasure
Which Peruvian mines supply;
Brighter still the tear of pleasure
Sparkling in Affection's eye.

Hymen, in his power for ever,
Firm the god of hearts would hold;
Binding oft—ah, vain endeavour!
Love with Interest's chains of gold.

Soon their weight his strength o'erpowers;
Soon they crush the petty elf;
Love can bear no chains but flowers,
Light and blooming like himself.

Ah, me! Why is St. Alme out of the way? He must be prepared for this discovery—and yet, my mother!—Should Darlemont be softened, will she consent?

Enter Mad. FRANVAL and FRANVAL.

Mad. F. Don't tell me, son; don't tell me. This is my opinion: to hesitate to deliver up this usurper to the vengeance of the laws—to wink at such enormities—is to become an accomplice in them.

Fran. You will allow us first to prove them on him, madam. Besides, can I forget, that he is the father of my friend? [*Mad. F. turns away in great displeasure.*] Has Dominique been to St. Alme?

[*To MARIANNE.*]

Mar. Yes; but he hadn't been at home.

Mad. F. And to tell you my opinion further, son—after this letter, I very much disapprove of that young man's visits here.

Fran. Ought we to make him responsible for his father's faults?

Mar. Which he is so far from sharing, that he will devote his life to atone them. [*Mad. FRANVAL gives her a look of disapprobation.*] One need only look in his face, to be sure of it.

Mad. F. Oh! had the Seneschal been living now!

Fran. If only Darlemont were concerned, madam, I should, without regret, tear away his specious visor, and expose him bare-faced; such, however, are the prejudices of the world, that I cannot publish the guilt of the parent without reflecting the disgrace of his actions on his blameless son.

Mad. F. What, then, he is to escape after all?

Fran. Here's somebody coming. My dear madam—

Mar. Good mother—

Mad. F. Nay, nay—

Enter DE L'ÉPÉE, introducing THEODORE.

De l'E. In obedience to your kind commands, I present to you my adopted child, my Theodore. This, sir, is the orphan, whose story you have heard, and whose wrongs you will redress.

[*THEODORE, having saluted them with great vivacity, fixes his eyes on FRANVAL.*]

Mar. How intelligent and animated a look!

Mad. F. The perfect image of his late father!

De l'E. Do you say so, madam?

Mad. F. I see his father in him, at his age, as if he stood before me.

[*THEODORE, to whom DE L'ÉPÉE is attentive, points to FRANVAL; lays the fore-finger of his right hand on his forehead, and assumes an expression of genius; then darts his arm forward with force, grandeur, &c.*]

De l'E. Ay! he tells me, that he reads in your countenance the certainty of triumphing, and confounding his oppressor.

Fran. Yes; I have given him my promise, and will perform it.

[*THEODORE having touched his lips with a look of regret, seizes the hand of FRANVAL; holds it to his heart; and, with his other hand, beats quickly and often on the bosom of FRANVAL.*]

De l'E. Ah! that he could speak his gratitude! But, by the throbbings of his heart, he bids you learn, that your goodness to him will live there for ever. These are his true expressions.

Fran. Are you then so perfectly comprehensible to each other?

Mad. F. Are your signs so minutely accurate?

De l'E. As speech itself.

Mar. And does he understand everything you desire to express?

De l'E. You shall have proof of it this moment.

[*DE L'ÉPÉE taps THEODORE on the shoulder, to*

make him observe, rubs his forehead, then points to MARIANNE, and writes a line or two with his finger on the palm of his hand. THEODORE nods to DE L'EPEE; runs to the table, sits down, snatches up a pen, and shews that he is ready to write.] Now, madam, make what inquiry you please of him, he will copy it down from my action, and immediately give you his reply. He waits for you.

Mar. I really don't know what to—

Fran. Anything—anything.

Mad. F. Ay, ay, child; the first thing that comes into your head.

Mar. [After a moment's reflection.] In your opinion,—

De l'E. Speak slowly, and repeat the question, as if you were dictating to him yourself.

[THEODORE expresses that he attends to DE L'EPEE's signs.

Mar. In your opinion—

[DE L'E. makes a sign, THEO. writes.

Mar. Who is the greatest genius—

[DE L'E. makes a sign, THEO. writes.

Mar. That France has ever produced?

De l'E. [Makes a sign, THEO. writes.—Takes the paper from the table, and shews it to FRANVAL.] You see he has written the question distinctly.

[Returns the paper to THEO., who for a moment meditates.

Mar. He seems a little at a loss.

De l'E. I don't wonder at it; it's a delicate question.

[THEODORE starts from his reverie, looks affectionately at DE L'EPEE, wipes his eyes, and writes with the utmost rapidity.

Fran. Look, look! what fire sparkles in his eyes! What animation in every turn! I dare promise you, this will be the answer of a feeling heart, and an enlightened mind.

[THEODORE starts up; presents the paper to MARIANNE, and desires her to read it to the company. Mad. FRANVAL and FRANVAL look over MARIANNE as she reads; THEODORE runs to DE L'EPEE, and looks at him with fond curiosity.

Mar. [Reads.] "In your opinion, who is the greatest genius that France has ever produced?"

Mad. F. Ay; what does he say to that?

Mar. [Reads.] "Science would decide for D'Alembert, and Nature say, Buffon; Wit and Taste present Voltaire; and Sentiment pleads for Rousseau; but Genius and Humanity cry out for De l'Epée; and him I call the best and greatest of human creatures."

[MARIANNE drops the paper, and retires to a chair in tears. THEODORE throws himself into DE L'EPEE's arms. Mad. FRANVAL and FRANVAL look at each other in astonishment.

De l'E. [With an emotion which he strives to repress.] You must excuse him; 'tis a great mistake; but a very, very pardonable one.

Fran. [Takes up the paper, and examines it.] I can hardly credit what I see.

Mad. F. What do you think of this Darlemont now?

[THEODORE and Mad. FRANVAL go to MARIANNE.

Fran. This decision discovers an extent of acquirements, and shews a purity of taste, that—[To DE L'E.] What study, what pains, must it have cost you to accomplish such effects!

De l'E. To tell you what it has cost me, were impossible; but the bare thought of prompting to the

forgetfulness of nature; of calling forth the faculties of mind; this one persuasion gives strength, courage, and perseverance, to accomplish miracles. If the laborious husbandman, when he views a rich harvest waving over the lands he has fertilized, experiences a pleasure proportioned to his toils; judge what are my sensations when, surrounded by my pupils, I watch them gradually emerging from the night that overshadows them, and see them dazzled at the widening dawn of opening Deity, till the full blaze of perfect intellect informs their souls to hope and adoration. This is to new-create our brethren. What transport to bring man acquainted with himself! Enjoyments, I own, there may be, more splendid, more alluring; but I am sure that, in the wide round of our capacities, none will be found more true.

Fran. They are the just reward of such benevolence; and if my efforts—

Dom. [Without.] Come back, come back! I tell you, Claudine, you can't see her.

Clau. [Without.] I tell you I must and will see her, if I search the whole house after her.

Enter CLAUDINE, followed by DOMINIQUE.

Clau. [To Mad. F.] I beg pardon for being so bold—

Dom. [To MAR.] She slipped by, the back way, and got the start of me.

[THEODORE, on the entrance of CLAUDINE, appears struck with recollection of her; then falls in the most lively agitation; and signifies to DE L'EPEE that she was wife to the porter of the house he lived in, and had been his nurse. DE L'EPEE answers him in signs of surprise and joy.

Clau. [To FRANVAL.] Sir, I beg pardon; yet, when the heart is full—This dear young lady has been so good. [Kisses MARIANNE's hand.

Mad. F. What does all this mean, Marianne?

Mar. [Hesitating.] Madam—

Clau. Sweet saint! She blushes to speak her own good deeds. Ah! madam, this angel of a girl heard I was in distress, and has been for a long time my benefactress; I never knew what charitable hand was stretched to me, till this morning Dominique told me—

Dom. No, I didn't tell you; you coaxed it out of me. Come away, come away; you're a rare one to keep a secret! [Signs to her to be gone.

De l'E. Good woman! good woman!

Clau. Me, sir?

De l'E. You lived formerly in the palace of Harancour?

Clau. My husband was porter there nine-and-twenty years.

De l'E. Do you remember young Count Julio, your late master's son?

Clau. Remember him? I had him in my arms the very hour he was born. My lady died in childhood; I was his nurse—his mother, begging your pardon, I may say; and a sweet babe he was. I shall never forget him. His death was a hard pinch to us all. [Weeping.

[THEODORE gazes on her in great agitation. De l'E. [Takes THEODORE by the hand.] Did you ever see his face?

Clau. [Starting.] Merciful goodness! why sure—[THEODORE flings back the hair from his forehead, &c.

Clau. It is, it is he! it is young Count Juho himself!

[THEODORE, as she runs to him, and is falling at his feet, prevents, and kisses her.

Dom. Ha, ha! and there I had like not to have let her in.

De l'E. Providential encounter!

Fran. This may lead to other proofs.

Mad. F. And confound the insolent Darlemont. Now, son!

Clau. If my poor Blaise were but alive! But where has he been?—the dear boy! where has he—

De l'E. Hush! recollect yourself: are you so thoroughly convinced, that this is Julio of Harancour, that you dare solemnly attest it—

Clau. To the whole world; to men and angels; earth and heaven.

Fran. Can't you immediately, without letting them know what has passed, bring hither some others of the servants, who knew Count Julio in his infancy?

Clau. To be sure; there's the coachman's widow living still: and there's—

Dom. Ay, so there is; and there's Denys the groom besides, and his old wife; they don't live far off.

Mad. F. Fetch them this moment; fetch them all.

Dom. Come along, Claudine; come along.

[Going.

Fran. And—not a word, for your lives.

Dom. Oh! I know better than to chatter about what doesn't concern me. Long live Count Julio!

Fran. Dominique—

Dom. Oh! come along, Claudine.

[Exit DOMINIQUE and CLAUDINE.

Mad. F. There, there! make haste, make haste!

Mar. My dear madam, if they should discover—

Mad. F. Daughter, daughter, he must be punished for his ambition; his insolence must be humbled. Son, we'll leave you together. Come, we'll shew the Count of Harancour his apartment.

[Signs to THEODORE to go with her; he takes her hand. Exit Mad. FRANVAL, very ceremoniously; THEODORE nodding to DE L'EVEE; and MARIANNE, with an imploring look at FRANVAL.

Fran. I have already told you, the friendship that binds me to St. Alme imposes on me the duty of proceeding by the gentlest steps. I now propose, that we present ourselves at the palace of Harancour; there, jointly, and in private, we may attack this Darlemont; you, with the energy so good a cause inspires; and I, with all the terror of the laws. He must be more hardened and audacious than I think him, if he can withstand us.

De l'E. I agree: and a thought this instant strikes me, which, if he is not quite a monster, must insure our success.

[Exit.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—The Room in the Palace of Harancour: the picture being removed.

Enter DARLEMONT and PIERRE.

Dar. Go and inquire immediately. [Exit PIERRE.] Vain, groundless apprehensions, leave me! what an absurd propensity there is in man to be his own tormentor: to conjure up the wildest visions; to fancy the most frightful accidents; and shake the more, the more preposterous the terrors are which his imagination creates!

Re-enter PIERRE.

Pie. Sir, my master is not come in yet.

Dar. I suppose he's at Franval's, then.

Pie. No, sir, he's not; they sent here just now to inquire for him.

Dar. [Aside.] My son opposing all my wishes; my servant ready to betray me; whom can I trust in? my ambition is my curse; the moment I attained its object, my plague began. Where is Dupré?

Pie. Shut up in his own room.

Dar. Is anybody with him?

Pie. No, sir; I saw him go in alone, and heard the door lock.

[Going

Dar. Well, Pierre, have you seen anything more of these—

Pie. What, the strangers, sir?

Dar. So very like the—No, nothing. You may go. [Exit PIERRE.] Dumb! Like the picture! Should he be still alive; should some infernal accident have returned him hither. Well, how will he prove his story? His death is registered; that testimony no evidence but Dupré's can now invalidate; and him, too, I might set at defiance, and be at rest for ever, could I but link my interest to the President's by this marriage with his daughter: that would place me beyond the result of danger.

Enter St. ALME, who stands at a distance, as if not daring to approach his father.

I am on the rack, till it is accomplished.

St. A. Am I permitted, sir,—

Dar. Who's there?

St. A. I was told, sir, you wished to see me.

Dar. I do; and let me warn you, sir, that unless you come resolved to shew a proper sense of duty to your father, you have heard that wish for the last time. Tell me, where have you been all this morning?

St. A. My father, it is not in my nature to dissemble with you.—I come from the President's.

Dar. Ha! What was your business there, and without me?

St. A. To lay open my whole soul before him; to acquaint him from my own lips with my engagements to Marianne. [DARLEMONT starts.] Pardon me, sir. O, think how resistless must be the power that over-masters me, since it could hurry me to make this declaration, even at the risk of your displeasure!

Dar. [Stifling his rage.] Well, sir; what was his answer?

St. A. Noble, kind, and like himself. He gently told me, it would have been the pride of his heart, and the comfort of his declining years, to have seen me happy with his daughter; but that the choice I had made did me honour—

Dar. [Gradually giving way to his fury.] How!

St. A. And that the ties by which I was engaged to so worthy an object must be indissoluble.

Dar. [Bursting out.] Parricide! You have undone me. Vain, empty schemes of human foresight! I possess myself of my ne—of a vast inheritance: I devote it to your advancement; employ it to ally you with the most powerful and wealthy family in Languedoc; and, when I have succeeded in removing every prejudice, every obstacle, you dare to make a mockery of my solicitudes, and audaciously reject power, rank, fortune, for the interested attractions of a beggar, the seductive arts of a—

St. A. O, no; that she has fixed me her's, and her's alone, 'tis true: but, sir, 'twas without artifices,

as it was without design. Her enchanting loveliness, my father—her innocence, if possible, still more lovely: these are the seductions, these the arts, this virtuous girl has practised on me.

Dar. [*Bursting into tears.*] Short-sighted, foolish parents! for thankless children, thus to plunge yourselves in guilt and danger.

St. A. O, sir! [*Affectionately.*] Surely, you are in no danger?

Dar. [*Resolutely.*] No! I don't know that I am. Yet, should the world once suspect—

St. A. Who can live fairer in the opinion of the world?

Dar. He who lives fair in his own mind.

St. A. For heaven's sake, sir! what labours in your bosom?

Dar. O, misery! to think I have a son, and want a friend!

St. A. You rend my heart with these doubts. Honour me as a friend; shew me how I may serve my father; and let man and heaven renounce me, if I forget the duty of a son!

Dar. Do you speak this from your soul? May I depend on you?

St. A. Can it be a question, sir?

Dar. Then return to the President—

St. A. Ha!

Dar. Retrieve the mischief; apologise, plead, obtain his daughter.

St. A. Sir!

Dar. If you have the affection of a son—if you value the safety, life, and honour of your father—go.

St. A. Your agitation terrifies me. Tell me, I conjure you, tell me the cause of it.

Dar. Impossible! Think, 'tis no trivial cause that could induce me to plead by dark hints for a son's obedience.

St. A. Speak, sir; O, speak!

Dar. It is not to be told. Nothing but the support of rank, wealth, office, can secure me: the gulph of ruin gapes at my feet. I call on my son; him to whom I have given life; for whom I have risked life, infamy, and perdition. I once more call on him; save me, or never see me more. [*Exit.*]

St. A. Such guilt! Such danger! Can this be real? Impossible! 'Tis but a cruel artifice to extort my consent to this hated marriage. Unkind father! thus with suborned emotions, to practise on the affections of a son, who would die for you.

Enter PIERRE.

Pie. Sir, the porter says, Dominique was here just now in a great hurry to ask for you.

St. A. I come. Yes, Franval; my friend; my brother! Your advice and assistance are the only reliance left me. [*Exit.*]

Pie. And now for a little chat with Dupré about this picture. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—Franval's Study.

Enter Mad. FRANVAL, MARIANNE, DE L'ÉPÉE, and FRANVAL, with a paper in his hand.

Mad. F. Bless my soul! Where can they be? No news of these witnesses yet?

De l'E. We must have patience, madam.

Mad. F. This Dominique is so slow!

Fran. [*To DE L'ÉPÉE.*] How severe is the duty you have imposed on me! Must I present the accusation of the father of St. Alme? My heart bleeds at the thought!

De l'E. Would he had been less criminal, and Theodore less injured!

Mad. F. No, no; his punishment cannot be too sudden, nor too public.

Fran. Think of his virtuous son:

Mar. Who, innocent of his crimes, would share in his disgrace.

De l'E. Besides, madam, we must remember that he still is my poor boy's uncle; his mother's brother.

Mad. F. How the Count of Harancour could stoop to marry into such a family; and then, to make this wretch his eventual heir!

De l'E. Integrity and honour, it may be, governed his life, till this temptation overpowered him; at least, under that persuasion, madam, I would first try, whether he may not still be reclaimable by lenient means.

Fran. On that I am fixed.

Mad. F. Remember, I tell you, he'll treat all your sentiments, and your lenient means, with contempt.

Enter ST. ALME, dejected.

Fran. Then, madam—St. Alme! I wished to see you. [*Talks apart with* ST. ALME.

De l'E. [*To MARIANNE.*] Is this his son?

Mar. Yes, sir.

Mad. F. Daughter!

[*Exit* Mad. F., looking disdainfully at ST. A.

Mar. [*To DE L'E.*] O, sir, speak with him; acquaint yourself with the virtues of his heart, then ask your own, whether ignominy be his desert!

[*Exit in tears.*]

Fran. [*To DE L'E.*] My friend requests a moment's conversation.

De l'E. Honour and persuasion sit on his brow; trust him at once; his father will never be able to resist him.

Fran. You judge him by yourself.

De l'E. Try everything. Theodore shall know that his cousin is here. [*Exit.*]

Fran. St. Alme, why are your looks so sad?

St. A. My distresses double every moment, and are inexplicable. The stern reserve, in which my father has so long wrapped himself, is suddenly changed to terrors that distract him.

Fran. [*Aside.*] Indeed!

St. A. The horror of his thoughts seems agonizing. To me he appeals for safety; yet mysteriously hides from me the cause of his alarm: by the sacred names of son and friend; with prayers, with tears, and solemn warnings, I am adjured to shield a father from perdition.

Fran. [*Aside.*] Surely he cannot have heard— [*To* ST. ALME.] What are the means?

St. A. The means? The sacrifice of friendship, happiness, and love. O, heaven, can this be just? And yet, he is my father.

Fran. Ay, would he were not!

St. A. Hold, hold, Franval! If you are my friend, no wish like that.

Fran. I am your friend: and have an office to discharge, that might better suit your bitterest enemy.

St. A. No word against my father; or, here for ever—

Fran. Be calm, and hear me. You had a cousin, Julio, Count of Harancour?

St. A. You know I had.

Fran. St. Alme, I cannot proceed; I cannot tell you; yet you must know it, for all your sakes.

St. A. Speak out at once.

Fran. I want the courage to reveal it.

St. A. Speak; what of Julio?

Fran. You loved him.

St. A. Dearly as my own life.

Fran. You would not see him wronged.

St. A. What mean you? Wronged! Who wrongs him? 'Tis eight years and more, since Julio died in Paris.

Fran. Ay, in the report of guilt.

St. A. Sir, in the report of Darlemont. Wronged! He died in Paris.

Fran. No, no.

St. A. Whither would these dark insinuations tend? Merciful heaven! add not to my miseries, that of hating the brother of Marianne! Julio—

Fran. Is still alive.

St. A. Franval! you are deceived; the attestation of his death is in my father's hands. Dupré was present in his last moments, and is a surviving witness to it.

Fran. Indeed! Then let your own eyes judge between us. Look, who comes here. Darlemont declares Count Julio dead; I, Franval, present him living. There—

Enter DE L'ÉPÉE and THEODORE.

St. A. All gracious heaven! Do my eyes deceive me? Risen from the dead! It is, it is—

[THEODORE, after they have gazed a moment on each other, utters a shriek of joy, and rushes into ST. ALME's arms.

De l'É. No, you are not deceived. He calls you friend; he speaks to you in smiles and tears, the language of the heart—his only language.

St. A. Can this be real? I know not yet. Speechless! it must, it must be he—my long lost, dear, lamented Julio! And yet, stand off awhile, and let me gaze till I have satisfied my doubts.

[THEODORE affected at ST. ALME's putting him away, hastily recollects himself, bares his right arm, and points to the scar upon it. ST. ALME bursting into tears, runs to him, and kisses the scar.

St. A. That scar!

De l'É. O, nature, nature, how resistless is thy eloquence!

Fran. St. Alme, compose yourself; I shudder for the final close of this discovery.

St. A. It is, it is my Julio. Friend! companion! preserver of my life! I'm lost in joy and wonder. To whom are we indebted for this strange blessing?

Fran. To him; to the benevolence of De l'Épée.

St. A. De l'Épée! has Julio been an object of your generous pity? O, sir, I cannot thank you. [Kisses DE L'ÉPÉE's hand.] Come, come, my dear Julio; [To DE L'ÉPÉE.] my father's gratitude shall bless you; how will he rejoice at this event! Let us haste to him; he has been much altered since your loss; your presence shall dispel all gloom, and his heart dance with transport to behold you.

Fran. Hold, hold, one moment.

Mad. F. [Within.] Come in, come in, Dupré; he is here—it's all true.

Fran. Dupré!

[Looking at ST. ALME.

Dup. [Within.] Where is he? Let me see him, let me see him.

Enter Mad. FRANVAL and DUPRE.

Fran. How has he learned—

Dup. No; Pierre was not mistaken. O, Julio, Julio!

[Throws himself at THEODORE's feet.

Mad. F. We expect the other servants every moment.

St. A. All overjoyed to hear of his return.

THEODORE instantly recollects DUPRE, shrinks from him, and explains to DE L'ÉPÉE who he is.

Dup. Now I have seen him once again, let me but ask forgiveness, and expire at his feet.

De l'É. [To ST. A.] This man seems strangely agitated.

St. A. Forgiveness! What does he mean? He was his favourite servant, and attended Julio, when my father carried him to Paris.

Dup. [Starting up.] Yes, I am that ungrateful viper; that villain who became the accomplice of an act—He lives, however, and I can now substantiate the truth. Drag me away; I am ready. Deliver me and my seducer to the just punishment of our crimes.

De l'É. You went with him to Paris about eight years ago?

Dup. Yes, yes—with Darlemont, with Darlemont!

St. A. With Darlemont! What then?

Fran. St. Alme! St. Alme!

St. A. Rack me not thus, but speak.

Dup. I must; and may my true confession and remorse find acceptance there [Pointing to heaven.] towards the remission of my guilt.

De l'É. Be but sincere, it will. Go on.

Dup. The very evening we reached Paris, your father, pointing to a small trunk, sternly ordered me to dress his nephew in those clothes; it contained a beggar's wretched covering.

[ST. ALME starts back, and turns away a moment, hiding his face.

Mad. F. The very rags they brought him to you in.

Dup. Muffled in these tatters, shrouded by midnight darkness, my master hurried him away; and, till this moment, I never saw him more.

St. A. Strike me with deafness, heaven!

Mad. F. Why didn't you immediately accuse him? He might have murdered the poor child for aught you knew.

Dup. At first, I feared it. Pressed and overpowered by my suspicions on his return alone, he owned that he had put in execution the design which brought him to Paris, and under shelter of the night, had lost the disguised and helpless innocent beyond recovery, in the inextricable mazes of that wide city.

Mad. F. Thank heaven, he'll find himself disappointed and detected.

De l'É. Madam—Well, sir—

Dup. In order to possess himself of the estates of the young Count, it still was necessary that he should prove his death. Two witnesses were wanting; seduced by gold, one, since dead, was the poor wretch we lodged with.

Fran. The other—was yourself; and by this dark and perjured attestation—

St. A. His name annihilated, his rich inheritance purloined, his death a forgery, and my own father the perpetrator! Saints of heaven, guard my soul from desperation! Already the licentious rabble point at me as I pass; I hear them cry,—“There goes the monster, the unnatural villain, who conspired to rob his noble kinsman, the friend of his youth, the saviour of his life, and turned him forth, naked and speechless, on a desert and unpeopled world.”

De l'É. Listen, sir, listen for a moment to a stranger, who views the dignity of your sorrow with reverence, and the severity of your fate with compassion; be just to yourself: you are not guilty.

St. A. Compassion? O heaven! Am I not his son? Not guilty? I'll hear of no compassion. Proclaim our crimes; clothe us in the same infamy; overwhelm us in one common ruin; raise monuments

to perpetuate the villainy of the house of Darlemont; let the name be recorded as pestilential to virtue, and the race exterminated from the world for ever.

[*St. ALME throws himself in an agony on a chair.*

THEODORE, to whom DE L'EPÉE has explained DUPRÉ's confession, endeavours by every means to console him.]

Dup. Since that fatal deed, my horror and remorse have never given me one moment's peace. But heaven is just; it has preserved this noble youth, and sends me to unload my conscience at the tribunal of the laws. Deliver me this moment to them. I know the punishment that awaits me, and am resigned to it; too blest at last, if in confessing and expiating the crimes to which I have been an accomplice, I can repair the evils they have caused.

St. A. [*Starting up, as if with a sudden thought, and rushing forward between DE L'EPÉE and FRANVAL.*] Yes, yes—they must be repaired. Follow me, wretched old man.

Fran. St. Alme, where are you going?

St. A. Where despair calls me.

De l'E. Look on your Julio.

St. A. The sight of him drives me to madness.

Fran. What is your design?

St. A. To avenge him, or die.—Come, villain.

[*Exit St. ALME, dragging DUPRÉ away with him—DUPRÉ looking back on THEODORE.*

Fran. I must follow and detain him; or, in this madness of conflicting passions, he may publish his father's crimes, and defeat our very hope to save him from such dishonour. [*Exit.*

Mad. F. We follow you. Well, this St. Alme is a very good young man, upon my word; and, though he is Darlemont's son, I can't help being concerned for him, I protest.

De l'E. Franval speaks highly of his virtues and his honour. Ah! thou poor reed, shaken so long by storms! How this eventful day may end for thee, heaven knows! But come, my Theodore, should an unfeeling uncle persist in renouncing thee, should the laws reject thy appeal, thou shalt still find a warm, though humble, asylum, in the affection of De l'Epée. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Room in the palace of Harancour. The picture having been removed.*

Enter PHILIPPE, PIERRE, CHARLES, and ETIENNE.

Pie. Nay, nay, don't be in such a hurry. Friends! fellow servants! what have I done? what have I done?

Phil. Nay, nay, no hanging back—you must come to my master.

Cha. Come along, come along.

Pie. Let me go, I say. I am coming along; but you have a mind to strangle me before I get there. Hands off, gentlemen! [*Disengages himself from them.*] I won't be dragged in this manner, like a lamb to a slaughter-house. What's the meaning of this? What's the matter, I say?

Phil. O, poor innocent creature; you'll know what the matter is, sooner than you desire, I fancy. You must always act the great man; you must affect to be in all your young master's secrets.

Pie. I! I wish I may be hanged if I know any of his secrets.

Eti. Ay, ay; so you say. You call us wretched plodders, you know. What do you think of us now? My master has been in a fine rage about you and Dupré; you must be tattling.

Pie. Tattling?

Eti. Ay, you have been telling Dupré something or other.

Pie. Me! upon my soul, I—

Phil. Well, well, it doesn't signify; whatever it was, it drove Dupré into the square, raving like a madman, and my master has been raving ever since. He has almost murdered the porter, I can tell you, for letting Dupré out,—against his express orders, it seems.

Pie. Letting him out! and why not? where is he gone?

Eti. I fancy, that's the very thing my master wishes to know.

Pie. Is it? I'm sure then he wishes to know more than I can tell him.

Phil. Ay, ay, that's your business; but he'll find a way to make you tell him, I believe.

Pie. Make me tell! None of your impertinence, if you please, sir.

Eti. Don't make a fool of yourself, but come quietly with us; we shall all be finely handled for staying so long.

Pie. Handled, indeed! Come, I like that, too: handled!

Phil. Don't be too flippant, friend Pierre; he's in a most unmerciful humour, I promise you. Come.

Pie. This is all about that confounded picture, I suppose. My cursed curiosity will be the ruin of me at last.

Phil. Eti. Cha. Come away! come away!

Pie. Well, well; friends, fellow-servants, gentlemen! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Saloon in the palace of Harancour, in which the picture is now placed.*

Enter DARLEMONT.

Dar. Doubt, horror, and distraction! Where now can I look for support? my son estranged from me! Dupré a fugitive! All torments that disobedience, treachery, and self-condemnation can conjure up, beleaguer and confound me! [*A noise without.*]

Enter PHILIPPE.

Now, sir.

Phil. We have brought him, sir: Pierre is at the door.

Dar. So! he's in the plot, too. Bring him in. [*Exit PHILIPPE.*] Down, thronging apprehensions, down! I shall betray myself.

Enter PIERRE, PHILIPPE, ETIENNE, and CHARLES.

Tell me, sirrah! whether is he fled?

Pie. Fled, sir! Who, sir?

Dar. No prevarication, rascal!—the hypocritical comploter of your schemes. Speak! Dupré,—where is he?

Pie. If you'll believe me, sir, I can't tell.

Dar. I'll not believe you, villain! I'll have the truth, though I tear it out of your heart. I know you went to him into his room: deny that too.

Pie. Went to him in his—yes, yes, I did, I believe,—I did, sir.

Dar. [*Seizing him.*] What was your business with him, then?

Pie. [*Very much frightened.*] As I hope for mercy, sir, I only went, after you ordered me to take away the young Court's picture, just to—

Dar. [*Perceiving the other servants, he recovers himself.*] Go; I'll call you, when I have done with him.

[*Exit PHILIPPE, ETIENNE, and CHARLES; DARLEMONT pulls the door very violently.*]

Pie. Sir, I see I have done something that alarms you.

Dar. Alarms me!

Pie. That displeases you; I read it in your looks: but what it is, I protest I know no more than I do what is become of Dupré.

Dar. [*Having composed himself.*] I'm not displeased; you are mistaken. Come, tell me honestly what passed between you.

Pie. Why, nothing, sir; only, at first, when I said something about your bidding me remove the picture, he shook his head, with a deep groan. So, to spirit him up a little, I told him,—as I told you, sir,—that I had seen a young gentleman in the morning, a stranger, who seemed deaf, and dumb too, as like that picture, as if he had sat for it.

Dar. [*Very eagerly.*] What did he say to that?

Pie. Not one single word, sir; but all the blood flew into his face in a moment, and he sunk on the table, weeping bitterly; then he waved his hand so, and I left him.

Dar. [*Aside.*] Ha! he has revealed nothing yet. You have seen nothing of him since, then?

Pie. No, sir.

Dar. Nor of the strangers?

Pie. Nothing, sir.

Dar. Leave me.

Pie. [*Aside.*] And glad to be so cheaply quit, too. What is the meaning of all this rout? I durst not own that I told Dupré the strangers were at Franval's. [*Going.*]

Dar. And—stay within call. [*Exit PIERRE.*] I know not what to think, nor what course to take. Is this fellow's account true, or false? am I betrayed, or not?—nor dare I tax him too closely; that would excite suspicion. Horrible uncertainty! O, let no man ever trust himself into the path of guilt! it is a labyrinth beset with dismay and remorse, and not to be retord without a miracle! Yet I think, for his own sake, I think, Dupré will not divulge me. No, no, this sudden start is but the restlessness of his sickly conscience.

Re-enter PIERRE.

Pie. Sir, the Advocate Franval begs the favour of a few moments' private conversation with you.

Dar. Franval! With me, or with my son?

Pie. With you he said, sir.

Dar. Tell him, I beg his pardon: I'm particularly engaged. [*Exit PIERRE.*] He comes to torture me on his side; to prattle to me of his sister, and the match they have so craftily settled with St. Alme: but I shall counterwork their project. My son is good and dutiful, and loves me; and, though he could withstand my commands, I know he cannot long be proof to my intreaties; and the alliance I have provided, is the only imaginable means of securing me and himself against all turns of fortune.

Re-enter PIERRE.

Pie. I beg pardon, sir; the Advocate Franval has sent me back to inform you, that he has immediate business of the first importance, and that the Abbé De l'Epée, from Paris, is with him.

Dar. [*Starts.*] Who?

Pie. The Abbé De l'Epée.

Dar. What! the instructor of the deaf and dumb?

Pie. I don't know, sir; but I dare say it is; for it's the very gentleman that stopped me with the young stranger in the square this morning.

Dar. [*Having paced once or twice across the room in great agitation.*] Desire them to walk up. [*Exit PIERRE.*] He in Toulouse! accompanied by a youth, speaking by signs, pointing out this house, and like the picture! I'll not believe it. What! after so many years? Yet, wherefore should this very man address himself to me? I must command myself; and by a firm and calm exterior, baffle the keenest scrutiny of suspicion. I hear them. Be their errand what it may, my resolution's fixed. Defiance is a champion whose vigour may be dreaded; but Fear, a recreant destined to fall by the very sword which he surrenders. They come; I must withdraw one moment. [*Exit.*]

Re-enter PIERRE, introducing FRANVAL and DE L'EPEE. Pierre places chairs, and exit.

Fran. Pray, sir, remember; not one word of Dupré. I know him well; to find his servant his accuser, would rouse his pride to fury, and render all our endeavours to serve him, and in him my friend, ineffectual. No hint of Dupré's evidence, unless he absolutely drives us to desperate measures, I beg.

De l'E. I shall observe.

Re-enter DARLEMONT—DARLEMONT and DE L'EPEE eye each other stedfastly. FRANVAL presents DE L'EPEE.

De l'E. Your servant, sir.

[*DARLEMONT bows to them, points to the chairs, and they all sit; DARLEMONT in the centre, evidently struggling with his alarm.*]

Dar. You desire, I am told, to speak with me in private. May I ask what motive—

De l'E. The deep interest we both take in the honour of the father of St. Alme, and the solemn obligation we are at the same time under to fulfil an act of justice; these, sir, are the motives on which we judged it proper to request this interview in private.

Dar. [*Embarrassed.*] Does any man suppose my honour, then, in question?

Fran. A moment's patience, sir.

De l'E. You are the uncle, and were left the guardian of Julio, Count of Harancour.

Dar. [*Shocked.*] Well, sir!

De l'E. Of that unhappy youth, who was deprived by death of the watchful affection of his parents, and by nature left destitute of that distinctive prerogative of man, the power of appealing against injustice and oppression!

Dar. [*Haughtily.*] Oppression, sir?

De l'E. Ha! then you conceive my meaning?

Dar. [*Checking himself.*] If you have business, state it plainly.

De l'E. Do you desire it?

Dar. What means—

De l'E. Are you prepared for plain and honest speaking?

Dar. I'm not prepared for rude interrogation.— [*Rises to go away.*]

Fran. [*Rises and stops him.*] Listen one instant, and, perhaps, what he has spoken will hardly be construed thus.

Dar. Damnation! [*Aside.*] To the point at once.

De l'E. [*Rises.*] With all my soul. In one plain word then, learn, that chance, or rather that good Power that governs chance and the destiny of man, first placed your nephew, Julio, in my hands. This defrauded orphan, whose misfortunes should have

doubled the tenderness of his natural protector towards him; this outcast, deaf and dumb, is still alive; and by our mouths now demands of you the restitution of his name and fortune.

Dar. [After a convulsion of his whole frame.] Lives, do you say? still lives? You will not wonder if I am astonished, while I listen to fables such as these.

De l'E. No, sir; struck as I see you are by this discovery, my only wonder is, that your emotions are not more terrible.

Dar. And who are you, who arrogantly presume to interpret looks? You, who attribute the crimes you first invent for sordid, selfish ends, and dare pronounce men guilty in the face of proof?

Fran. Not so; the proofs are ours.

Dar. Away! my nephew died in Paris.

Fran. Are you sure of that?

De l'E. Recollect, sir, that he is your nephew, and let your conscience answer. Were you present in his expiring moments? dare you deliberately affirm you saw him dead?

Dar. And do you know the man to whom you put these dishonourable and malignant questions?

Fran. Far otherwise:—we come not with malignity, but with sincere solicitude to save the father of St. Alme, the uncle of Julio, from public ignominy, and inevitable impending ruin.

Dar. Begone! And if you are vain enough to think your brawling eloquence has power to overthrow the credit and character of Darlemont, to annul a legal act, a formal register of death, exert that power: I hurl defiance at you.

Fran. Rush not on your destruction. Confide in us; and believe that, next to those just claims of which I am the assertor, nothing, no nothing, can be more sacred to me than the honour of the father of my friend.

Dar. My heart throws back the imputation. I dare your malice to produce one proof, that this supposititious founding is the descendant of the house of Harancour.

De l'E. A thousand! The time when he was found; his transport on re-entering this the loved place of his nativity; his emotion on first seeing this house,—

Fran. His infirmity; his striking likeness to the late President, his father; the declaration of poor Claudine;—

De l'E. His own declarations.

Dar. His declarations!

De l'E. His,—Be not too obstinately incredulous.

Fran. Yes; fostered by his humanity, and guided by his lessons, Julio has found in De l'Epée a more than father: genius has compensated the wrongs that nature did him, and made him, even in dumbness, eloquently intelligible.

Dar. Concerted fraud and artifice! I know my holds of safety, and despise your menace. His death is registered.

De l'E. Suppose that register a forgery.

Dar. [Aside.] So; then the villain has betrayed me!

De l'E. It staggers him; we triumph. [Aside to FRANVAL.] I see, your lips are ready to avow the secret of your heart. O, for your own sake, listen to the charities of nature.

Fran. Free yourself at once from the torments that too long have burrowed in your bosom.

Dar. Why do I submit to the ascendancy these men assume over me?

Fran. [Taking his hand.] Yield to our friendship.

De l'E. [Taking his other hand.] Yield to our prayers.

Dar. Leave me, I say—begone! Never will I acknowledge this impostor! [Going.]

Enter St. Alme.

St. A. O, my father, have compassion on me!—on yourself! my cousin Julio—

Dar. What, you conspire against me! St. Alme! St. Alme!

St. A. If I was ever dear to you—

Dar. Peace, fool! Join to calumniate your father, and defraud yourself!

[DE l'EPÉE sends FRANVAL out; he returns immediately.]

St. A. Do not, do not aggravate our dishonour! Relent, relent! Let me not hate myself by knowing that your affection for me led you into crimes, at which your soul revolts. Have I not witnessed the agonies of your despair—the horrors of your self-accusation? O, sir, do not make it believed that you justify the deeds, which I know you abhor.

Dar. Hence! for ever leave me! I can maintain my rights, though I am deserted by an unnatural son.

St. A. Since you will drive me from you, sir, I go—Enjoy your riches; but enjoy them in cheerless solitude: no child, no friend to share them. Where I shall hide this dishonoured head, I know not. But to haunt with savages, or dwell with lepers, will be paradise to that board, where a son and father must daily meet, blackened with mutual guilt, and consciously living under each other's contempt. [Going.]

Dar. Stay, ruffian! monster!—No, begone—league with the assassins of your father, and of your own hopes; I shall find means to confront you all. [Going.]

Enter Madame FRANVAL, THEODORE, and MARIANNE.

St. A. Confront this witness, too.

[Points to THEODORE.]

Dar. [Turns round and sees THEODORE.] Horror! madness! Hide me from his sight!

St. A. Turn to him—take him to you: his looks speak blessings and forgiveness.

Dar. To be disgraced—never! This is the very crisis of my fate, and I will stand the event. I do look on him. Is this your instrument? I know him not. And you at once decide your choice—Him, or me, you must renounce this instant.

[To St. ALME.]

St. A. Put me not to so severe a trial.

Dar. Enough—'Tis past—Farewell for ever.

[Going.]

St. A. [Falls on his knees, and catches DARLEMONT.] In the name of all that's sacred, my father! You heed me not!—You fly me!—Look on me, father!—For all our sakes—relent, relent!

Dar. Never, never.

St. A. O! sir! sir—I must be heard.

[Exit DARLEMONT in the greatest agony, dragging St. ALME on his knees. THEODORE all this while in the greatest agitation.]

De l'E. Obdurate man! Be still, be still, poor boy, you shall have justice yet.

Mad. F. Now, son; can you any longer hesitate? *Fran.* No; I should become criminal myself, if I delayed the execution of the trust reposed in me; this dreadful memorial must instantly be preferred.

[Takes the accusation from his pocket.]

Mar. Then we are lost for ever.

Enter DOMINIQUE and CLAUDEINE.

Mad. F. Well, Dominique: well, Claudine! Heyday! where are your companions?—What, have you brought none of the old servants with you?

Dom. It isn't for want of searching for them, madam. First, we called at Denys, the groom's;—he and his old wife went out early in the morning, nobody knows where.

Clau. Then we went to the coachman's widow.

Dom. She was gone to pass the day at her cousin's in the country. However, we told all the neighbours to be sure to tell them they were wanted, the moment they came back.

Fran. You took care to conceal the motive of our sending for them?

Dom. O, to be sure. You'll never catch me blabbing, when I'm trusted with a secret.

Fran. 'Tis well; wait without.

[*Exeunt DOMINIQUE and CLAUDINE.*]

The facts this paper contains will, I doubt not, excite the immediate attention and zeal of the magistrates. We must be gone. If St. Alme returns in our absence, calm and console him, I beseech you! You, Marianne, particularly—you, my sister, tell him what I undergo. But, come; a single moment of delay may—

[*A noise within.*]

Mar. Hark! hark! What noise?

De l'E. It is St. Alme.—Good heaven! in what agitation! in what alarm!

[*Enter ST. ALME.*]

St. A. O, sir!—My friend!—[*Falls on FRANVAL.*]

Fran. St. Alme!—Speak—speak—

St. A. My father—

Fran. Heavens!

St. A. My father—

De l'E. Go on.

St. A. Distracted by Julio's wrongs—I ran, I burst into the chamber with my father—Dupré followed, and at once owned he had revealed all to you; and was resolved (unless he did the young Count justice) by a public confession to make him the partner of his punishment. My father shuddered—maddening and agonized I drew my sword, and vowed, if he persisted to refuse his acknowledgment of Julio, that moment to expire on its point before his eyes. The dread of indelible disgrace—the cry of my despair—the horror of my death, prevailed—nature triumphed—my father relented—and with a trembling hand—there, there—

[*Gives DE L'ÉPÉE a paper.*]

De l'E. [Reads.] “I do acknowledge Theodore, the pupil of De l'Épée, to be Julio, the lawful Count of Harancour; and am prepared immediately to reinstate him in all his rights. Darlemont.” To thee, all-gracious heaven, be endless praise and thanks!

[*Gives the paper to THEODORE.*]

Fran. [Tearing the accusation to pieces.] From what a load is my heart relieved!

[*THEODORE, having read the paper, throws himself at DE L'ÉPÉE's feet, and kisses him; rises transported, and embraces FRANVAL: then running towards ST. ALME, pauses, as if struck by some sudden thought; looks stead-*

fastly at him, and runs to the table, where he writes something under DARLEMONT's declaration.]

Fran. What would he do? What is his design?

De l'E. I know not.

Mad. F. He seems extremely moved.

Mar. How the tears stream from his eyes!

[*THEODORE returns to ST. ALME, takes one of his hands and places it on his heart, then gives what he has been writing into his other hand, and makes signs to him to read it.*]

St. A. [Reads.] “Half of my fortune must be yours, St. Alme—if you refuse me, I here vow again to disappear, and never more be heard of. From our cradles we were accustomed to share every good, like brothers—and I can never be happy at the expense of my friend.” Still the same noble Julio!

[*Embraces THEODORE.*]

De l'E. This single act overpays all I have done for him.

Mad. F. The very spirit of the old count.—He's his father's own son.

St. A. O, that I could efface the memory of thy wrongs! How shall I ever bear the weight of that recollection?

De l'E. [Looking at MARIANNE.] If this young lady would but kindly condescend to take a title to assist you, you might, perhaps—

Mad. F. Nay, nay; reflect, sir, that such an union would—

De l'E. Bless, for ever bless, two virtuous hearts, that heaven formed for each other, and make the happiness of this fortunate day complete.

Mad. F. I protest, I can't—really I don't know—

Fran. I am sure, madam—

Mad. F. Upon my word, son, you seem to persuade me to anything. [To ST. ALME.] You need not speak, sir; [To MARIANNE.] no, nor you, Marianne. The matter has been settled among you, I see, and now you pretend to ask my approbation: though, after that letter, I assure you, if you had not found a friend to whose intercession nothing can be refused, I should not have been prevailed with to give my consent.

[*THEODORE, after a sign from DE L'ÉPÉE, kisses MARIANNE, and gives her hand to ST. ALME.*]

St. A. O, joy unutterable!—

Mar. How are we all beholden to your goodness!

De l'E. 'Tis to the prudence of your brother, and to the fortitude of St. Alme, we owe our final triumph. [To ST. ALME.] Consoled by love, by friendship, and a father's return to virtue, all cause of regret may well be forgotten, sir; and let us hope, that the example of this protected orphan, may terrify the unjust man from the abuse of trust, and confirm the benevolent in the discharge of all the gentle duties of humanity.

[*Exeunt.*]

THE PADLOCK;

A COMIC OPERA, IN TWO ACTS,

BY ISAAC BICKERSTAFF.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DON DIEGO
LEANDER
MUNGO
Two Scholars.

LEONORA
URSULA.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Garden belonging to Don Diego's House.*

Enter DON DIEGO, musing.

AIR.—DIEGO.

Thoughts to council—let me see—

Hum—to be, or not to be

A husband, is the question.

A cuckold! must that follow?

Say what men will,

Wedlock's a pill,

Bitter to swallow,

And hard of digestion.

But fear makes the danger seem double:

Say, Hymen, what mischief can trouble

My peace, should I venture to try you?

My doors shall be lock'd,

My windows be block'd;

No male in my house,

Not so much as a mouse;

Then horns, horns, I defy you.

Enter URSULA.

Dieg. Ursula!

Urs. Here, an't please your worship.

Dieg. Where is Leonora?

Urs. In her chamber, sir.

Dieg. There is the key of it; there the key of the best hall; there the key of the door upon the first flight of stairs; there the key of the door upon the second; this double locks the hatch below; and this the door that opens into the entry.

Urs. I am acquainted with every ward of them.

Dieg. You know, Ursula, when I took Leonora from her father and mother, she was to live in the house with me three months; at the expiration of

which time, I entered into a bond of four thousand pistoles, either to return her to them spotless, with half that sum for a dowry, or make her my true and lawful wife.

Urs. And, I warrant you, they came secretly to inquire of me, whether they might venture to trust your worship. Lord! said I, I have lived with the gentleman nine years and three quarters, come Lammas, and never saw anything uncivil by him in my life; nor no more I ever did; and to let your worship know, if I had, you would have mistaken your person; for I bless heaven, though I'm poor, I'm honest, and would not live with any man alive that should want to handle me unlawfully.

Dieg. Ursula, I do believe it; and you are particularly happy, that both your age and your person exempt you from any such temptation. But, be this as it will, Leonora's parents, after some little difficulty, consented to comply with my proposal; and, being fully satisfied with their daughter's temper and conduct, which I wanted to be acquainted with, this day being the expiration of the term, I am resolved to fulfil my bond, by marrying her to-morrow.

Urs. Heaven bless you together.

Dieg. During the time she has lived with me, she has never been a moment out of my sight: and now tell me, Ursula, what you have observed in her?

Urs. All meekness and gentleness, your worship; and yet, I warrant you, shrewd and sensible; egad! when she pleases, she can be as sharp as a needle.

Dieg. You have not been able to discover any particular attachments?

Urs. Why, sir, of late I have observed—

Dieg. Eh! how! what!

Urs. That she has taken greatly to the young kitten.

Dieg. O! is that all?

Urs. Ay, by my faith! I don't think she is fond of anything else.

Dieg. Of me, Ursula?

Urs. Ay, ay, of the kitten, and your worship, and her birds, and going to mass. I have taken notice of late, that she is mighty fond of going to mass, as your worship lets her, early of a morning.

Dieg. Well! I am now going to her parents, to let them know my resolution. I will not take her with me, because, having been used to confinement, and it being the life I am determined she shall lead, it will be only giving her a bad habit. I shall return with the good folks to-morrow morning; in the

meantime, Ursula, I confide in your attention; and take care, as you would merit my favour.

Urs. I will, indeed, your worship; there is not a widow gentlewoman in all Salamanca fitter to look after a young maiden.

Dieg. Go, and send Leonora to me. [*Exit* *URSULA.*] I dreamt last night that I was going to church with Leonora to be married, and that we were met on the road by a drove of oxen. Oxen; I don't like oxen! I wish it had been a flock of sheep. [*Exit.*]

Enter *LEONORA*, with a bird on her finger, which she holds in the other hand by a string.

AIR.—LEONORA.

*Say, little foolish, fluttering thing,
Whither, ah! whither would you wing
Your airy flight?*

*Stay here, and sing,
Your mistress to delight.*

*No, no, no,
Sweet robin, you shall not go:
Where, you wanton, could you be
Half so happy as with me?*

Re-enter *DIEGO.*

Dieg. Leonora!

Leon. Here I am.

Dieg. Look me in the face, and listen to me attentively.

Leon. There.

Dieg. I am going this evening to your father and mother, and I suppose you are not ignorant of the cause of my journey. Are you willing to be my wife?

Leon. I am willing to do whatever you and my father and mother please.

Dieg. But that's not the thing: do you like me?

Leon. Y—es.

Dieg. What do you sigh for?

Leon. I don't know.

Dieg. When you came hither, you were taken from a mean, little house, ill situated, and worse furnished; you had no servants, and were obliged, with your mother, to do the work yourself.

Leon. Yes, but when we had done, I could look out at the window, or go a walking in the fields.

Dieg. Perhaps you dislike confinement?

Leon. No, I don't, I am sure.

Dieg. I say, then, I took you from that mean habitation, and hard labour, to a noble building, and this fine garden; where, so far from being a slave, you are absolute mistress; and instead of wearing a mean stuff gown, look at yourself, I beseech you; the dress you have on is fit for a princess.

Leon. It's very fine, indeed.

Dieg. Well, Leonora, you know in what manner you have been treated since you have been my companion; ask yourself again now, whether you can be content to lead a life with me according to the specimen you have had.

Leon. Specimen!

Dieg. Ay, according to the manner I have treated you—according—

Leon. I'll do whatever you please.

Dieg. Then, my dear, give me a kiss.

Leon. Good bye to you.

Dieg. Here, Ursula!

SONG.—DIEGO.

*By some I am told
That I'm wrinkled and old;
But I will not believe what they say:
I feel my blood mounting,*

*Like streams in a fountain,
That merrily sparkle and play.*

For love I have will,

And ability still;

Odsbobs, I can scarcely refrain!

My diamond, my pearl,

Well, be a good girl,

Until I come to you again.

[*Exit.*]

Leon. Heigho! I think I am sick. He's very good to me, to be sure, and it's my duty to love him, because we ought not to be ungrateful; but I wish I was not to marry him for all that, though I'm afraid to tell him so. Fine feathers, they say, make fine birds; but I am sure they don't make happy ones; a sparrow is happier in the fields than a goldfinch in a cage. There is something makes me mighty uneasy. While he was talking to me, I thought I never saw anything look so ugly in my life. O dear now, why did I forget to ask leave to go to mass to-morrow? I suppose, because he's abroad, Ursula won't take me. I wish I had asked leave to go to mass.

SONG.—LEONORA.

*Were I a shepherd's maid, to keep
On yonder plains a flock of sheep,
Well pleas'd I'd watch the live-long day,
My ewes at feed, my lambs at play.
Or, would some bird, that pity brings,
But for a moment lend its wings,
My parents then might rave and scold,
My guardian strive my will to hold:
Their words are harsh, his walls are high,
But, spite of all, away I'd fly.* [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—A Street in Salamanca

Enter *LEANDER* and two Scholars, in their university gowns.

Leand. His name is Don Diego. There's his house, like another monastery, or rather prison; his servants are an ancient duenna, and a negro slave—

1 *Schol.* And after having lived fifty years a bachelor, this old fellow has picked up a young thing of sixteen, whom he by chance saw in a balcony!

2 *Schol.* And you are in love with the girl?

Leand. To desperation; and I believe I am not indifferent to her; for finding that her jealous guardian took her to the chapel of a neighbouring convent every morning before it was light, I went there in the habit of a pilgrim, planting myself as near as I could; I then varied my appearance, continuing to do so, from time to time, 'till I was convinced she had sufficiently remarked and understood my meaning.

1 *Schol.* Well, Leander, I'll say that for you, there is not a more industrious lad in the university of Salamanca, when a wench is to be ferreted.

2 *Schol.* But pr'ythee, tell us now, how did you get information?

Leand. First, from report, which raised my curiosity; and afterwards from the negro I just now mentioned. I observed that when the family were gone to bed, he often came to air himself at yonder grate. You know I am no bad chanter, nor a very scurvy minstrel; so taking a guitar, clapping a black patch on my eye, and a swathe upon one of my legs, I soon scraped acquaintance with my friend Mungo. He adores my songs and sarabands, and taking me for a poor cripple, often repays me

with a share of his allowance, which I accept, to avoid suspicion.

1 *Schol.* And so—

Leand. And so, sir, he has told me all the secrets of his family; and one worth knowing: for he informed me last night, that his master will this evening take a short journey into the country, whence he proposes not to return 'till to-morrow, leaving his young wife, that is to be, behind him.

2 *Schol.* Zounds! let's scale the wall.

Leand. Fair and softly. I will this moment go and put on my disguise, watch for the Don's going out, attack my negro afresh, and try if, by his means, I cannot get into the house; or, at least, obtain a sight of my charming angel.

1 *Schol.* Angel! is she then so handsome?

Leand. It is time for us to withdraw: come to my chambers, and there you shall know all you can desire. *[Exeunt two Scholars.]*

SONG.—LEANDER.

*Hither, Venus, with your doves,
Hither, all ye little loves;
Round me light your wings display,
And bear a lover on his way.
Oh, could I but, like Jove of old,
Transform myself to show'ry go'd;
Or in a swan my passion shroud,
Or wrap it in an orient cloud;
What locks, what bars should then impede,
Or keep me from my charming maid?* *[Exit.]*

SCENE III.—*The outside of Don Diego's house, which appears with windows barred up, and an iron grate before an entry.*

Enter DON DIEGO from the house, having first unlocked the door, and removed two or three bars which assisted in fastening it.

Dieg. With the precautions I have taken, I think I run no risk in quitting my house for a short time. *Leonora* has never shewn the least inclination to deceive me; besides, my old woman is prudent and faithful, she has all the keys, and will not part with them from herself: but suppose—suppose—by the rood and St. Francis, I will not leave it in her power to do mischief. A woman's not having it in her power to deceive you is the best security for her fidelity, and the only one a wise man will confide in; fast bind, safe find, is an excellent proverb. I'll e'en lock her up with the rest; there is a hasp to the door, and I have a padlock within which shall be my guarantee; I will wait 'till the negro returns with the provisions he has gone to purchase; and clapping them all up together, make my mind easy by having the key they are under in my pocket. *[Exit.]*

Enter MUNGO, singing, with a hamper.

Mungo. *[Sits down upon the hamper.]* Go, get you down, you d—n hamper, you carry me now. Curse my old massa, sending me always here and dere for one something to make me tire like a mule—curse him impurance—and him d—n insuraunce.

Re-enter DON DIEGO.

Dieg. How now!

Mungo. *[Rising.]* Ah, massa, bless your heart.

Dieg. What's that you are muttering, sirrah?

Mungo. Nothing, massa, only me say, you very good massa.

Dieg. What do you leave your load there for?

Mungo. Massa, me lila tire.

Dieg. Take it up, rascal.

Mungo. Yes, bless your heart, massa.

Dieg. No, lay it down: now I think on't, come hither.

Mungo. What you say, massa?

Dieg. Can you be honest?

Mungo. Me no savee, massa, you never ax me before.

Dieg. Can you tell truth?

Mungo. What you give me, massa?

Dieg. There's a pistorren for you; now tell me, do you know of any ill going on in my house?

Mungo. Ah, massa, a d—n deal.

Dieg. How! that I'm a stranger to?

Mungo. No, massa, you lick me every day with your rattan; I'm sure, massa, that's mischief enough for poor neger-man.

Dieg. So, so.

Mungo. La! massa, how could you have a heart to lick poor neger-man, as you lick me last Thursday?

Dieg. If you have not a mind I should chastise you now, hold your tongue.

Mungo. Yes, massa, if you no lick me again.

Dieg. Listen to me, I say.

Mungo. You know, massa, me very good servant.

Dieg. Then you will go on?

Mungo. And ought to be use kine—

Dieg. If you utter another syllable—

Mungo. And I'm sure, massa, you can't deny but I worky worky. I dress a victuals, and run a errands, and wash a house, and make a beds, and scrub a shoes, and wait a table.

Dieg. *[Beats him.]* Take that. Now will you listen to me?

Mungo. La! massa, if ever I saw—

Dieg. I am going abroad, and shall not return 'till to-morrow morning. During this night I charge you not to sleep a wink, but be watchful as a lynx, and keep walking up and down the entry, that if you hear the least noise, you may alarm the family. Stay here, perverse animal, and take care that nobody approaches the door; I am going in, and shall be out again in a moment. *[Exit into the house.]*

Mungo. So I must be stay in a cold all night, and have no sleep, and get no tanks neither; den him call me tief, and rogue, and rascal, to tempt me.

SONG.—MUNGO.

Dear heart, what a terrible life am I led!

A dog has a better, that's shelter'd and fed:

Night and day 'tis de same,

My pains is dere game:

Me wish to de lord me was dead.

Whate'er's to be done,

Poor blacky must run;

Mungo here, Mungo dere,

Mungo every where;

Above and below;

Sirrah come, sirrah go;

Do so, and do so,

Oh! oh!

Me wish to de lord me was dead.

[Dieg having entered from the house during the song, MUNGO goes in, and appears to bolt the door on the inside.]

Dieg. *[Unseen, puts on a large padlock.]* That must do till I get a larger. *[Exit.]*

Enter LEANDER disguised.

Leand. So,—my old Argus is departed, and the evening is as favourable for my design as I could wish. Now to attract my friend Mungo; if he is within hearing of my guitar, I am sure he will quickly make his appearance.

Mungo appears at the grate.

Mungo. Who goes dere? Hip, hollo!

Leand. Heaven bless you, my worthy master, will your worship's honour have a little music this evening? and I have got a bottle of delicious cordial here, given me by a charitable monk of a convent hard by, if your grace will please to taste it.

Mungo. Give me a sup tro a grate: come closee, man; don't be fear; old massa gone out, as I say last night, and he no come back before to-morrow; come, try moosic, and give us song.

Leand. I'll give your worship a song I learned in Barbary when I was a slave among the Moors.

Mungo. Ay, do.

Leand. There was a cruel and malicious Turk, who was called Heli Abdalah Mahomet Schah; now this wicked Turk had a fair Christian slave named Jezabel, who not consenting to his beastly desires, he draws out his sabre, and is going to cut off her head; here's what he says to her.—[*Sings and plays.*] Now you shall hear the slave's answer.—[*Sings and plays again.*—Now you shall hear how the wicked Turk, being greatly enraged, is again going to cut off the fair slave's head. Now you shall hear—

Mungo. What signify me hear? Me no understand.

Leand. Oh, you want something you understand? If your honour had said that—

Enter URSULA at the window.

Urs. Mungo! Mungo!

Mungo. Some one call dere—

Urs. Mungo! I say.

Mungo. What devil you want?

Urs. What lewd noise is that?

Mungo. Lewd you self, no lewd here; play away, never mind her.

Urs. I shall come down if you go on.

Mungo. Ay, come along, more merrier; nothing here but poor man, he sing for bit of bread.

Urs. I'll have no poor man near our door; barkye, fellow, can you play the "Forsaken Maid's Delight," or "Black Bess of Castile?" Ah, Mungo, if you had heard me sing when I was young.

Mungo. Gad! I'm sure, I hear your voice often enough now you old.

Urs. I could quaver like any blackbird.

Mungo. And now you grunt like an old sow. Come, throw a poor soul a penny, he play a tune for you.

Urs. How did you lose the use of your leg?

Leand. In the wars, my good dame: I was taken by a Barbary corsair, and carried into Sallee, where I lived eleven years and three quarters upon cold water and the roots of the earth, without having a coat on my back, or laying my head on a pillow: an infidel bought me for a slave: he gave me the strappado on my shoulders, and the bastinado on the soles of my feet: now this infidel Turk had fifty-three wives, and one hundred and twelve concubines.

Urs. Then he was an unreasonable villain.

Mungo. How many wives had he?

Leand. Fifty-three wives, and one hundred and twelve concubines.

Mungo. Poor man! what de devil did he do wid dem all?

Enter LEONORA at the window.

Leon. Ursula!

Urs. Od's my life, what's here to do! Go back, go back; fine work we shall have indeed; good man, good bye.

Leon. I could not stay any longer by myself; pray let me take a little air at the grate.

Leand. Do, worthy madam, let the young gentlewoman stay; I'll play her a love song for nothing.

Urs. No, no, none of your love songs here; if you could play a saraband indeed, and there was room for one's motion—

Leand. I am but a poor man; but if your ladyship will let me in as far as the hall or the kitchen, you may all dance, and I sha'n't ask any thing.

Urs. Why, if it was not on my master's account, I should think no harm in a little innocent recreation.

Mungo. Do, and let us dance.

Leand. Has madam the keys then?

Urs. Yes, yes, I have the keys.

Leand. Have you the key of this padlock too, madam? Here's a padlock upon the door, heaven help us! large enough for a state prison.

Urs. Eh,—how,—what! a padlock!

Mungo. Here it is, I feel it; adod! it's a tumper.

Urs. He was afraid to trust me then.

Mungo. And if de house was a fire, we none of us get out to save ourselves.

Leand. Well, madam, not to disappoint you and the young lady, I know the back of your garden-wall, and I'll undertake to get up at the outside of it, if you can let me down on the other.

Urs. Do you think you could with your lame leg?

Leand. O yes, madam, I'm very sure.

Urs. Then, by my faith, you shall; for now I am set on't!—A padlock! Mungo, come with me into the garden. [*Exit with MUNGO.*]

Leon. Pray let me go with you.

Leand. Stay, charming creature; why will you fly the youth that adores you?

Leon. O, lord! I'm frightened out of my wits!

Leand. Have you not taken notice, beautous Leonora, of the pilgrim who has so often met you at church? I am that pilgrim; one who would change shapes as often as Proteus, to be blessed with a sight of you.

Re-enter MUNGO and URSULA.

QUARTETTO.

LEANDER, LEONORA, URSULA, and MUNGO.

Leand. O thou whose charms enslave my heart,
In pity hear a youth complain.

Leon. I must not hear—dear youth, depart—
I'm certain I have no desert
A gentleman like you to gain.

Leand. Then do I seek your love in vain?

Leon. It is another's right;

Leand. And he,
Distracting thought! must happy be,
While I am doom'd to pain.

Urs. Come round, young man, I've been to try
Mung. And so have I.

All. I'm sure the wall is not too high.
If you please,

Leand. You'll mount with ease,
Can you to aid my bliss deny?
Shall it be so?

Urs. If you say no,
I will not go.

Leon. I must consent, however loath;
But, whenever we desire,
Make him promise to retire.

Urs. Nay, marry, he shall take his oath.

Leand. By your eyes of heavenly blue;
By your lips' ambrosial dew;
Your cheeks, where rose and lily blend;
Your voice, the music of the spheres—

Mung. *Lord a' mercy, how he swears !
He makes my hairs
All stand on end !*

Urs. *Come, that's enough ; ascend, ascend.*

All. *Let's be happy while we may ;
Now the old one's far away ;
Laugh, and sing, and dance, and play ;
Harmless pleasure why delay ?*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Hall in Don Diego's house, with folding-doors, which open in the back scene. On one side a stair-case, leading to an apartment ; on the other, a door leading to a cellar. A table with a bottle and glass, two candles, a guitar, and LEANDER'S disguise, placed upon it.*

Enter LEANDER in a rich habit, following URSULA.

Urs. Oh ! shame ; out upon't, sir ; talk to me no more. I, that have been famed throughout all Spain, as I may say, for virtue and discretion ; the very flower and quintessence of duennas ;—you have cast a blot upon me ; a blot upon my reputation, that was as fair as a piece of white paper ; and now I shall be reviled, pointed at, nay, men will call me filthy names upon your account.

Leand. What filthy names will they call you ?

Urs. They'll say I'm an old procuress.

Leand. Fie ! fie ! men know better things. Besides, though I have got admittance into your house, be assured I shall commit no outrage here ; and if I have been guilty of any indiscretion, let love be my excuse.

Urs. Well, as I live, he's a pretty young fellow.

Leand. You, my sweet Ursula, have known what it is to be in love ; and, I warrant, have had admirers often at your feet ; your eyes still retain fire enough to tell me that.

Urs. They tell you no lie ; for, to be sure, when I was a young woman, I was greatly sought after ; nay, it was reported that a youth died for love of me ; one Joseph Perez, a tailor by trade ; of the greyhound make, lank, and if my memory fail me not, his right shoulder about the breadth of my hand higher than his left ; but he was as upright as an arrow ; and, by all accounts, one of the finest workmen at a button-hole !—

Leand. But where is Leonora ?

Urs. Where is she ? By my troth, I have shut her up in her chamber, under three bolts and a double lock.

Leand. And will you not bring us together ?

Urs. Who, I ? How can you ask me such a question ? Really, sir, I take it extremely unkind.

Leand. Well, but you misapprehend—

Urs. I told you just now, that if you mentioned that to me again, it would make me sick ; and so it has, turned me upside down as it were.

Leand. Ursula, take this gold.

Urs. For what, sir ?

Leand. Only for the love of me.

Urs. Nay, if that be all, I won't refuse it, for I love you, I assure you ; you put me so much in mind of my poor dear husband ; he was a handsome man ; I remember he had a mole between his eye-brows, about the bigness of a hazel-nut ; but, I must say, you have the advantage in the lower part of the countenance.

Leand. The old beldam grows amorous. [*Aside.*]

Urs. Lord love you ! you're a well-looking young man.

Leand. But Leonora—

Urs. Ha, ha, ha ! but to pretend you were lame. —I never saw a finer leg in my life.

Leand. Leonora—

Urs. Well, sir, I'm going.

Leand. I shall never get rid of her. [*Aside.*]

Urs. Sir !

Leand. How now ?

Urs. Would you be so kind, sir, as to indulge me with the favour of a salute ?

Leand. Ugh !

Urs. Gad-a-mercy, your cheek ! Well, well. I have seen the day—but no matter, my wine's upon the lees now ; however, sir, you might have had the politeness when a gentlewoman made the offer.—But heaven bless you ! [*Exit.*]

Enter MUNGO.

Mungo. Ah ! massa ! You brave massa, now ; what you do here wid de old woman ?

Leand. Where is your young mistress, Mungo ?

Mungo. By gog, she lock her up. But why you no tell me before time, you a gentleman ?

Leand. Sure I have not given the purse for nothing.

Mungo. Purse ! what, you giving her money den ? Curse her imperance ; why you no give it me ? You give me something, as well as she. You know, massa, you see me first.

Leand. There, there, are you content ? [*Giving him money.*]

Mungo. Me get supper ready, and now me go to de cellar. But I say, massa, ax de old man now, what good him watching do, him bolts, and him bars, him walls, and him padlock ?

Leand. Hist ! Leonora comes. [*Exit.*]

Mungo. But, massa, you say you teach me play.

SONG.—MUNGO.

*Let me, when my heart a sinking,
Hear de sweet guitar a clinking ;
When a string speak,
Such moosic he make,
Me soon am cur'd of tinkling.
Wid de toot, toot, toot,
Of a merry flute,
And cymbalo,
And tymbalo
To toot,
We dance and we sing,
Till we make a house ring,
And, tied in his garters, old massa may swing.
[*Exit at cellar door.*]*

SCENE II.—*Interior of Don Diego's house.*

Enter LEANDER, LEONORA, and URSULA.

Leand. Oh, charming Leonora ! how shall I express the rapture of my heart upon this occasion ? I almost doubt the kindness of that chance which has brought me thus happily to see, to speak to you, without restraint.

Urs. Well, but it must not be without restraint ; it can't be without restraint ; it can't, by my faith ; now you are going to make me sick again.

Leon. La ! Ursula, I dare say the gentleman doesn't want to do me any harm—Do you, sir ? I'm sure, I would not hurt a hair of his head, nor nobody's else, for the lucre of the whole world.

Urs. Come, sir, where's your lute? You shall see me dance a saraband; or if you'd rather have a song—or the child and I will move a minuet, if you choose grace before agility.

Leand. This fulsome harriard—

Leon. I don't know what's come over her, sir; I never saw the like of her since I was born.

Leand. I wish she was at the devil.

Leon. Ursula, what's the matter with you?

Urs. What's the matter with me! Marry come up! what's the matter with you? *Signor Diego* can't shew such a shape as that; well, there is nothing I like better than to see a young fellow with a well-made leg.

Leand. Pr'ythee let us go away from her.

Leon. I don't know how to do it, sir.

Leand. Nothing more easy; I will go with my guitar into the garden; 'tis moonlight: take an opportunity to follow me there; I swear to you, beautiful and innocent creature, you have nothing to apprehend.

Leon. No, sir, I am certain of that, with a gentleman such as you are: and that have taken so much pains to come after me; and I should hold myself very ungrateful, if I did not do anything to oblige you, in a civil way.

Leand. Then you'll come?

Leon. I'll do my best endeavours, sir.

Leand. And may I hope that you love me?

Leon. I don't know; as to that I can't say.

Urs. Come, come, what colloquing's here; I must see how things are going forward; besides, sir, you ought to know that it is not manners to be getting into corners, and whispering, before company.

Leand. Psha!

Urs. Ay, you may say your pleasure, sir, but I'm sure what I say is the right thing; I should hardly choose to venture in a corner with you myself; nay, I would not do it, I protest and vow.

Leand. Beautiful Leonora, I find my being depends upon the blessing of your good opinion; do you desire to put an end to my days?

Leon. No, indeed; indeed, I don't.

Leand. But then—

SONG.—LEANDER.

*In vain you bid your captive live,
While you the means of life deny;
Give me your smiles, your wishes give
To him who must without you die.*

*Shut from the sun's enlivening beam,
Bid flow'rs retain their scent and hue;
Its source dry'd up, bid flow the stream,
And me exist, depriv'd of you.* [Exit.

Urs. Come hither, child, I am going to give you good advice, therefore listen to me, for I have more years over my head than you.

Leon. Well, and what then?

Urs. What then! Marry, then you must mind what I say to you. As I said before—but I say—what was I saying?

Leon. I'm sure I don't know.

Urs. You see the young man that is gone out there; he has been telling me, that he's dying for love of you; can you find in your heart to let him expire?

Leon. I'm sure I won't do anything bad.

Urs. Why that's right; you learned that from me; have I not said to you a thousand times, never do anything bad? Have I not said it? Answer me that.

Leon. Well, and what then?

Urs. Very well, listen to me: your guardian is old, and ugly, and jealous, and yet he may live longer than a better man.

Leon. He has been very kind to me, for all that, Ursula! and I ought to strive to please him.

Urs. There again: have I not said to you a thousand times, that he was very kind to you, and you ought to strive to please him? It would be a hard thing to be preaching from morning 'till night without any profit.

Leon. Well, Ursula, after all, I wish this gentleman had never got into the house; heaven send no ill comes of it!

Urs. Ay, I say so too; heaven send it! but I'm cruelly afraid: for how shall we get rid of him? he'll never be able to crawl up the inside of the wall, whatever he did the out.

Leon. O lord! won't he?

Urs. No, by my conscience, won't he; and when your guardian comes in, if we had fifty necks a-piece, he'd twist them every one, if he finds him here; for my part, the best I expect is, to end my old days in a prison.

Leon. You don't say so?

Urs. I do, indeed; and it kills me to think of it; but every one has their evil day, and this has been mine.

Leon. I have promised to go to him in the garden.

Urs. Nay, you may do any thing now, for we are undone; though I think, if you could persuade him to get up the chimney, and stay on the roof of the house until to-morrow night, we might then steal the keys from your guardian; but I am afraid you won't be able to persuade him.

Leon. I'll go down upon my knees.

Urs. Find him out, while I step up stairs.

Leon. Pray for us, dear Ursula.

Urs. I will, if I possibly can.

SONG.—LEONORA.

*Oh me! oh me! what shall we do?
The fault is all along of you;
You brought him in, why did you so?
'Twas not by my desire, you know.
We have but too much cause to fear;
My guardian, when he comes to hear
We've had a man with us, will kill
Me, you, and all; indeed he will.
No penitence will pard'n procure,
He'll kill us ev'ry soul, I'm sure.*

[Re-enter LEONORA and URSULA.]

Enter DON DIEGO, groping his way, with a padlock in his hand.

Dieg. All dark, all quiet; gone to bed and fast asleep, I warrant them; however, I am not sorry that I altered my first intention of staying out the whole night; and meeting Leonora's father on the road was, at any rate, a lucky incident. I will not disturb them; but, since I have let myself in with my own master-key, go softly to bed; I shall be able to strike a light; and then I think I may say, my cares are over. Good heavens! what a wonderful deal of uneasiness may mortals avoid by a little prudence! I doubt not now, there are some men who would have gone out in my situation, and, trusting to the goodness of fortune, left their house and their honour in the care of an unexperienced girl, or the discretion of a mercenary servant. But what do I do to—I put a padlock on my door, and all is safe.

Enter MUNGO from a cellar, with a flask in one hand, and a candle in the other.

Mungo. Tol, lol, lol, lol.

Dieg. Hold, didn't I hear a noise?
Mungo. Hola!
Dieg. Heaven and earth! what do I see?
Mungo. Where are you, young massa and missy: here wine for supper.
Dieg. I'm thunder struck!
Mungo. My old massa little tink we be so merry—hic—hic—what's the matter wid me? the room turn round.
Dieg. Wretch, do you know me?
Mungo. Know you? D—n you.
Dieg. Horrid creature! what makes you here at this time of night? Is it with a design to surprise the innocents in their beds, and murder them sleeping?
Mungo. Hush, hush! make no noise—hic—hic.
Dieg. The slave is intoxicated.
Mungo. Make no noise, I say; dere's young gentleman wid young lady; he play on guitar, and she like him better dan she like you. Fal, lal, lal.
Dieg. Monster, I'll make an example of you.
Mungo. What you call me names for, you old dog?
Dieg. Does the villain dare to lift his hand against me?
Mungo. Will you fight?
Dieg. He's mad.
Mungo. Dere's one in de house you little tink. Gad! he do you business.
Diego. Go, lie down in your sty, and sleep.
Mungo. Sleep, sleep yourself; you drunk—ha, ha, ha! Look, a padlock: you put a padlock on a door again, will you? Ha, ha, ha!
Dieg. Didn't I hear music?
Mungo. Hic—hic—
Dieg. Was it not the sound of a guitar?
Mungo. Yes; he play on de guitar rarely. Give me hand; you're old rascal, a'n't you?
Dieg. What dreadful shock affects me? I'm in a cold sweat; a mist comes over my eyes; and my knees knock together as if I had got a fit of the shaking palsy.
Mungo. I tell you a word in your ear.
Dieg. Has any stranger broken into my house?
Mungo. Yes, by—hic—a fine young gentleman; he now in a next room with missy.
Dieg. Holy Saint Francis! is it possible?
Mungo. Go you round softly: you catch them together.
Dieg. Confusion! Distraction! I shall run mad!

SONG.—DIEGO.

*Oh, wherefore this terrible flurry?
 My spirits are all in a hurry!
 And above and below,
 From my top to my toe,
 Are running about hurry scurry.
 My heart in my bosom a bumping,
 Goes lumping,
 And jumping,
 And thumping;
 Is't a spectre I see?
 Hence! vanish!—Ah me!
 My senses deceive me;
 Soon reason will leave me;
 What a wretch am I destin'd to be!* [Exit.

Enter URSULA.

Urs. O shame! monstrous! you drunken swab, you have been in the cellar, with a plague to you.
Mungo. Let me put my hands about your neck—
Urs. Oh, I shall be ruined! Help, help! ruin, ruin!—

Enter LEANDER and LEONORA.

Leon. Goodness me! what's the matter?
Urs. O dear child, this black villain has frightened me out of my wits; he has wanted—
Mungo. Me! curse a heart! I want nothing wid her. What she say I want for—
Leon. Ursula, the gentleman says he has some friends waiting for him at the other side of the garden-wall, that will throw him over a ladder made of ropes, which he got up by.

DUET.

Leand. Then must I go?
Leon. Yes, good sir, yes.
Leand. A parting kiss?
Leon. No, good sir, no.
Leand. It must be so.
*By this, and this,
 Here I could for ever grow.
 'Tis more than mortal bliss.*
Leon. Well, now good night:
*Pray ease our fright,
 You're very bold, sir;
 Let loose your hold, sir;
 I think you want to scare me quite.*
Leand. Oh, fortune's spite!
Leon. Good night, good night.

Enter DON DIEGO.

Dieg. Stay, sir; let nobody go out of the room.
Urs. [Falling down.] Ah! ah! a ghost! a ghost!
Dieg. Woman, stand up. Leonora, what am I to think of this?
Leon. Oh, dear sir! don't kill me.
Dieg. Young man, who are you, who have thus clandestinely, at an unseasonable hour, broken into my house? Am I to consider you as a robber, or how?
Leand. As one whom love has made indiscreet; as one whom love taught industry and art to compass his designs. I love the beautiful Leonora, and she me; but, further than what you hear and see, neither one nor the other have been culpable.
Mungo. Hear him, hear him.
Leand. Don Diego, you know my father well,—Don Alphonso de Luna; I am a scholar of this university, and am willing to submit to whatever punishment he, through your means, shall inflict; but break not your vengeance here. [Pointing to LEONORA.]
Dieg. Thus, then, my hopes and cares are at once frustrated. Possessed of what I thought a jewel, I was desirous to keep it for myself; I left my watch for one little moment, and in that moment—
Leon. Pray, pray, guardian, let me tell you the story, and you'll find I am not to blame.
Dieg. No, child, I only am to blame, who should have considered that sixteen and sixty agree ill together. But, though I was too old to be wise, I am not too old to learn; and so, I say, send for a smith directly; beat all the grates from my windows, take the locks from my doors, and let egress and regress be given freely.
Leon. And will you be my husband, sir?
Dieg. No, child, I will give you to one that will make you a better husband. Here, young man, take her: if your parents consent, to-morrow shall see you joined in the face of the church; and the dowry which I promised her, in case of failure on my side of the contract, shall now go with her as a marriage portion.

Leand. Signor, this is so generous—

Dieg. No thanks. Perhaps I owe acknowledgments to you ! but you, Ursula, have no excuse, no passion to plead, and your age should have taught you better. I'll give you five hundred crowns, but never let me see you more.

Mungo. And what you give me, massa ?

Dieg. Bastinadoes for your drunkenness and infidelity. Oh, man ! man ! how short is your foresight ; how ineffectual your prudence ; while the very means you use are destructive of your ends !

FINALE.

Dieg. Go, forge me fetters that shall bind
The rage of the tempestuous wind ;
Sound with a needle-full of thread
The depth of ocean's steepy bed ;
Snap like a twig the oak's tough tree :
Quench Etna with a cup of tea ;

*In these manœuvres shew your skill,
Then hold a woman if you will.*

Mung. And massa, be not angry, pray,
If neger man a word should say ;
Me have a fable pat as she,
Which wid dis matter will agree :
An owl once took it in his head,
Wid some young, pretty birds to wed ;
But when his worship came to woo,
He could get none but de cuckoo.

Leon. Ye youth select, who wish to taste
The joys of wedlock pure and chaste,
Ne'er let the mistress and the friend
In abject slave, and tyrant, end.
While each with tender passion burns,
Ascend the throne of rule by turns :
And place, to love, to virtue just
Security in mutual trust.

THE END.

LOVE IN A VILLAGE;

AN OPERA, IN THREE ACTS,

BY ISAAC BICKERSTAFF.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SIR WILLIAM MEADOWS
YOUNG MEADOWS
JUSTICE WOODCOCK
HAWTHORN
EUSTACE
HODGE
FOOTMAN
CARTER
VILLAGERS

ROSETTA
LUCINDA
DEBORAH WOODCOCK
MADGE
COOK
HOUSEMAID

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Garden, with statues, fountains, and flower-pots.*

Several arbours appear in the side-scenes; ROSETTA and LUCINDA are discovered at work, seated on two garden chairs.

DUET.

Ros. *Hope! thou nurse of young desire,
Fairy promiser of joy,
Painted vapour, glow-worm fire,
Temperate sweet, that ne'er can cloy.*

Luc. *Hope! thou earnest of delight,
Safest soother of the mind,
Balmy cordial, prospect bright,
Surest friend the wretched find.*

Both. *Kind deceiver, flatter still,
Deal out pleasures unpossest;
With thy dreams my fancy fill,
And in wishes make me blest.*

Luc. Heigho! Rosetta!

Ros. Well, child, what do you say?

Luc. 'Tis a cruel thing to live in a village a hundred miles from the capital, with a preposterous gouty father, and a superannuated maiden aunt. I am heartily sick of my situation.

Ros. And with reason; but 'tis in a great measure your own fault. Here is this Mr. Eustace, a man of character and family: he likes you, you like him; you know one another's minds, and yet you'll not resolve to make yourself happy with him.

AIR.

*Whence can you inherit
So slavish a spirit?
Confin'd thus, and chain'd to a log?
Now fondled, now chid,
Permitted, forbid:
'Tis leading the life of a dog.
For shame! you a lover!
More firmness discover;
Take courage, nor here longer mope:
Resist and be free,
Run riot, like me,
And, to perfect the picture, elope.*

Luc. And is this your advice?

Ros. Positively.

Luc. Here's my hand; positively, I'll follow it. I have already sent to my gentleman, who is now in the country, to let him know he may come hither this day; we will make use of the opportunity to settle all preliminaries, and then—but take notice, whenever we decamp, you march off along with us.

Ros. Oh! madam, your servant; I have no inclination to be left behind, I assure you. But you say you got acquainted with this spark, while you were with your mother during her last illness at Bath, so that your father has never seen him.

Luc. Never in his life, my dear; and, I am confident, he entertains not the least suspicion of my having any such connexion: my aunt, indeed, has her doubts and surmises; but, besides that my father will not allow any one to be wiser than himself it is an established maxim between these affectionate relations, never to agree in any thing.

Ros. Except being absurd; you must allow they sympathize perfectly in that. But, now we are on the subject, I desire to know what I am to do with this wicked old justice of peace, this father of yours? He follows me about the house like a tame goat.

Luc. Nay, I'll assure you he hath been a wag in his time; you must have a care of yourself.

Ros. Wretched me! to fall into such hands, who have been just forced to run away from my parents to avoid an odious marriage. You smile at that

now; and I know you think me whimsical, as you have often told me; but you must excuse my being a little over-delicate in this particular.

AIR.

*My heart's my own, my will is free,
And so shall be my voice;
No mortal man shall wed with me,
Till first he's made my choice.*

*Let parents rule, cry nature's laws,
And children still obey;
And is there then no saving clause,
Against tyrannic sway?*

Luc. Well, but my dear, mad girl—

Ros. Lucinda, don't talk to me. Were your father to go to London, meet there by accident with an old fellow as wrong-headed as himself, and in a fit of absurd friendship, agree to marry you to that old fellow's son, whom you had never seen, without consulting your inclinations or allowing you a negative, in case he should not prove agreeable—

Luc. Why, I should think it a little hard, I confess; yet, when I see you in the character of a chambermaid—

Ros. It is the only character, my dear, in which I could hope to lie concealed; and, I can tell you, I was reduced to the last extremity, when in consequence of our old boarding-school friendship, I applied to you to receive me in this capacity; for we expected the parties the very next week.

Luc. But had not you a message from your intended spouse, to let you know he was as little inclined to such ill-concerted nuptials as you were?

Ros. More than so; he wrote to advise me, by all means, to contrive some method of breaking them off; for he had rather return to his dear studies at Oxford: and after that, what hopes could I have of being happy with him?

Luc. Then you are not at all uneasy at the strange rout you must have occasioned at home? I warrant, during this month you have been absent—

Ros. Oh! don't mention it, my dear; I have had so many admirers, since I commenced Abigail, that I am quite charmed with my situation. But hold; who stalks yonder in the yard, that the dogs are so glad to see?

Luc. Daddy Hawthorn, as I live! He is come to pay my father a visit; and never more luckily, for he always forces him abroad. By the way, what will you do with yourself while I step into the house to see after my trusty messenger, Hodge?

Ros. No matter; I'll sit down in that arbour, and listen to the singing of the birds: you know I am fond of melancholy amusements.

Luc. So it seems, indeed: sure, Rosetta, none of your admirers had power to touch your heart; you are not in love, I hope?

Ros. In love! that's pleasant: who do you suppose I should be in love with, pray?

Luc. Why, let me see; what do you think of Thomas, our gardener? There he is at the other end of the walk. He's a pretty young man, and the servants say, he's always writing verses on you.

Ros. Indeed, Lucinda, you are very silly.

Luc. Indeed, Rosetta, that blush makes you look very handsome.

Ros. Blush! I am sure I don't blush.

Luc. Ha, ha, ha!

Ros. Psha! Lucinda, how can you be so ridiculous?

Luc. Well, don't be angry, and I have done. But suppose you did like him, how could you help yourself?

[*Exeunt into arbour.*]

Enter Young MEADOWS.

Young M. Let me see; on the fifteenth of June, at half an hour past five in the morning, [*Taking out a pocket-book.*] I left my father's house unknown to any one, having made free with a coat and jacket of our gardener's that fitted me, by way of a disguise; so says my pocket-book: and chance directing me to this village, on the twentieth of the same month I procured a recommendation to the worshipful justice Woodcock, to be the superintendent of his pumpkins and cabbages, because I would let my father see, I chose to run any lengths, rather than submit to what his obstinacy would have forced me to, a marriage against my inclination with a woman I never saw. [*Puts up the book, and takes up a watering-pot.*] Here I have been three weeks, and in that time I am as much altered as if I had changed my nature with my habit. 'Sdeath! to fall in love with a chambermaid! And yet, if I could forget that I am the son and heir of sir William Meadows—But that's impossible.

AIR.

*O! had I been by fate decreed
Some humble cottage swain,
In fair Rosetta's sight to feed
My sheep upon the plain!
What bliss had I been born to taste,
Which now I ne'er must know!
Ye envious powers! why have ye plac'd
My fair one's lot so low?*

Ha! who was it I had a glimpse of as I passed by that arbour? Was it not she sat reading there? The trembling of my heart tells me my eyes were not mistaken. Here she comes.

Enter ROSETTA, from the arbour.

Ros. Lucinda was certainly in the right of it; and yet I blush to own my weakness, even to myself. Marry, hang the fellow for not being a gentleman.

Young M. I am determined not to speak to her. [*Turning to a rose-tree, and plucking the flowers.*] Now or never is the time to conquer myself; besides, I have some reason to suppose the girl has no aversion to me; and, as I wish not to do her an injury, it would be cruel to fill her head with notions of what can never happen. [*Hums a tune.*] Psha! rot these roses, how they prick one's fingers!

Ros. He takes no notice of me, but so much the better; I'll be as indifferent as he is. I am sure the poor lad likes me; and, if I were to give him any encouragement, I suppose the next thing he talked of would be buying a ring, and being asked in church. Oh, dear pride! I thank you for that thought.

Young M. Ha! going without a word—a look! I can't bear that. Mrs. Rosetta, I am gathering a few roses here, if you please to take them in with you.

Ros. Thank you, Mr. Thomas, but all my lady's flower-pots are full.

Young M. Will you accept of them yourself, then? [*Catching hold of her.*] What's the matter? you look as if you were angry with me.

Ros. Pray let go my hand.

Young M. Nay, pr'ythee, why is this? you sha'n't go, I have something to say to you.

Ros. Well, but I must go—I will go; I desire, Mr. Thomas—

AIR.

*Gentle youth, ah, tell me why
Still you force me thus to fly?*

*Cease, Oh! cease to persevere!
 Speak not what I must not hear:
 To my heart its ease restore;
 Go, and never see me more.* [Exit.

Young M. This girl is a riddle. That she loves me I think there is no room to doubt; she takes a thousand opportunities to let me see it: and yet, when I speak to her, she will hardly give me an answer; and, if I attempt the smallest familiarity, she is gone in an instant. I feel my passion grow for her every day more and more violent. Well; would I marry her? would I make a mistress of her, if I could? Two things, called prudence and honour, forbid either. What am I pursuing, then? A shadow. Sure my evil genius laid this snare in my way. However, there is one comfort: it is in my power to fly from it; if so, why do I hesitate? I am distracted—unable to determine anything.

AIR.

*Still in hopes to get the better
 Of my stubborn flame I try;
 Swear this moment to forget her,
 And the next my oath deny.
 Now, prepared with scorn to treat her,
 Ev'ry charm in thought I brave;
 Boast my freedom, fly to meet her,
 And confess myself a slave.* [Exit.

SCENE II.—A Hall in Justice Woodcock's house.

Enter HAWTHORN, with a fowling-piece in his hand, and a net with birds at his girdle.

AIR.

*There was a jolly miller once,
 Liv'd on the river Dee;
 He work'd and sung from morn till night;
 No lark more blithe than he:
 And this the burthen of his song
 For ever used to be:—
 I care for nobody, no, not I,
 If nobody cares for me.*

House! Here, house! What, all gadding, all abroad! House, I say! hilli-ho, ho!

Justice W. [Without.] Here's a noise, here's a racket! William, Robert, Hodge! why does not somebody answer? Ods-my-life, I believe the fellows have lost their hearing!

Enter JUSTICE WOODCOCK.

Oh, master Hawthorn! I guessed it was some such mad cap. Are you there?

Haw. Am I here? Yes: and, if you had been where I was three hours ago, you would have found the good effects of it by this time: but you have got the lazy, unwholesome London fashion of lying a-bed in a morning, and there's gout for you. Why, sir, I have not been in bed five minutes after sunrise these thirty years: am generally up before it; and I never took a dose of physic but once in my life, and that was in compliment to a cousin of mine, an apothecary, that had just set up business.

Jus. W. Well but, master Hawthorn, let me tell you, you know nothing of the matter; for, I say, sleep is necessary for a man; ay, and I'll maintain it.

Haw. What, when I maintain the contrary?—Look you, neighbour Woodcock, you are a rich man, a man of worship, a justice of peace, and all that; but learn to know the respect that is due to the sound from the infirm; and allow me that superiority, a good constitution gives me over you.—Health is the greatest of all possessions; and, 'tis a maxim with me, that a hale cobbler is a better man than a sick king.

Jus. W. Well, well, you are a sportsman.

Haw. And so would you be too, if you would take my advice. A sportsman! why, there is nothing like it. I would not exchange the satisfaction I feel, while I am beating the lawns and thickets about my little farm, for all the entertainment and pageantry in Christendom.

AIR.

*Let gay ones and great
 Make the most of their fate,
 From pleasure to pleasure they run;
 Well, who cares a jot?
 I envy them not,
 While I have my dog and my gun.
 For exercise, air,
 To the fields I repair,
 With spirits unclouded and light;
 The blisses I find
 No stings leave behind,
 But health and diversion unite.*

Enter HODGE.

Hodge. Did your worship call, sir?

Jus. W. Call, sir! Where have you and the rest of the rascals been? but I suppose I need not ask. You must know there is a statute, a fair for hiring servants, held upon my green to-day; we have it usually at this season of the year, and it never fails to put all the folks hereabout out of their senses.

Hodge. Lord, your honour, look out, and see what a nice show they make yonder: they had got pipers, and fiddlers, and were dancing as I came along, for dear life.—I never saw such a mortal throng in our village in all my born days again.

Haw. Why, I like this now; this is as it should be.

Jus. W. No, no, 'tis a very foolish piece of business; good for nothing but to promote idleness, and the getting of bastards; but I shall take measures for preventing it another year, and I doubt whether I am not sufficiently authorized already; for, by an act passed Anno undecimo Caroli primi, which empowers a justice of peace, who is lord of the manor—

Haw. Come, come, never mind the act; let me tell you, this is a very proper, a very useful meeting. I want a servant or two myself: I must go see what your market affords; and you shall go, and the girls, my little Lucy and the other young rogue, and we'll make a day on't as well as the rest.

Jus. W. I wish, master Hawthorn, I could teach you to be a little more sedate: why won't you take pattern by me, and consider your dignity? Ods heart, I don't wonder you are not a rich man; you laugh too much ever to be rich.

Haw. Right, neighbour Woodcock! health, good humour, and competence, is my motto: and, if my executors have a mind, they are welcome to make it my epitaph.

AIR.

*The honest heart, whose thoughts are clear
 From fraud, disguise, and guile,
 Need neither fortune's frowning fear,
 Nor court the harlot's smile.
 The greatness that would make us grace
 Is but an empty thing;
 What more than mirth would mortals have?
 The cheerful man's a king.* [Exeunt.

Enter LUCINDA, HODGE going off.

Luc. Hist, hist, Hodge!

Hodge. Who calls? Here am I.

Luc. Well, have you been?

Hodge. Been? ay, I ha' been far enough, an that be all: you never knew anything fall out so crossly in your born days.

Luc. Why, what's the matter?

Hodge. Why, you know, I dare not take a horse out of his worship's stables this morning, for fear it should be missed, and breed questions; and our old nag at home was so cruelly beat i' the hoofs, that, poor beast, it had not a foot to set to ground; so I was fain to go to farmer Ploughshare's, at the Grange, to borrow the loan of his bald filly; and, would you think it? after walking all that way, de'el from me, if the cross-grained toad did not deny me the favour.

Luc. Unlucky!

Hodge. Well, then I went my ways to the King's-head in the village, but all their cattle were at plough; and I was as far to seek below at the turnpike: so, at last, for want of a better, I was forced to take up with dame Quickset's blind mare.

Luc. Oh, then you have been?

Hodge. Yes, yes, I ha' been.

Luc. Psha! why did you not say so at once?

Hodge. Ay, but I have had a main tiresome jaunt on't, for she is a sorry jade at best.

Luc. Well, well, did you see Mr. Eustace, and what did he say to you? Come, quick; have you e'er a letter?

Hodge. Yes, he gave me a letter, if I ha'na' lost it.

Luc. Lost it, man!

Hodge. Nay, nay, have a bit of patience: ad-wawns! you are always in such a hurry. [*Rummaging his pockets.*] I put it somewhere in this waistcoat pocket. Oh, here it is.

Luc. So; give it me. [*Reads the letter to herself.*]

Hodge. Lord a mercy! how my arm aches with beating that plaguy beast! I'll be hang'd if I won't na' rather ha' thrash'd half a day, than ha' ridden her.

Luc. Well, Hodge, you have done your business very well.

Hodge. Well, have not I now?

Luc. Yes; Mr. Eustace tells me in this letter, that he will be in the green lane, at the other end of the village, by twelve o'clock; you know where he came before?

Hodge. Ay, ay.

Luc. Well, you must go there, and wait till he arrives! and watch your opportunity to introduce him, across the fields, into the little summer-house, on the left side of the garden.

Hodge. That's enough.

Luc. But take particular care that nobody sees you.

Hodge. I warrant you.

Luc. Not for your life, drop a word of it to any mortal.

Hodge. Never fear me.

Luc. And, Hodge—

AIR.—HODGE.

Well, well, say no more;

Sure, you told me before;

I see the full length of my tether:

Do you think I'm a fool,

That I need go to school?

I can spell you and put you together.

A word to the wise,

Will always suffice:

Adsniggers! go talk to your parrot;

I'm not such an elf,

Though I say it myself,

But I know a sheep's head from a carrot.

[*Exit.*]

Luc. How severe is my case! Here I am obliged

to carry on a clandestine correspondence with a man in all respects my equal, because the oddity of my father's temper is such, that I dare not tell him I have ever yet seen the person I should like to marry: but perhaps he has quality in his eye; and hopes, one day or other, as I am his only child, to match me with a title: vain imagination!

AIR.

Cupid, god of soft persuasion,

Take the helpless lover's part:

Seize, oh seize some kind occasion

To reward a faithful heart.

Justly those we tyrants call,

Who the body would enthrall;

Tyrants of more cruel kind,

Those, who would enslave the mind.

What is grandeur? foe to rest,

Childish mummery at best.

Happy I, in humble state;

Catch, ye fools, the glittering bait. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—*A Field, with a stile.*

Enter HODGE, followed by MADGE.

Hodge. What does the wench follow me for? Ods flesh! folk may well talk, to see you dangling after me everywhere, like a tantony pig: find some other road, can't you: and don't keep wherreting me with your nonsense.

Madge. Nay, pray you, Hodge, stay, and let me speak to you a bit.

Hodge. Well; what say'n you?

Madge. Dear heart, how can you be so barbarous? and is this the way you serve me after all; and won't you keep your word, Hodge?

Hodge. Why, no, I won't, I tell you; I have chang'd my mind.

Madge. Nay, but surely, surely—consider, Hodge, you are obligated in conscience to make me an honest woman.

Hodge. Obligated in conscience! How am I obligated?

Madge. Because you are; and none but the basest of rogues would bring a poor girl to shame, and afterwards leave her to the wide world.

Hodge. Bring you to shame! Don't make me speak, Madge; don't make me speak.

Madge. Yes, do; speak your worst.

Hodge. Why, then, if you go to that, you were fain to leave your own village down in the west, for a bastard you had by the clerk of the parish; and I'll bring the man shall say it to your face.

Madge. No, no, Hodge, 'tis no such thing; 'tis a base lie of farmer Ploughshare's. But I know what makes you false-hearted to me; that you may keep company with young madam's waiting-woman; and I am sure she's no fit body for a poor man's wife.

Hodge. How should you know what she's fit for? She's fit for as much as you, mayhap; don't find fault with your betters, Madge.

Enter YOUNG MEADOWS.

Oh! Master Thomas, I have a word or two to say to you; pray, did not you go down the village one day last week, with a basket of something upon your shoulder?

Young M. Well, and what then?

Hodge. Nay, not much; only the hostler at the Green-man was saying, as how there was a passenger at their house as seed you go by, and said he know'd you; and axt a mort of questions. So, I thought I'd tell you.

Young M. The devil! ask questions about me? I know nobody in this part of the country: there must be some mistake in it. Come hither, Hodge.

[*Exit HODGE and Young MRADOWS.*]

Madge. A nasty, ungrateful fellow, to use me at this rate, after being to him as I have. Well, well; I wish all poor girls would take warning by my mishap, and never have anything to say to none of them.

AIR.

How happy were my days till now!

I ne'er did sorrow feel;

I rose with joy to milk my cow,

Or turn my spinning-wheel.

My heart was lighter than a fly,

Like any bird I sung;

Till he pretended love, and I

Believ'd his flattery tongue.

Oh, the fool, the silly, silly fool,

Who trusts what man may be;

I wish I was a maid again,

And in my own country.

Exit.

SCENE IV.—*A Green, with a prospect of a village, and the representation of a statue, or fair.*

Enter Justice WOODCOCK, HAWTHORN, Mrs. DEBORAH WOODCOCK, LUCINDA, ROSETTA, Young MEADOWS, HODGE, and several country people.

Hodge. This way, your worship, this way. Why don't you stand aside there? Here's his worship a-coming.

Countryman. His worship!

Jus. W. Fie, fie, what a crowd's this! Od! I'll put some of them in the stocks. [*Striking a fellow.*] Stand out of the way, sirrah.

Haw. For shame, neighbour. Well, my lad, are you willing to serve the king?

Countryman. Why, can you list ma? Serve the king, measter? No, no; I pay the king, that's enough for me. Ho, ho, ho!

Haw. Well said, Sturdy-boots.

Jus. W. Nay, if you talk to them, they'll answer you.

Haw. I would have them do so; I like they should. Well, madam, is not this a fine sight? I did not know my neighbour's estate had been so well peopled. Are all these his own tenants?

Mrs. D. More than are good of them, Mr. Hawthorn. I don't like to see such a parcel of young hussies fleering with the fellows.

Haw. There's a lass. [*Beckoning to a country girl.*] Come hither, my pretty maid. What brings you here? [*Chuckling her under the chin.*] Do you come to look for a service?

C. Girl. Yes, an't please you.

Haw. Well, and what place are you for?

C. Girl. All work, an't please you.

Jus. W. Ay, ay, I don't doubt it; any work you'll put her to.

Mrs. D. She looks like a brazen one; go, hussy.

Haw. Here's another. [*Catching a girl that goes by.*] What health, what bloom! This is nature's work; no art, no daubing. Don't be ashamed, child; those cheeks of thine are enough to put a whole drawing-room out of countenance.

Hodge. Now, your honour, now the sport will come: the gut-scrapers are here, and some among them are going to sing and dance. Why there's not the like of our statute, mun, in five counties; others are but fools to it.

Serv. Man. Come, good people, make a ring; and stand out, fellow-servants, as many of you as are willing and able to bear a bob. We'll let our masters and mistresses see we can do something at least; if they won't hire us, it sha'n't be our fault. Strike up the servants' medley.

MEDLEY and CHORUS.

Housem. I pray ye, gentles, list to me:

I'm young, and strong, and clean, you see:

I'll not turn tail to any she,

For work that's in the country.

Of all your house the charge I take,

I wash, I scrub, I brew, I bake;

And more can do than here I'll speak,

Depending on your bounty.

Footm. Behold a blade, who knows his trade,

In chamber, hall, and entry:

And what though here I now appear,

I've serv'd the best of gentry.

A footman would you have,

I can dress, and comb, and shave;

For I a handy lad am:

On a message I can go,

And slip a billet-doux,

With "your humble servant, nadam."

Cookm. Who wants a good cook, my hand they must cross;

For plain wholesome dishes I'm ne'er at a loss;

And what are your soups, your ragouts, and your sauce,

Compar'd to the beef of old England,

Compar'd to old English roast beef?

Cart. If you want a young man, with a true honest heart,

Who knows how to manage a plough and a cart,

Here's one for your purpose, come take me and try;

You'll say you ne'er met with a better nor I.

Gee ho, Dobbin, &c.

Chorus. My masters and mistresses, hither repair;

What servants you want, you will find in our fair;

Men and maids fit for all sorts of stations there be;

And, as for the wages, we sha'n't disagree. [Dance.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Parlour in Justice Woodcock's House.*

Enter LUCINDA and EUSTACE.

Luc. Well, am I not a bold adventurer, to bring you into my father's house at noon-day? Though, to say the truth, we are safer here than in the garden; for there is not a human creature under the roof besides ourselves.

Eust. Then why not put our scheme into execution this moment? I have a post-chaise ready.

Luc. Fie: how can you talk so lightly? I protest I am half afraid to have anything to do with you; and my aunt Deborah says—

Eust. What! by all the rapture my heart now feels—

Luc. Oh, to be sure, promise and vow; it sounds prettily, and never fails to impose upon a fond female.

Eust. Well, I see you've a mind to divert yourself with me; but I wish I could prevail on you to be a little serious.

Luc. Seriously, then, what would you desire me to say? I have promised to run away with you:

which is as great a concession as any reasonable lover can expect from his mistress.

Eust. Yes; but my dear, provoking angel, you have not told me when you will run away with me.

Luc. Why, that, I confess, requires some consideration.

Eust. Yet, remember, while you are deliberating, the season, now so favourable to us, may elapse, never to return.

Enter Justice WOODCOCK, and Mrs. DEBORAH WOODCOCK.

Jus. W. Hoity-toity! who have we here?

Luc. My father, and my aunt!

Eust. The devil! what shall we do?

Luc. Take no notice of them, only observe me.—[*Speaks aloud to EUSTACE.*] Upon my word, sir, I don't know what to say to it, unless the justice was at home; he is just stepp'd into the village with some company; but, if you'll sit down a moment, I dare swear, he will return—[*Pretends to see the Justice.*] O! sir, here is my papa!

Jus. W. Here is your papa, hussy! Who's this you have got with you? Hark you, sirrah, who are you, ye dog? and what's your business here?

Eust. Sir, this is a language I am not used to.

Jus. W. Don't answer me, you rascal; I am a justice of the peace; and if I hear a word out of your mouth, I'll send you to jail.

Mrs. D. Send him to jail, brother, that's right.

Jus. W. And how do you know it's right? How should you know anything's right? Sister Deborah, you are never in the right.

Mrs. D. Brother, this is the man I have been telling you about so long.

Jus. W. What man, goody Wiseacre?

Mrs. D. Why the man your daughter has an intrigue with: but I hope you will not believe it now, though you see it with your own eyes. Come, hussy, confess, and don't let your father make a fool of himself any longer.

Luc. Confess what, aunt? This gentleman is a music-master: he goes about the country, teaching ladies to play and sing; and has been recommended to instruct me; I could not turn him out when he came to offer his service; and did not know what answer to give him till I saw my papa.

Jus. W. A music-master?

Eust. Yes, sir, that's my profession.

Mrs. D. It's a lie, young man; it's a lie. Brother, he is no more a music-master than I am a music-master.

Jus. W. What then, you know better than the fellow himself, do you? and you will be wiser than all the world?

Mrs. D. Brother, he does not look like a music-master.

Jus. W. He does not look! ha, ha, ha! Was ever such a poor stupe? Well, and what does he look like, then? But I suppose you mean he is not dressed like a music-master. Why, you silly wretch, these whipper-snappers set up for gentlemen now-a-days, and give themselves as many airs as if they were people of quality.—Hark you, friend, I suppose you don't come within the vagrant act; you have some etitled habitation. Where do you live?

Mrs. D. It's an easy matter for him to tell you a wrong place.

Jus. W. Sister Deborah, don't provoke me.

Mrs. D. I wish, brother, you would let me examine him a little.

Jus. W. You sha'n't say a word to him; you sha'n't say a word to him.

Mrs. D. She says he was recommended here, brother; ask him by whom.

Jus. W. No, I won't now, because you desire it.

Luc. If my papa did ask the question, aunt, it would be very easily resolved.

Mrs. D. Who bid you speak, Mrs. Nimble-chops? I suppose the man has a tongue in his head, to answer for himself.

Jus. W. Will nobody stop that prating old woman's mouth for me? Get out of the room.

Mrs. D. Well, so I can, brother; I don't want to stay; but remember, I tell you, you will make yourself ridiculous in this affair: for through your own obstinacy, you will have your daughter run away with, before your face.

Jus. W. My daughter! who will run away with my daughter?

Mrs. D. That fellow will.

Jus. W. Go, go, you are a wicked, censorious woman.

Luc. Why, sure, madam, you must think me very forward, indeed.

Jus. W. Ay, she judges of others by herself; I remember when she was a girl, her mother dared not trust her the length of her apron-string; she was clambering upon every fellow's back.

Mrs. D. I was not.

Jus. W. You were.

Luc. Well, but why so violent?

AIR.—LUCINDA.

*Believe me, dear aunt,
If you rave thus and rant,
You'll never a lover persuade;
The men will all fly,
And leave you to die,
Oh, terrible chance! an old maid.*

*How happy the lass,
Must she come to this pass,
Who ancient virginity 'scapes!
'Twere better on earth
Have five brats at a birth,
Than in hell be a leader of apes.*

[*Exit Mrs. D.*]

Jus. W. Well done, Lucy, send her about her business; a troublesome, foolish creature. Does she think I want to be directed by her?—Come hither, my lad, you look tolerably honest. [*LUCY retires.*]

Eust. I hope, sir, I shall never give you cause to alter your opinion.

Jus. W. No, no; I am not easily deceived; I am generally pretty right in my conjectures.—You must know, I had once a little notion of music myself, and learned upon the fiddle. I could play the Trumpet Minuet, and Buttered Peas, and two or three tunes. I remember, when I was in London about thirty years ago, there was a song, a great favourite at our club at Nando's Coffee-house; Jack Pickle used to sing it for us—a droll fish! but 'tis an old thing: I dare swear you have heard of it often.

AIR.

*When I follow'd a lass that was froward and shy,
Oh! I stuck to her stuff, till I made her comply;
Oh! I took her so lovingly round the waist,
And I smack'd her lips and held her fast:*

*When hugg'd and haul'd,
She squeal'd and squall'd;
But though she wou'd all I did was in vain,
Yet I pleased her so well that she bore it again:*

*Then hoity-toity,
Whisking, fisking,
Green was her gown upon the grass:
Oh! suck were the joys of our dancing days.*

Eust. Very well, sir, upon my word.

Just. W. No, no, I forget all those things now; but I could do a little at them once.—Well, stay and eat your dinner, and we'll talk about your teaching the girl:—Lucy, take your master to your spinnet, and show him what you can do—I must go and give some orders. *Then hoity-toity, &c.*

[*Erit, singing.*

Luc. My sweet, pretty papa, your most obedient, humble servant; ha, ha, ha! was ever so whimsical an accident? Well, sir, what do you think of this?

Eust. Think of it! I am in a maze.

Luc. O your awkwardness! I was frightened out of my wits, lest you should not take the hint; and, if I had not turned matters so cleverly, we should have been utterly undone.

Eust. 'Sdeath! why would you bring me into the house? We could expect nothing else: besides, since they did surprise us, it would have been better to have discovered the truth.

Luc. Yes, and never have seen one another afterwards. I know my father better than you do; he has taken it into his head I have no inclination for a husband; and let me tell you, that is our best security; for if once he has said a thing, he will not be easily persuaded to the contrary.

Eust. And pray what am I to do now?

Luc. Why, as I think all danger is pretty well over, since he has invited you to dinner with him, stay; only be cautious of your behaviour; and, in the mean time, I will consider what is next to be done.

Eust. Had not I better go to your father?

Luc. Do so, while I endeavour to recover myself a little out of the flurry this affair has put me in.

[*Ereunt.*

SCENE II.—A Garden.

Enter ROSETTA.

Ros. If ever poor creature was in a pitiable condition, surely I am. The deuce take this fellow! I cannot get him out of my head; and yet I would fain persuade myself I don't care for him: well, but surely I am not in love; let me examine my heart a little: I saw him kissing one of the maids the other day; I could have boxed his ears for it, and have done nothing but find fault and quarrel with the girl ever since. Why was I uneasy at his toying with another woman? What was it to me? Then I dream of him almost every night—but that may proceed from his being generally uppermost in my thoughts all day:—Oh! worse and worse!—Well, he is certainly a pretty lad; he has something very uncommon about him, considering his rank. And now, let me only put the case: if he were not a servant, would I or would I not prefer him to all the men I ever saw? Why, to be sure, if he were not a servant.—In short, I'll ask myself no more questions, for the further I examine, the less reason I shall have to be satisfied.

AIR.

*How blest the maid whose bosom
No headstrong passion knows:
Her days in joy she passes,
Her nights in calm repose.
Where'er her fancy leads her,
No pain, no fear invades her;
But pleasure,
Without measure,
From every object flows.*

Enter Young MEADOWS.

Young M. Do you come into the garden, Mrs. Rosetta, to put my lilies and roses out of counte-

nance; or, to save me the trouble of watering my flowers, by reviving them? The sun seems to have hid himself a little, to give you an opportunity of supplying his place.

Ros. Where could he get that now? he never read it in the Academy of Compliments. [*Aside.*

Young M. Come, don't affect to treat me with contempt; I can suffer anything better than that. In short, I love you; there is no more to be said: I am angry with myself for it, and strive all I can against it; but in spite of myself, I love you.

Ros. Really, Mr. Thomas, this is very improper language; it is what I don't understand; I can't suffer it, and, in short, I don't like it.

Young M. Perhaps you don't like me.

Ros. Well, perhaps I don't.

Young M. Nay, but 'tis not so; come, confess you love me.

Ros. Confess! Indeed, I shall confess no such thing: besides, to what purpose should I confess it?

Young M. Why, as you say, I don't know to what purpose; only, it would be a satisfaction to me to hear you say so; that's all.

Ros. Why, if I did love you, I can assure you, you would never be the better for it: women are apt enough to be weak; we cannot always answer for our inclinations, but it is in our power not to give way to them; and if I were so silly, I say if I were so indiscreet, which I hope I am not, as to entertain an improper regard, when people's circumstances are quite unsuitable, and there are obstacles in the way that cannot be surmounted—

Young M. Oh! to be sure, Mrs. Rosetta; to be sure: you are entirely in the right of it:—I know very well you and I can never come together.

Ros. Well, then, since that is the case, as I assure you it is, I think we had better behave accordingly.

Young M. Suppose we make a bargain, then, never to speak to one another any more.

Ros. With all my heart.

Young M. Nor look at, nor, if possible, think of, one another?

Ros. I am very willing.

Young M. And as long as we stay in the house together, never to take any notice?

Ros. It is the best way.

Young M. Why, I believe it is. Well, Mrs. Rosetta—

DUET

Ros. *Be gone—I agree;
From this moment we're free;
Already, the matter I've sworn:*

Young M. *Yet let me complain
Of the fates that ordain
A trial so hard to be borne.*

Ros. *When things are not fit,
We should calmly submit;
No cure in reluctance we find:*

Young M. *Then, thus I obey,
Tear your image away,
And banish you quite from my mind.*

Ros. Well, now I think I am somewhat easier: I am glad I have come to this explanation with him, because it puts an end to things at once.

Young M. Hold, Mrs. Rosetta, pray stay a moment. The airs this girl gives herself are intolerable: I find now the cause of her behaviour; she despises the meanness of my condition, thinking a gardener below the notice of a lady's waiting-woman: 'sdeath, I have a good mind to discover myself to her. [*Aside.*

Ros. Poor wretch! he does not know what to make of it: I believe he is heartily mortified, but I must not pity him. [*Aside.*]

Young M. It shall be so: I will discover myself to her, and leave the house directly.—*Mrs. Rosetta*—Plague on it, yonder's the justice come into the garden.

Ros. O lord! he will walk round this way: pray go about your business; I would not for the world he should see us together.

Young M. The devil take him; he's gone across the parterre, and can't hobble here this half-hour: I must and will have a little conversation with you.

Ros. Some other time.

Young M. This evening, in the greenhouse, at the lower end of the canal; I have something to communicate to you of importance. Will you meet me there?

Ros. Meet you!

Young M. Ay; I have a secret to tell you; and I swear, from that moment, there shall be an end of everything betwixt us.

Ros. Well, well, pray leave me now.

Young M. You'll come, then?

Ros. I don't know; perhaps I may.

Young M. Nay, but promise.

Ros. What signifies promising? I may break my promise—but I tell you, I will.

Young M. Enough; yet, before I leave you, let me desire you to believe, I love you more than ever man loved woman; and that when I relinquish you, I give up all that can make my life supportable.

AIR.

Oh! how shall I, in language weak,

My ardent passion tell;

Or form my falt'ring tongue to speak

That cruel word, farewell?

Farewell—but know, though thus we part,

My thoughts can never stray:

Go where I will, my constant heart

Must with my charmer stay. [Exit.

Enter Justice Woodcock.

Ros. What can this be that he wants to tell me? I have a strange curiosity to hear it, methinks. Well—

Jus. W. Hem! hem! Rosetta!

Ros. So, I thought the devil would throw him in my way; now for a courtship of a different kind; but I'll give him a surfeit. [*Aside.*] Did you call me, sir?

Jus. W. Ay, where are you running so fast?

Ros. I was only going into the house, sir.

Jus. W. Well, but come here; come here, I say.

[*Looking about.*] How do you do, Rosetta?

Ros. Thank you, sir, pretty well.

Jus. W. Why, you look as fresh and bloomy to-day—Adad, you little slut, I believe you are painted.

Ros. O, sir! you are pleased to compliment.

Jus. W. Adad, I believe you are—let me try—

Ros. Lord, sir!

Jus. W. What brings you into this garden so often, Rosetta? I hope you don't get eating green fruit and trash; or have you a hankering after some lover in dowlas, who spoils my trees by engraving true-lovers' knots on them, with your horn and buck-handled knives? I see your name written upon the ceiling of the servants'-hall, with the smoke of a candle; and I suspect—

Ros. Not me, I hope, sir. No, sir, I am of another-guess mind, I assure you; for I have heard say, men are false and fickle.

Jus. W. Ay, that's your flaunting, idle, young fellows; so they are—and they are so d—d impudent,

I wonder a woman will have anything to say to them; besides, all that they want is something to brag of, and tell again.

Ros. Why, I own, sir, if ever I were to make a slip, it should be with an elderly gentleman; about seventy, or seventy-five years of age.

Jus. W. No, child, that's out of reason; though I have known many a man turned of three-score with a hale constitution.

Ros. Then, sir, he should be troubled with the gout, have a good, strong, substantial, winter cough; and I should not like him the worse, if he had a small touch of the rheumatism.

Jus. W. Pho, pho! Rosetta, this is jesting.

Ros. No, sir; everybody has a taste, and I have mine.

Jus. W. Well but, Rosetta, have you thought of what I was saying to you?

Ros. What was it, sir?

Jus. W. Ah, you know; you know well enough, hussy.

Ros. Dear sir, consider what has a poor servant to depend on but her character? and I have heard you gentlemen will talk one thing before, and another after.

Jus. W. I tell you again, these are the idle, flashy, young dogs: but when you have to do with a staid, sober man—

Ros. And a magistrate, sir!

Jus. W. Right; it's quite a different thing. Well, shall we, Rosetta; shall we?

Ros. Really, sir, I don't know what to say to it.

AIR.

Young I am, and sore afraid;

Would you hurt a harmless maid?

Lead an innocent astray?

Tempt me not, kind sir, I pray.

Men too often we believe;

And, should you my faith deceive,

Ruin first, and then forsake,

Sure my tender heart would break.

Jus. W. Why, you silly girl, I won't do you any

Ros. Won't you, sir? [harm.]

Jus. W. Not I.

Ros. But won't you, indeed, sir?

Jus. W. Why, I tell you I won't.

Ros. Ha, ha, ha!

Jus. W. Hussy, hussy!

Ros. Ha, ha, ha! Your servant, sir, your servant!

[*Exit.*]

Jus. W. Why, you impudent, audacious—

Enter HAWTHORN.

Haw. So, so, justice at odds with gravity! his worship playing at romps! [*Aside.*] Your servant, sir!

Jus. W. Ha! friend Hawthorn!

Haw. I hope I don't spoil sport, neighbour; I thought I had the glimpse of a petticoat as I came in here?

Jus. W. Oh! the maid. Ay, she has been gathering a salad: but come hither, Master Hawthorn, and I'll shew you some alterations I intend to make in my garden.

Haw. No, no, I am no judge of it; besides, I want to talk to you a little more about this. Tell me, Sir Justice, were you helping your maid to gather a salad here, or consulting her taste in your improvements, eh? ha, ha, ha! Let me see, all among the roses: 'egad! I like your notion; but you look a little blank upon it; you are ashamed of the business then, are you?

AIR.

*Oon'-! neighbour, ne'er blush for a trifle like this;
What harm with a fair one to toy and to kiss?
The greatest and gravest—a truce with grimace—
Would do the same thing, were they in the same place.
No age, no profession, no station is free;
To sovereign beauty mankind bends the knee;
That power, resistless, no strength can oppose,
We all love a pretty girl—under the rose.*

Jus. W. I profess, master Hawthorn, this is all Indian, all Cherokee language to me; I don't understand a word of it.

Haw. No, may be not; well, sir, will you read this letter, and try whether you can understand that? It is just brought by a servant, who stays for an answer.

Jus. W. A letter! and to me? [*Taking the letter.*] Yes, it is to me; and yet I am sure it comes from no correspondent that I know of. Where are my spectacles? not but I can see very well without them, master Hawthorn; but this seems to be a sort of crabbed hand. [*Reads.*] *Sir,—I am ashamed of giving you this trouble: but I am informed there is an unthinking boy, a son of mine, now disguised and in your service, in the capacity of a gardener. Tom is a little wild, but an honest lad; and no fool either, though I am his father that say it. Tom! oh, this is Thomas, our gardener; I always thought that he was a better man's child than he appeared to be, though I never mentioned it.*

Haw. Well, well, sir, pray let's hear the rest of the letter.

Jus. W. Stay, where is the place? Oh, here. *I am come in quest of my runaway, and write this at an inn in your village, while I am swallowing a morsel of dinner: because, not having the pleasure of your acquaintance, I did not care to intrude, without giving you notice. Whoever this person is, he understands good manners. I beg leave to wait on you sir; but desire you would keep my arrival a secret, particularly from the young man.*

WILLIAM MEADOWS.

I'll assure you, a very well worded, civil letter. Do you know anything of the person who writes it, neighbour?

Haw. Let me consider; Meadows. By dad! I believe it is Sir William Meadows of Northamptonshire; and, now I remember, I heard some time ago that the heir of that family had absconded, on account of a marriage that was disagreeable to him. It is a good many years since I have seen Sir William, but we were once well acquainted; and, if you please, sir, I will go and conduct him to the house.

Jus. W. Do so, master Hawthorn, do so. But pray, what sort of a man is this Sir William Meadows? Is he a wise man?

Haw. There is no occasion for a man that has five thousand pounds a year to be a conjuror; but I suppose you ask that question because of this story about his son; taking it for granted, that wise parents make wise children.

Jus. W. No doubt of it, master Hawthorn; no doubt of it. I warrant we shall find now, that this young rascal has fallen in love with some minx, against his father's consent. Why, sir, if I had as many children as king Priam had, that we read of at school, in the destruction of Troy, not one of them should serve me so.

Haw. Well, well, neighbour, perhaps not; but we should remember when we were young ourselves; and I was as likely to play an old don such a trick in my day, as e'er a spark in the hundred; nay, be-

tween you and me, I had done it once, had the wench been as willing as I.

AIR.

*My Dolly was the fairest thing!
Her breath disclos'd the sweets of spring;
And if for summer you would seek,
'Twas painted in her eye, her cheek;
Her swelling bosom, tempting ripe,
Of fruitful autumn was the type
But, when my tender tale I told,
I found her heart was winter cold.*

Jus. W. Ah! you were always a scape-grace rattle-cap.

Haw. Ods heart! neighbour Woodcock, don't tell me; young fellows will be young fellows, though we preach till we're hoarse again; and so there's an end on't. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—Justice Woodcock's Hall.

Enter HODGE and MADGE.

Hodge. So, mistress, who let you in?

Madge. Why, I let myself in.

Hodge. Indeed! Marry come up! why then, pray let yourself out again. Times are come to a pretty pass; I think you might have had the manners to knock at the door first. What does the wench stand there for?

Madge. I want to know if his worship's at home?
Hodge. Well, what's your business with his worship?

Madge. Perhaps you will hear that. Lookye, Hodge, it does not signify talking; I am come, once for all, to know what you intends to do? for I won't be made a fool of any longer.

Hodge. You won't?

Madge. No, that's what I won't, by the best man that ever wore a head; I am the make-game of the whole village upon your account; and I'll try whether your master gives you toleration in your doings.

Hodge. You will?

Madge. Yes, that's what I will; his worship shall be acquainted with all your pranks, and see how you will like to be sent for a soldier.

Hodge. There's the door: take a friend's advice, and go about your business.

Madge. My business is with his worship; and I won't go till I sees him.

Hodge. Look you, Madge, if you make any of your orations here, never stir, if I don't set the dogs at you. Will you be gone?

Madge. I won't.

Hodge. Here, Towser; [*whistling.*] whu, whu, whu!

AIR.

*Was ever poor fellow so plag'd with a rizen?
Zawns! Madge, don't provoke me, but mind what I say;
You've chose a wrong parson for playing your tricks on,
So, pack up your alls, and be trudging away;
You'd better be quiet,
And not breed a riot;
'Shlood! must I stand prating with you here all day?
I've got other matters to mind;
Mayhap, you may think me an ass,
But to the contrary you'll find;
A fine piece of work, by the mass!*

Enter ROSETTA.

Ros. Sure, I heard the voice of discord here. As

I live, an admirer of mine; and, if I mistake not, a rival. I'll have some sport with them. How now, fellow servant, what's the matter?

Hodge. Nothing, Mrs. Rosetta, only this young woman wants to speak with his worship; Madge, follow me.

Madge. No, Hodge, this is your fine madam! but I am as good flesh and blood as she, and have as clear a skin too, tho' I mayn't go so gay; and now she's here, I'll tell her a piece of my mind.

Hodge. Hold your tongue, will you?

Madge. No; I'll speak, if I die for it.

Ros. What's the matter, I say?

Hodge. Why, nothing, I tell you; Madge—

Madge. Yes, but it is something; it's all along of she, and she may be ashamed of herself.

Ros. Bless me, child! do you direct your discourse to me?

Madge. Yes, I do, and to nobody else; there was not a kinder soul breathing than he was till of late; I had never a cross word with him till he kept you company; but all the girls about say, there is no such thing as keeping a sweetheart for you.

Ros. Do you hear this, friend Hodge?

Hodge. Why, you don't mind she, I hope? but if that vexes her, I do like you, I do; my mind runs upon nothing else: and if so be as you was agreeable to it, I would marry you to-night, before to-morrow.

Madge. You're a nasty monkey! you are parjur'd, you know you are; and you deserve to have your eyes tore out.

Hodge. Let me come at her; I'll teach you to call names, and abuse folk.

Madge. Do; strike me! You a man!

Ros. Hold, hold! we shall have a battle here presently, and I may chance to get my cap tore off. Never exasperate a jealous woman, 'tis taking a mad bull by the horns; leave me to manage her.

Hodge. You manage her! I'll kick her.

Ros. No, no; it will be more for my credit, to get the better of her by fair means; I warrant I'll bring her to reason.

Hodge. Well, do so then; but may I depend upon you? when shall I speak to the parson?

Ros. We'll talk of it another time. Go!

Hodge. Madge, good bye! [Exit.]

Ros. The brutality of this fellow shocks me! Oh, man! man! you are all alike. A bumpkin here, bred at the barn door—had he been brought up in a court, could he have been more fashionably vicious? Shew me the lord, squire, colonel, or captain of them all, that could outdo him!

Madge. I am ready to burst; I can't stay in the place any longer.

Ros. Hold, child! come hither.

Madge. Don't speak to me, don't you.

Ros. Well, but I have something to say to you of consequence, and that will be for your good; I suppose this fellow promised you marriage?

Madge. Ay; or he never should have prevail'd upon me.

Ros. Well, now you see the ill consequence of trusting to such promises; when once a man hath cheated a woman of her virtue, she has no longer hold of him; he despises her for wanting that which he has robb'd her of; and, like a lawless conqueror, triumphs in the ruin he has occasioned.

Madge. Anan!

Ros. However, I hope the experience you have got, though somewhat dearly purchased, will be of use to you for the future; and, as to any designs I have upon the heart of your lover, you may make

yourself easy; for I assure you, I shall be no dangerous rival; so go your ways, and be a good girl.

[Exit.]

Madge. Yes; I don't very well understand her talk, but I suppose that's as much as to say she'll keep him all to herself; well, let her; who cares? I don't fear getting better nor he is any day of the year, for the matter of that: and I have a thought come into my head, that, may be, will be more to my advantage.

AIR.

*Since Hodge proves ungrateful, no further I'll seek;
But go up to town in the waggon next week;
A service in London is no such disgrace,
And Register's office will get me a place:
Bet Blossom went there, and soon met with a friend;
Folks say, in her silks, she's now standing an end!
Then, why should not I the same maxim pursue,
And better my fortune, as other girls do?* [Exit.]

SCENE IV.—A Chamber.

Enter ROSETTA and LUCINDA

Ros. Ha, ha, ha! Oh, admirable; most delectably ridiculous! And so, your father is content he should be a music-master, and will have him such, in spite of all your aunt can say to the contrary?

Luc. My father and he, child, are the best companions you ever saw; and have been singing together the most hideous duets! Bobbing Joan, and old Sir Simon the King: heaven knows where Eustace could pick them up.

Ros. And have you resolved to take wing to-night?

Luc. This very night, my dear: my swain will go from hence this evening, but no further than the inn, where he has left his horses; and, at twelve precisely, he will be with a post-chaise at the little gate that opens from the lawn into the road, where I have promised to meet him.

Ros. Then depend upon't, I'll bear you company.

Luc. We shall slip out when the family are asleep, and I have prepared Hodge already. Well, I hope we shall be happy.

Ros. Never doubt it.

AIR.

*In love should there meet a fond pair,
Untutor'd by fashion or art;
Whose wishes are warm and sincere,
Whose words are th' excess of the heart:
If aught of substantial delight,
On this side the stars can be found,
'Tis sure when that couple unite,
And Cupid by Hymen is crown'd.*

Enter HAWTHORN.

Haw. Lucy, where are you?

Luc. Your pleasure, sir.

Ros. Mr. Hawthorn, your servant.

Haw. What, my little water-wagtail! The very couple I wished to meet: come hither, both of you.

Ros. Now, sir, what would you say to both of us?

Haw. Why, let me look at you a little; have you got on your best gowns, and your best faces? If not, go and trick yourselves out directly; for I'll tell you a secret: there will be a young bachelor in the house within these three hours, that may fall to the share of one of you, if you look sharp; but whether mistress or maid—

Ros. Ay, marry, this is something; but how do you know whether either mistress or maid will think him worth acceptance?

Haw. Follow me, follow me; I warrant you.

Luc. I can assure you, Mr. Hawthorn, I am very difficult to please.

Ros. And so am I, sir.

Haw. Indeed!

TRIO.

*Well, come, let us hear what the swain must possess,
Who may hope at your feet to implore with success?*

Ros. He must be, first of all,

Straight, comely, and tall:

Luc. Neither awkward,

Ros. Nor foolish,

Luc. Nor apish,

Ros. Nor mulish;

Luc. } Nor yet should his fortune be small.

Haw. What think'st of a captain?

Luc. All bluster and wounds.

Haw. What think'st of a squire?

Ros. To be left for his hounds.

Luc. } *The youth that is form'd to my mind,
Must be gentle, obliging, and kind;*

Ros. } *Of all things in nature love me;
Have sense both to speak and to see,
Yet sometimes be silent and blind.*

Haw. } *'Fore George, a most rare matrimonial receipt;*

Ros. } *Observe it, ye fair, in the choice of a mate;*

Luc. } *Remember, 'tis wedlock determines your fate.* [Exeunt.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Parlour in Justice Woodcock's House.

Enter Sir WILLIAM MEADOWS, followed by HAWTHORN.

Sir W. Well, this is excellent, this is mighty good, this is mighty merry, faith; ha, ha, ha! Was ever the like heard of? That my boy, Tom, should run away from me, for fear of being forced to marry a girl he never saw; that she should scamper from her father, for fear of being forced to marry him; and that they should run into each other's arms this way in disguise, by mere accident; against their consents, and without knowing it, as a body may say? May I never do an ill turn, Master Hawthorn, if it is not one of the oddest adventures partly—

Haw. Why, sir William, it is a romance, a novel, a pleasanter history by half than the loves of Dorastus and Faunia: we shall have ballads made of it within these two months, setting forth how a young squire became a serving-man of low degree; and it will be stuck up with Margaret's Ghost, and the Spanish Lady, against the walls of every cottage in the country.

Sir W. But what pleases me best of all, Master Hawthorn, is the ingenuity of the girl. May I never do an ill turn, when I was called out of the room, and the servant said she wanted to speak to me, if I knew what to make on't; but when the little gipsy took me aside, and told me her name, and how matters stood, I was quite astonished, as a body may say; and could not believe it partly, till her young friend that she is with here, assured me of the truth on't:—Indeed, at last, I began to recollect her face, though I have not set eyes on her

before, since she was the height of a full-grown greyhound.

Haw. Well, sir William, your son as yet knows nothing of what has happened, nor of your being come hither; and, if you'll follow my counsel, we'll have some sport with him. He and his mistress were to meet in the garden this evening by appointment; she's gone to dress herself in all her airs; will you let me direct your proceedings in this affair?

Sir W. With all my heart, master Hawthorn, with all my heart; do what you will with me, say what you please for me; I am so overjoyed, and so happy; and may I never do an ill turn, but I am very glad to see you too; ay, and partly as much pleased at that as anything else, for we have been merry together before now, when we were some years younger: well, and how has the world gone with you, master Hawthorn, since we saw one another last?

Haw. Why, pretty well, sir William; I have no reason to complain; every one has a mixture of sour with his sweets: but, in the main, I believe, I have done in a degree as tolerably as my neighbours.

AIR.

*The world is a well-furnish'd table,
Where guests are promiscuously set;
We all fare as well as we are able,
And scramble for what we can get.*

*My simile holds to a tittle,
Some gorge, while some scarce have a taste;
But if I'm content with a little,
Enough is as good as a feast.*

Enter ROSETTA.

Ros. Sir William, I beg pardon for detaining you, but I have had so much difficulty in adjusting my borrowed plumes.

Sir W. May I never do an ill turn, but they fit you to a T, and you look very well, so you do: Cocksbones, how your father will chuckle when he comes to hear this! Her father, master Hawthorn, is as worthy a man as lives by bread, and has been almost out of his senses for the loss of her. But tell me, hussy, has not this been all a scheme, a piece of conjuration between you and my son? Faith, I am half persuaded it has, it looks so like hocus-pocus, as a body may say.

Ros. Upon my honour, sir William, what has happened has been the mere effect of chance; I came hither unknown to your son, and he unknown to me: I never in the least suspected that Thomas the gardener was other than his appearance spoke him; and least of all, that he was a person with whom I had so close a connexion. Mr. Hawthorn can testify the astonishment I was in when he first informed me of it; but I thought it was my duty to come to an immediate explanation with you.

Sir W. Is not she a neat wench, master Hawthorn? May I never do an ill turn, but she is—but you little, plaguy devil, how came this love affair between you?

Ros. I have told you the whole truth very ingeniously, sir; since your son and I have been fellow-servants, as I may call it, in this house, I have had more than reason to suspect he has taken a liking to me; and I will own, with equal frankness, had I not looked upon him as a person so much below me, I should have had no objection to receive his courtship.

Haw. Well said, by the lord Harry, all above board, fair and open.

Ros. Perhaps I may be censured by some for this candid declaration; but I love to speak my sentiments; and I assure you, Sir William, in my opinion, I should prefer a gardener with your son's good qualities, to a knight of the shire without them.

Haw. Well but, sir, we lose time; is not this about the hour appointed to meet in the garden?

Ros. Pretty near it.

Haw. Oons then, what do we stay for? Come, my old friend, come along; and by the way we will consult how to manage your interview.

Sir W. Ay, but I must speak a word or two to my man about the horses first.

[*Exeunt Sir W. and Haw.*]

Enter Hodge.

Ros. Well, what's the business?

Hodge. Madam! mercy on us, I crave pardon!

Ros. Why, Hodge, don't you know me?

Hodge. Mrs. Rosetta!

Ros. Ay.

Hodge. Know you! ecod, I don't know whether I do or not; never stir, if I did not think it was some lady belonging to the strange gentlefolks: why, you ben't dizen'd this way to go to the statute dance presently, be you?

Ros. Have patience and you'll see; but is there any thing amiss, that you came in so abruptly?

Hodge. Amiss! why there's ruination.

Ros. How? where?

Hodge. Why, with Miss Lucinda: her aunt has catch'd she and the gentleman above stairs, and overheard all their love discourse.

Ros. You don't say so!

Hodge. Ecod, I had like to have popp'd in among them this instant; but, by good luck, I heard Mrs. Deborah's voice, and ran down again as fast as ever my legs would carry me.

Ros. Is your master in the house?

Hodge. What, his worship? no, no, he is gone into the fields to talk with the reapers and people.

Ros. Poor Lucinda! I wish I could go up to her; but I am so engaged with my own affairs.

Hodge. Mistress Rosetta!

Ros. Well.

Hodge. Odds bobs, I must have one smack of your sweet lips.

Ros. Oh, stand off; you know I never allow liberties.

Hodge. Nay, but why so coy? there's reason in roasting of eggs; I would not deny you such a thing.

Ros. That's kind; ha, ha, ha! but what will become of Lucinda? Sir William waits for me, I must be gone. Friendship, a moment by your leave; yet, as our sufferings have been mutual, so shall our joys; I already lose remembrance of all former pains and anxieties.

AIR.

*The traveller benighted,
And led through weary ways,
The lamp of day new lighted,
With joy the dawn surveys.
The rising prospects viewing,
Each look is forward cast;
He smiles, his course pursuing,
Nor thinks on what is past.*

[*Exit.*]

Hodge. Hist! stay! don't I hear a noise?

Luc. [*Without.*] Well, but dear, dear aunt—

Mrs. D. [*Without.*] You need not speak to me, for it does not signify.

Hodge. Adwawns, they are coming here! ecod, I'll get out of the way; Murraim take it, this door is bolted now—so, so.

Enter Mrs. DEBORAH WOODCOCK, driving in LUCINDA before her.

Mrs. D. Get along, get along; you are a scandal to the name of Woodcock; but I was resolved to find you out; for I have suspected you a great while, though your father, silly man, will have you such a poor innocent.

Luc. [*Aside.*] What shall I do?

Mrs. D. I was determined to discover what you and your pretended music-master were about, and lay in wait on purpose: I believe he thought to escape me, by slipping into the closet when I knocked at the door; but I was even with him; for now I have him under lock and key; and please the fates there he shall remain till your father comes in: I will convince him of his error, whether he will or not.

Luc. You won't be so cruel, I'm sure you won't: I thought I had made you my friend by telling you the truth.

Mrs. D. Telling me the truth, quotha! did I not overhear your scheme of running away to-night, through the partition? did I not find the very bundles pack'd up in the room with you, ready for going off? No, brazen-face, I found out the truth by my own sagacity, though your father says I am a fool, but now we'll be judged who is the greatest; and you, Mr. Rascal; my brother shall know what an honest servant he has got.

Hodge. Madam!

Mrs. D. You were to have been aiding and assisting them in their escape, and have been the go-between, it seems; the letter-carrier!

Hodge. Who? me, madam!

Mrs. D. Yes, you, sirrah.

Hodge. Miss Lucinda, did I ever carry a letter for you? I'll make my affidavit before his worship—

Mrs. D. Go, go, you are a villain; hold your tongue.

Luc. I own, aunt, I have been very faulty in this affair; I don't pretend to excuse myself; but we are all subject to frailties; consider that, and judge of me by yourself; you were once young and inexperienced as I am.

Mrs. D. This is mighty pretty, romantic stuff! but you learn it out of your play-books and novels. Girls in my time had other employments. we worked at our needles, and kept ourselves from idle thoughts; before I was your age, I had finished, with my own fingers, a complete set of chairs and a fire-screen in tent-stitch, four counterpanes in Mar-seilles quilting, and the Creed and the Ten Commandments in the hair of our family; it was framed and glaz'd, and hung over the parlour chimney-piece, and your poor, dear grandfather was prouder of it than e'er a picture in his house. I never looked into a book, but when I said my prayers, except it was the Complete Housewife, or the great Family Receipt Book: whereas, you are always at your studies! Ah! I never knew a woman come to good, that was fond of reading.

Luc. Well pray, madam, let me prevail on you to give me the key to let Mr. Eustace out, and I promise I never will proceed a step further in this business without your advice and approbation.

Mrs. D. Have not I told you already my resolution? Where are my clogs and my bonnet? I'll go out to my brother in the fields; I'm a fool, you know, child; now let's see what the wits will think of themselves. Don't hold me. [*Exit.*]

Luc. I'm not going; I have thought of a way to be even with you, so you may do as you please.

[*Exit.*]

Hodge. Well, I thought it would come to this, I'll be shot if I didn't; so, here's a fine job: but what can they do to me? They can't send me to gaol for carrying a letter, seeing, there was no treason in it; and how was I obliged to know my master did not allow of their meetings? The worst they can do, is to turn me off, and I am sure the place is no such great purchase; indeed, I should be sorry to leave Mrs. Rosetta, seeing as how matters are so near being brought to an end betwixt us; but she and I may keep company all as one: and I find Madge has been speaking with Gaffer Broadwheels, the waggoner, about her carriage up to London; so that I have got rid of she, and I am sure I have reason to be main glad of it, for she led me a wearisome life; but that's the way with them all.

AIR.

*A plague o' these wenches, they make such a pother,
When once they have let'n a man have his will;
They're always a whining for something or other,
And cry he's unkind in his carriage.*

What tho' she speaks them ne'er so fairly,

Still they keep teasing, teasing on:

You cannot persuade 'em,

Till promise you've made 'em;

And after they've got it,

They tell you, od rot it!

Their character's blasted, they're ruin'd, undone;

Then to be sure, sir,

There is but one cure, sir,

And all their discourse is of marriage. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—A Greenhouse.

Enter Young MEADOWS.

Young M. I am glad I had the precaution to bring this suit of clothes in my bundle, though I hardly know myself in them again. However, my gardener's jacket goes on no more. I wonder this girl does not come. [*Looking at his watch.*] Perhaps she won't come. Why, then I'll go into the village, take a post-chaise, and depart without any further ceremony.

AIR.

*How much superior beauty aces,
The coldest bosoms find;
But with resistless force it draws,
To sense and sweetness join'd.
The casket, where, to outward show,
The workman's art is seen,
Is doubly valu'd when we know
It holds a gem within.*

Hark! she comes.

Enter Sir WILLIAM MEADOWS and HAWTHORN.

Young M. Confusion! my father! What can this mean?

Sir W. Tom, are not you a sad boy, Tom, to bring me a hundred and forty miles here? May I never do an ill turn, but you deserve to have your head broke; and I have a good mind, partly. What, sirrah, don't you think it worth your while to speak to me?

Young M. Forgive me, sir; I own I have been in fault.

Sir W. In fault! to run away from me because I was going to do you good. May I never do an ill turn, Mr. Hawthorn, if I did not pick out as fine a girl for him, partly, as any in England! and the

rascal ran away from me, and came here and turn'd gardener. And pray what did you propose to yourself, Tom? I know you were always fond of botany, as they call it: did you intend to keep the trade going, and advertise fruit trees and flower-shrubs, to be had at Meadows' nursery?

Haw. No, sir William. I apprehend the young gentleman designed to lay by the profession; for he has quitted the habit already.

Young M. I am so astonished to see you here, sir, that I don't know what to say: but I assure you, if you had not come, I should have returned home directly. Pray, sir, how did you find me out?

Sir W. No matter, Tom, no matter: it was partly by accident as a body may say; but what does that signify? Tell me, boy, how stands your stomach towards matrimony: do you think you could digest a wife now?

Young M. Pray, sir, don't mention it: I shall always behave myself as a dutiful son ought: I will never marry without your consent, and I hope you won't force me to do it against my own

Sir W. Is not this highly provoking, master Hawthorn? Why, sirrah, did you ever see the lady I designed for you?

Young M. Sir, I don't doubt the lady's merit; but, at present, I am not disposed—

Haw. Nay, but, young gentleman, fair and softly; you should pay some respect to your father in this matter.

Sir W. Respect, master Hawthorn! I tell you he shall marry her, or I'll disinherit him! there's once. Look you, Tom; not to make any more words of the matter, I have brought the lady here with me, and I'll see you contracted before we part: or you shall delve and plant cucumbers as long as you live.

Young M. Have you brought the lady here, sir? I am sorry for it.

Sir W. Why sorry? What, then, you won't marry her? We'll see that! Pray, master Hawthorn, conduct the fair one in. [*Exit HAWTHORN.*] Ay, sir, you may fret and dance about; trot at the rate of fifteen miles an hour, if you please; but, marry whip me, I'm resolved.

Enter HAWTHORN and ROSETTA.

Haw. Here is the lady, sir William.

Sir W. Come in, madam; but turn your face from him; he would not marry you because he had not seen you: but I'll let him know my choice shall be his, and he shall consent to marry you before he sees you, or not an acre of estate. Pray, sir, walk this way.

Young M. Sir, I cannot help thinking your conduct a little extraordinary; but since you urge me so closely, I must tell you my affections are engaged.

Sir W. How, Tom, how? And pray sir, who are your affections engaged to? Let me know that.

Young M. To a person, sir, whose rank and fortune may be no recommendation to her, but whose charms and accomplishments entitle her to a monarch. I am sorry, sir, it's impossible for me to comply with your commands, and I hope you will not be offended if I quit your presence.

Sir W. Not I, not in the least: go about your business.

Young M. Sir, I obey.

Haw. Now, madam, is the time.

[*ROSETTA advances. Young MEADOWS turns round, and sees her.*]

AIR.—ROSETTA.

*When we see a lover languish,
And his truth and honour prove,*

*Ah! how sweet to heal his anguish,
And repay him love for love.*

Sir W. Well, Tom, will you go away from me now?
Haw. Perhaps, sir William, your son does not like the lady; and, if so, pray don't put a force upon his inclination.

Young M. You need not have taken this method, sir, to let me see you are acquainted with my folly, whatever my inclinations are.

Sir W. Well but, Tom, suppose I give my consent to your marrying this young woman?

Young M. Your consent, sir?

Sir W. May I never do an ill turn, Tom, if it is not truth! this is my friend's daughter.

Young M. Sir!

Ros. Even so, 'tis very true, indeed. In short, you have not been a more whimsical gentleman, than I have a gentlewoman; but you see we are designed for one another; 'tis plain.

Young M. I know not, madam, what I either hear or see; a thousand things are crowding on my imagination, while, like one just awakened from a dream, I doubt which is reality, which delusion.

Sir W. Well then, Tom, come into the air a bit, and recover yourself.

Young M. Nay, dear sir, have a little patience; do you give her to me?

Sir W. Give her to you! ay, that I do, and my blessing into the bargain.

Young M. Then, sir, I am the happiest man in the world! I inquire no further; here I fix the utmost limits of my hopes and happiness.

DUET.

Young M. *All I wish, in her obtaining,
Fortune can no more impart;*

Ros. *Let my eyes, my thoughts explaining,
Speak the feelings of my heart.*

Young M. *Joy and pleasure never ceasing,
Love with length of years increasing.*

Ros. *Together. Thus my heart and hand surrender,
Here my faith and truth I plight;
Constant still, and kind, and tender,
May our flames burn ever bright!*

Haw. Give you joy, sir; and you, fair lady. And, under favour, I'll salute you too, if there's no fear of jealousy.

Young M. And may I believe this? Pr'ythee tell me, dear Rosetta!

Ros. Step into the house, and I'll tell you everything; I must entreat the good offices of sir William and Mr. Hawthorn immediately: for I am in the utmost uneasiness about my poor friend, Lucinda.

Haw. Why, what's the matter?

Ros. I don't know; but I have reason to fear I left her just now in very disagreeable circumstances; however, I hope if there's any mischief fallen out between her father and her lover—

Haw. The music-master! I thought so.

Sir W. What, is there a lover in the case? May I never do an ill turn, but I am glad, so I am! for we'll make a double wedding; and, by way of celebrating it, take a trip to London, to show the brides some of the pleasures of the town. Come, child, go before us. [Ereunt *Young M.* and *Ros.*] And, master Hawthorn, you shall be of the party.

Haw. Thank you, sir William; I'll go into the house with you, and to church, to see the young folks married; but as to London, I beg to be excused.

AIR.

*If ever I'm catch'd in those regions of smoke,
That seat of confusion and noise,
May I ne'er know the sweets of a slumber unbroke,
Nor the pleasure the country enjoys.
Nay more, let them take me, to punish my sin,
Where, gaping, the cocknies they fleece;
Clap me up with their monsters, cry, masters walk in,
And show me for two pence a-piece.* [Ereunt.

SCENE III.—Justice Woodcock's Hall.

Enter Justice WOODCOCK, Mrs. DEBORAH WOODCOCK, LUCINDA, EUSTACE, and HODGE.

Mrs. D. Why, brother, do you think I can't hear, or see, or make use of my senses? I tell you, I left that fellow locked up in her closet; and, while I have been with you, they have broke open the door, and got him out again.

Jus. W. Well, you hear what they say.

Mrs. D. I care not what they say; it's you encourage them in their impudence. Harkye, hussy, will you face me down that I did not lock the fellow up?

Luc. Really, aunt, I don't know what you mean; when you talk intelligibly, I'll answer you.

Eust. Seriously, madam, this is carrying the jest a little too far.

Mrs. D. What, then, I did not catch you together in her chamber, nor overhear your design of going off to-night, nor find the bundles packed up—

Eust. Ha, ha, ha!

Luc. Why, aunt, you rave.

Mrs. D. Brother, as I am a Christian woman, she confessed the whole affair to me from first to last; and in this very place was down upon her marrow-bones for half an hour together, to beg I would conceal it from you.

Hodge. Oh Lord! Oh Lord!

Mrs. D. What, sirrah, would you brazen me too? Take that. [Boxes his ears.]

Hodge. I wish you would keep your hands to yourself! You strike me, because you have been telling his worship stories.

Jus. W. Why, sister, you are tipsy!

Mrs. D. I tipsy, brother! I—that never touch a drop of any thing strong from year's end to year's end; but now and then, a little anniseed water, when I have got the cholic.

Luc. Well, aunt, you have been complaining of the stomach-ache all day; and may have taken too powerful a dose of your cordial.

Jus. W. Come, come, I see well enough how it is: this is a lie of her own invention, to make herself appear wise: but, you simpleton, did you not know I must find you out?

Enter Sir WILLIAM MEADOWS, HAWTHORN, ROSETTA, and Young MEADOWS.

Young M. Bless me, sir! look who is yonder.

Sir W. Cocksbones! Jack, honest Jack, are you there?

Eust. Plague on't, this rencounter is unlucky; sir William, your servant.

Sir W. Your servant, again and again, heartily your servant; may I never do an ill turn, but I am glad to meet you.

Jus. W. Pray, sir William, are you acquainted with this person?

Sir W. What, with Jack Eustace? why he's my kinsman: his mother and I were cousin-germans once removed, and Jack's a very worthy young

fellow; may I never do an ill turn, if I tell a word of a lie.

Jus. W. Well but, sir William, let me tell you, you know nothing of the matter; this man is a music-master; a thrumner of wire, and a scraper of catgut, and teaches my daughter to sing.

Sir W. What, Jack Eustace a music master! no, no: I know him better.

Eust. 'Sdeath, why should I attempt to carry on this absurd farce any longer? what that gentleman tells you is very true, sir; I am no music-master, indeed.

Jus. W. You are not? you own it then?

Eust. Nay more, sir, I am, as this lady has represented me, [*Pointing to Mrs. DEBORAH.*—your daughter's lover: whom, with her own consent, I did intend to have carried off this night; but now that sir William Meadows is here, to tell you who and what I am, I throw myself upon your generosity; from which I expect greater advantages than I could reap from any imposition on your unsuspicious nature.

Mrs. D. Well, brother, what have you to say for yourself now? You have made a precious day's work of it! Had my advice been taken—Oh, I am ashamed of you; but you are a weak man, and it can't be help'd; however, you should let wiser heads direct you.

Luc. Dear papa, pardon me.

Sir W. Ay, do, sir, forgive her; my cousin Jack will make her a good husband, I'll answer for it.

Ros. Stand out of the way, and let me speak two or three words to his worship. Come, my dear sir, though you refuse all the world, I am sure you can deny me nothing. Love is a venial fault. You know what I mean. Be reconciled to your daughter, I conjure you, by the memory of our past affections. What, not a word?

AIR.

*Go, naughty man, I can't abide you;
Are then your vows so soon forgot?
Ah! now I see if I had tried you,
What would have been my hopeful lot.*

*But here I charge you,—make them happy;
Bless the fond pair, and crown their bliss:*

*Come, be a dear, good-natured pappy,
And I'll reward you with a kiss.*

Mrs. D. Come, turn out of the house, and be thankful that my brother does not hang you, for he could do it: he's a justice of peace; turn out of the house, I say:—

Jus. W. Who gave you authority to turn him out of the house? he shall stay where he is.

Mrs. D. He shan't marry my niece.

Jus. W. Shan't he? but I'll show you the difference now; I say he shall marry her, and what will you do about it?

Mrs. D. And you will give him your estate too, will you?

Jus. W. Yes, I will.

Mrs. D. Why I'm sure he's a vagabond.

Jus. W. I like him the better; I would have him a vagabond.

Mrs. D. Brother, brother!

Haw. Come, come, madam, all's very well; and I see my neighbour is what I always thought him, a man of sense and prudence.

Sir W. May I never do an ill turn, but I say so too.

Jus. W. Here, young fellow, take my daughter, and bless you both together; but hark you, no money till I die. Sister Deborah, you're a fool.

Mrs. D. Ah, brother, brother, you're a silly old man. [*Exit.*]

Haw. Adds me, sir, here are some of your neighbours come to visit you, and I suppose, to make up the company of your statute ball; yonder's music too, I see; shall we enjoy ourselves?

Enter Villagers, &c.

If so, give me your hand.

Jus. W. Why here's my hand, and we will enjoy ourselves. Heaven bless you both, children, I say.

FINALE.

*Hence with cares, complaints, and frowning,
Welcome jollity and joy;
Every grief in pleasure drowning,
Mirth this happy night employ.
Let's to friendship do our duty,
Laugh and sing some good old strain;
Drink a health to love and beauty—
May they long in triumph reign.*

LIONEL AND CLARISSA;

AN OPERA, IN THREE ACTS,

BY ISAAC BICKERSTAFF

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SIR JOHN FLOWERDALE
COLONEL OLDBOY
LIONEL
JESSAMY
HARMAN
JENKINS

LADY MARY OLDBOY
CLARISSA
DIANA
JENNY.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Chamber in Colonel Oldboy's house*

Colonel OLDBOY is discovered at breakfast, reading a newspaper; at a little distance from the tea-table, sits JENKINS; and on the opposite side, DIANA, who appears playing upon a harpsichord. A Girl attending.

TRIO.

*Ah! how delightful the morning,
How sweet are the prospects it yields;
Summer luxuriant adorning
The gardens, the groves, and the fields.*

*Be grateful to the season,
Its pleasures let's enjoy;
Kind nature gives, and reason
Permits us to enjoy.*

[Exit Maid.

Col. Well said Dy, thank you Dy. This, master Jenkins, is the way I make my daughter entertain me every morning at breakfast. Come here and kiss me, you slut; come here and kiss me, you baggage.

Dia. Lord, papa, you call one such names—

Col. A fine girl, master Jenkins; a devilish fine girl! she has got my eye to a twinkle. There's fire for you—spirit!—I design to marry her to a duke: how much money do you think a duke would expect with such a wench?

Jenk. Why, Colonel, with submission, I think there is no occasion to go out of our own country here; we have never a duke in it, I believe, but we

have many an honest gentleman, who, in my opinion, might deserve the young lady.

Col. So, you would have me marry Dy to a country 'squire, eh! How say you to this, Dy? would not you rather be married to a duke?

Dia. So my husband's a rake, papa, I don't care what he is.

Col. A rake! you d—d confounded little baggage; why you would not wish to marry a rake, would you? So her husband is a rake, she does not care what he is! Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Dia. Well, but listen to me, papa: when you go out with your gun, do you take any pleasure in shooting the poor tame ducks and chickens in your yard? No, the partridge, the pheasant, the woodcock, are the game; there is some sport in bringing them down, because they are wild; and it is just the same with an husband or a lover. I would not waste powder and shot, to wound one of your sober, pretty-behaved gentlemen; but to hit a libertine, extravagant, madcap fellow, to take him upon the wing—

Col. Do you hear her, master Jenkins? Ha, ha, ha!

Jenk. Well, but, good Colonel, what do you say to my worthy and honourable patron here, Sir John Flowerdale? He has an estate of eight thousand pounds a year, as well paid rents as any in the kingdom, and but one only daughter to enjoy it; and yet he is willing, you see, to give this daughter to your son.

Dia. Pray, Mr. Jenkins, how does Miss Clarissa and our university friend, Mr. Lionel? That is the only grave young man I ever liked, and the only handsome one I ever was acquainted with, that did not make love to me.

Col. Ay, master Jenkins, who is this Lionel? They say he is a d—d witty, knowing fellow; and egad, I think him well enough for one brought up in a college.

Jenk. His father was a general officer, a particular friend of Sir John's; who, like many more brave men, that live and die in defending their country, left little else than honour behind him. Sir John sent this young man, at his own expense, to Oxford; during the vacation, he is come to pay us a visit, and Sir John intends that he shall shortly take orders for a very considerable benefice in the gift of the family, the present incumbent of which is an aged man.

Dia. The last time I was at your house, he was teaching Miss Clarissa mathematics and philosophy. Lord, what a strange brain I have! If I was to sit down to distract myself with such studies—

Col. Go, hussy, let some of your brother's rascals inform their master that he has been long enough at his toilet; here is a message from Sir John Flowerdale. You a brain for mathematics indeed! We shall have women waiting to head our regiments to-morrow or next day.

Dia. Well, papa, and suppose we did. I believe, in a battle of the sexes, you men would hardly get the better of us.

SONG.

*To rob them of strength, when wise nature thought fit
By women to still do her duty,
Instead of a sword she endu'd them with wit,
And gave them a shield in their beauty.*

*Sound, sound, then, the trumpet, both sexes to arms,
Our tyrants at once and protectors!
We quickly shall see, whether courage or charms,
Decide for the Helens or Hector.* [Exit.

Col. Well, master Jenkins, don't you think now that a nobleman, a duke, an earl, or a marquis, might be content to share his title? I say, you understand me—with a sweetener of thirty or forty thousand pounds, to pay off mortgages? Besides, there is a prospect of my whole estate; for I dare swear, her brother will never have any children.

Jenk. I should be concerned at that, Colonel, when there are two such fortunes to descend to his heirs, as your's and Sir John Flowerdale's.

Col. Why look you, master Jenkins; Sir John Flowerdale is an honest gentleman; our families are nearly related; we have been neighbours time out of mind; and if he and I have an odd dispute now and then, it is not for want of a cordial esteem at bottom. He is going to marry his daughter to my son; she is a beautiful girl, an elegant girl, a sensible girl, a worthy girl; and—a word in your ear—don't me if I can't very sorry for her.

Jenk. Sorry, Colonel!

Col. Ay—between ourselves, master Jenkins, my son won't do.

Jenk. How do you mean?

Col. I tell you, master Jenkins, he won't do—he is not the thing—a prig. At sixteen years old, or thereabouts, he was a bold, sprightly boy, as you should see in a thousand; could drink his pint of port, or his bottle of claret—now he mixes all his wine with water.

Jenk. Oh! if that be his only fault, Colonel, he will ne'er make the worse husband, I'll answer for it.

Col. You know my wife is a woman of quality—I was prevailed upon to send him to be brought up by her brother, lord Jessamy, who had no children of his own, and promised to leave him an estate: he has got the estate indeed, but the fellow has taken his lordship's name for it. Now, master Jenkins, I would be glad to know, how the name of Jessamy is better than that of Oldboy?

Jenk. Well! but, Colonel, it is allowed on all hands, that his lordship has given your son an excellent education.

Col. Psha! he sent him to the university, and to travel, forsooth; but what of that? I was abroad, and at the university myself, and never a rush the better for either. I quarrelled with his lordship about six years before his death, and so had not an opportunity of seeing how the youth went on; if I

had, master Jenkins, I would no more have suffered him to be made such a monkey of! He has been in my house but three days, and it is all turned topsyturvy by him and his rascally servants; then his chamber is like a perfumer's shop, with wash-balls, pastes, and pomatum—and, do you know, he had the impudence to tell me yesterday, at my own table, that I did not know how to behave myself!

Jenk. Pray, Colonel, how does my lady Mary?

Col. What, my wife? in the old way, master Jenkins; always complaining; ever something the matter with her head, or her back, or her legs: but we have had the devil to pay lately—she and I did not speak to one another for three weeks.

Jen. How so, sir?

Col. A little affair of jealousy. You must know my game-keeper's daughter has had a child, and the plaguy baggage takes it into her head to lay it to me. Upon my soul, it is a fine fat, chubby infant as ever I set my eyes on: I have sent it to nurse; and, between you and me, I believe I shall leave it a fortune.

Jenk. Ah, Colonel, you will never give over.

Col. You know my lady has a pretty vein of poetry: she writ me an heroic epistle upon it, where she calls me her dear, false Damon; so I let her cry a little, promised to do so no more, and now we are as good friends as ever.

Jenk. Well, Colonel, I must take my leave; I have delivered my message, and Sir John may expect the pleasure of your company to dinner.

Col. Ay, ay, we'll come—plague o' ceremony among friends. But won't you stay to see my son? I have sent to him, and suppose he will be here as soon as his valet-de-chambre will give him leave.

Jenk. There is no occasion, good sir: present my humble respects, that's all.

Col. Well but, zounds! Jenkins, you must not go till you drink something; let you and I have a bottle of hock.

Jenk. Not for the world, Colonel; I never touch any thing strong in the morning.

Col. Never touch any thing strong! Why one bottle won't hurt you, man; this is old, and as mild as milk.

Jenk. Well, but, Colonel, pray excuse me.

SONG.

*To tell you the truth,
In the days of my youth,
As mirth and nature bid,
I lik'd a glass,
And I lov'd a lass,
And I did as youngers did.
But now I am old,
With grief be it told,
I must those freaks forbear;
At sixty-three,
'Twixt you and me,
A man grows wiser for wear.* [Exit.

Enter Mr. JESSAMY, Lady MARY OLDBOY, and Maid.

Lady M. Shut the door; why don't you shut the door there? Have you a mind I should catch my death? This house is absolutely the cave of Æolus; one had as good live on the eddy-stone, or in a windmill.

Mr. Jes. I thought they told your ladyship that there was a messenger here from Sir John Flowerdale.

Col. Well, sir, and so there was; but he had not

patience to wait upon your curling-irons. Mr. Jenkins was here, Sir John Flowerdale's steward, who has lived in the family these forty years.

Mr. Jes. And pray, sir, might not Sir John Flowerdale have come himself? if he had been acquainted with the rules of good breeding, he would have known that I ought to have been visited.

Lady M. Upon my word, Colonel, this is a solecism.

Col. 'Sblood, my lady, it's none. Sir John Flowerdale came but last night from his sister's seat in the west, and is a little out of order. But I suppose he thinks he ought to appear before him with his daughter in one hand, and his rent-roll in the other, and cry, "Sir, pray do me the favour to accept them."

Lady M. Nay, but Mr. Oldboy, permit me to say—

Col. He need not give himself so many affected airs; I think it's very well if he gets such a girl for going for: she's one of the handsomest and richest in this country, and more than he deserves.

Mr. Jes. That's an exceeding fine china jar your ladyship has got in the next room; I saw the fellow of it the other day at Williams's, and will send to my agent to purchase it: it is the true matchless old blue and white. Lady Betty Barebones has a couple that she gave an hundred guineas for, on board an Indianman; but she reckons them at a hundred and twenty five, on account of half a dozen plates, four nankeen beakers, and a couple of shaking mandarins, that the custom-house officer took from under her petticoats.

Col. Did you ever hear the like of this? He's chattering about old china, while I am talking to him of a fine girl. I tell you what, Mr. Jessamy, since that's the name you choose to be called by, I have a good mind to knock you down.

Mr. Jes. Knock me down, Colonel! What do you mean? I must tell you, sir, this is language to which I have not been accustomed; and, if you think proper to continue to repeat it, I shall be under the necessity of quitting your house.

Col. Quitting my house?

Mr. Jes. Yes, sir, inconceivably.

Col. Why, sir, am not I your father, sir? and have I not a right to talk to you as I like? I will, sirrah. But, perhaps, I mayn't be your father, and I hope not.

Lady M. Heavens and earth, Mr. Oldboy!

Col. What's the matter, madam; I mean, madam, that he might have been changed at nurse, madam—and I believe he was.

Mr. Jes. Huh! huh! huh!

Col. Do you laugh at me, you saucy jackanapes!

Lady M. Who's there?—Somebody bring me a chair. Really, Mr. Oldboy, you throw my weakly frame into such repeated convulsions. But I see your aim: you want to lay me in my grave, and you will very soon have that satisfaction.

Col. I can't bear the sight of him.

Lady M. Open that window, give me air, or I shall faint.

Mr. Jes. Hold, hold, let me tie a handkerchief about my neck first. This cursed sharp north-wind—Antoine, bring down my muff.

Col. Ay, do, and his great coat.

Enter ANTOINE, with great coat and muff.

Lady M. Marg'ret, some hartshorn. [*Exit Antoine.*] My dear Mr. Oldboy, why will you fly out in this way, when you know how it shocks my tender nerves?

Col. 'Sblood, madam, its enough to make a man mad.

Lady M. Hartshorn! hartshorn!

Enter Maid.

Mr. Jes. Colonel

Col. Do you hear the puppy? [*question?*]

Mr. Jes. Will you give me leave to ask one

Col. I don't know whether I will or not.

Mr. Jes. I should be glad to know, that's all, what single circumstance in my conduct, carriage, or figure, you can possibly find fault with—perhaps I may be brought to reform. Pr'ythee let me hear from your own mouth; then, seriously, what it is you do like, and what it is you do not like.

Col. Hum!

Mr. Jes. Be ingenuous; speak, and spare not.

Col. You would know?

SONG.

*Zounds, sir! then I'll tell you without any jest,
The thing of all things, which I hate and detest;*

A corcomb, a fop,

A dainty milk-sop,

Who, essenc'd and dizen'd from bottom to top,

Looks just like a doll for a milliner's shop:

A thing full of prate,

And pride and conceit;

All fashion, no weight;

Who shrugs and takes snuff,

And carries a muff;

A minikin,

Finicking,

French powder'd-puff;

And now, sir, I fancy, I've told you enough. [Exit.

Mr. Jes. What's the matter with the Colonel, madam; does your ladyship know?

Lady M. Heigho! don't be surprised, my dear; it was the same thing with my late dear brother, Lord Jessamy; they never could agree: that good-natured, friendly soul, knowing the delicacy of my constitution, has often said, "sister Mary, I pity you." Not but your father has good qualities, and I assure you I remember him a very fine gentleman himself. When he first paid his addresses to me, he was called agreeable Jack Oldboy, though I married him without the consent of your noble grandfather.

Mr. Jes. I think he ought to be proud of me; I believe there's many a duke, nay prince, who would esteem themselves happy in having such a son.

Lady M. Yes, my dear; but your sister was always your father's favourite: he intends to give her a prodigious fortune, and sets his heart upon seeing her a woman of quality.

Mr. Jes. He should wish to see her look a little like a gentlewoman first. When she was in London, last winter, I am told she was taken notice of by a few men; but she wants air, manner—

Lady M. And has not a bit of the genius of our family; and I never knew a woman of it but herself without. I have tried her; about three years ago I set her to translate a little French song; I found she had not even an idea of versification, and she put down love and joy for rhyme, so I gave her over.

Mr. Jes. Why, indeed, she appears to have more of the Thalestris than the Sappho about her.

Lady M. Well, my dear, I must go and dress myself; though, I protest, I am fitter for my bed than my coach. And condescend to the Colonel a little; do, my dear, if it be only to oblige your mamma. [*Exit.*]

Mr. Jes. Let me consider; I am going to visit a country baronet here, who would fain prevail upon me to marry his daughter; the old gentleman has

heard of my parts and understanding, miss of my figure and address. But, suppose I should not like her when I see her? Why, positively, then I will not have her; the treaty's at an end, and *sans compliment*, we break up the congress. But, won't that be cruel, after having suffered her to flatter herself with hopes, and shewing myself to her? She's a strange dowdy, I dare believe; however, she brings provision with her for a separate maintenance. *Antoine, appez la toilette.* I am going to spend a cursed day; that I perceive already; I wish it was over, I dread it as much as a general election. *[Exit.]*

SCENE II.—*A Study in Sir John Flowerdale's house.*

Enter CLARISSA.

SONG.

*Immortal powers protect me,
Assist, support, direct me;
Relieve a heart oppress.
Ah! why this palpitation?
Cease busy perturbation,
And let me, let me rest.*

Enter JENNY.

Jen. My dear lady, what ails you?

Cla. Nothing, Jenny, nothing.

Jen. Pardon me, madam, there is something ails you indeed. Lord, what signifies all the grandeur and riches in this world, if they can't procure one content? I am sure it vexes me to the heart, so it does, to see such a dear, sweet, worthy young lady as you are pining yourself to death.

Cla. Jenny, you are a good girl, and I am very much obliged to you for feeling so much on my account; but, in a little time, I hope I shall be easier.

Jen. Why, now, here to-day, madam, for certain you ought to be merry to-day, when there's a fine gentleman coming to court you; but, if you like any one else better, I am sure I wish you had him, with all my soul.

Cla. Suppose, Jenny, I was so unfortunate as to like a man without my father's approbation, would you wish me married to him?

Jen. I wish you married to any one, madam, that could make you happy.

Cla. Heigho!

Jen. Madam, madam! yonder's Sir John and Mr. Lionel on the terrace; I believe they are coming up here. Poor, dear Mr. Lionel, he does not seem to be in over-great spirits either. To be sure, madam, it's no business of mine; but, I believe, if the truth was known, there are those in the house who would give more than ever I shall be worth, or any the likes of me, to prevent the marriage of a certain person that shall be nameless.

Cla. What do you mean? I don't understand you.

Jen. I hope you are not angry, madam?

Cla. Ah! Jenny—

Jen. Lauk, madam, do you think, when Mr. Lionel's a clergyman, he'll be obliged to cut off his hair? I'm sure, it will be a thousand pities; and your great pudding-sleeves! Lord! they'll quite spoil his shape, and the fall of his shoulders. Well, madam, if I was a lady of large fortune, I'll be hanged if Mr. Lionel should be a parson, if I could help it.

Cla. I'm going into my dressing-room. It seems, then, Mr. Lionel is a great favourite of your's; but pray, Jenny, have a care how you talk in this manner to any one else.

Jen. Me talk, madam! I thought you knew me better; and, my dear lady, keep up your spirits.

I'm sure I have dressed you to day as nice as hands and pins can make you.

SONG.

*I'm but a poor servant, 'tis true, ma'am;
But was I a lady, like you, ma'am,
In grief would I sit? the dickens a bit;
No, faith, I would search the world thro', ma'am,
To find what my liking could hit.
Set in case a young man,
In my fancy there ran;
It might anger my friends and relations:
But, if I had regard,
It should go very hard,
Or I'd follow my own inclinations.* *[Exeunt.]*

Enter SIR JOHN FLOWERDALE and LIONEL.

Sir J. Indeed, Lionel, I will not hear of it. What! to run from us all of a sudden, this way; and at such a time too; the eve of my daughter's wedding, as I may call it; when your company must be doubly agreeable, as well as necessary to us? I am sure you have no studies at present that require your attendance at Oxford; I must, therefore, insist on your putting such thoughts out of your head.

Lio. Upon my word, sir, I have been so long from the university, that it is time for me to think of returning. It is true, I have no absolute studies; but really, sir, I shall be obliged to you, if you will give me leave to go.

Sir J. Come, come, my dear Lionel, I have for some time observed a more than ordinary gravity growing upon you, and I am not to learn the reason of it; I know, to minds serious, and well inclined, like your's, the sacred functions you are about to embrace—

Lio. Dear sir, your goodness to me, of every kind, is so unmerited! Your condescension, your friendly attentions; in short, sir, I want words to express my sense of obligations.

Sir J. Fie, fie! no more of them. By my last letters, I find that my old friend, the rector, still continues in good health, considering his advanced years. You may imagine I am far from desiring the death of so worthy and pious a man; yet, I must own, at this time, I could wish you were in orders, as you might then perform the ceremony of my daughter's marriage, which would give me a secret satisfaction.

Lio. No doubt, sir; any office in my power, that could be instrumental to the happiness of any in your family, I should perform with pleasure.

Sir J. Why, really, Lionel, from the character of her intended husband, I have no room to doubt, but this match will make Clarissa perfectly happy; to be sure, the alliance is the most eligible for both families.

Lio. If the gentleman is sensible of his happiness in the alliance, sir.

Sir J. The fondness of a father is always suspected of partiality; yet, I believe, I may venture to say, that few young women will be found more unexceptionable than my daughter: her person is agreeable, her temper sweet, her understanding good, and, with the obligations she has to your instructions—

Lio. You do my endeavours too much honour, sir. I have been able to add nothing to Miss Flowerdale's accomplishments, but a little knowledge in matters of small importance to a mind already so well improved.

Sir J. I don't think so; a little knowledge, even in those matters, is necessary for a woman, in whom I am far from considering ignorance as a desirable characteristic; when intelligence is not attended with impertinent affectation, it teaches them to judge

with precision, and gives them a degree of solidity necessary for the companion of a sensible man.

Lio. Yonder's Mr. Jenkins; I fancy he's looking for you, sir.

Sir J. I see him; he's come back from Colonel Oldboy's: I have a few words to say to him; and will return to you again in a minute. *[Exit.]*

Lio. To be a burthen to one's self, to wage continual war with one's own passions, forced to combat, unable to overcome! But see, she appears whose presence turns all my sufferings into transport, and makes even misery itself delightful.

Enter CLARISSA.

Perhaps, madam, you are not at leisure now; otherwise, if you thought proper, we would resume the subject we were upon yesterday.

Cla. I am sure, sir, I give you a great deal of trouble.

Lio. Madam, you give me no trouble: I should think every hour of my life happily employed in your service; and as this is probably the last time I shall have the satisfaction of attending you upon the same occasion—

Cla. Upon my word, Mr. Lionel, I think myself extremely obliged to you; and shall ever consider the enjoyment of your friendship—

Lio. My friendship, madam, can be of little moment to you; but if the most perfect adoration, if the warmest wishes for your felicity, though I should never be witness of it; if these, madam, can have any merit to continue in your remembrance a man once honoured with a share of your esteem—

Cla. Hold, sir—I think I hear somebody.

Lio. If you please, madam, we will resume our studies. *[They sit.]* Have you looked at the book I left you yesterday?

Cla. Really, sir, I have been so much disturbed in my thoughts for these two or three days past, that I have not been able to look at any thing.

Lio. I am sorry to hear that, madam; I hope there was nothing particular to disturb you. The care sir John takes to dispose of your hand in a manner suitable to your birth and fortune?

Cla. I don't know, sir; I own I am disturbed; I own I am uneasy; there is something weighs upon my heart, which I would fain disclose.

Lio. Upon your heart, madam? did you say your heart?

Cla. I did, sir—I—

Enter JENNY.

Jen. Madam! madam! here's a coach and six driving up the avenue: it's Colonel Oldboy's family; and, I believe, the gentleman is in it that's coming to court you. Lord, I must run and have a peep at him out of the window. *[Exit.]*

Lio. Madam, I'll take my leave.

Cla. Why so, sir? Bless me, Mr. Lionel! what's the matter? You turn pale.

Lio. Madam!

Cla. Pray speak to me, sir; you tremble. Tell me the cause of this sudden change. How are you? Where's your disorder?

Lio. Oh, fortune! fortune!

SONG.

*You ask me in vain,
Of what ills I complain,
Where harbours the torment I find;
In my head, in my heart,
It invades ev'ry part,
And subdues both my body and mind.*

*Each effort I try,
Ev'ry med'cine apply,
The pangs of my soul to appease;
But doom'd to endure,
What I mean for a cure,
Turns poison, and feeds the disease.* *[Exit.]*

Enter DIANA.

Dia. My dear Clarissa, I'm glad I have found you alone. For heaven's sake, don't let any one break in upon us; and give me leave to sit down with you a little. I am in such a tremour, such a panic—

Cla. Mercy on us, what has happened?

Dia. You may remember I told you, that when I was last winter in London, I was followed by an odious fellow, one Harman: I can't say but the wretch pleased me, though he is but a younger brother, and not worth sixpence; and, in short, when I was leaving town, I promised to correspond with him.

Cla. Do you think that was prudent?

Dia. Madness! But this is not the worst; for what do you think? the creature had the assurance to write to me about three weeks ago, desiring permission to come down and spend the summer at my father's.

Cla. At your father's?

Dia. Ay, who never saw him, knows nothing of him, and would as soon consent to my marrying a horse-jockey. He told me a long story of some tale he intended to invent, to make my father receive him as an indifferent person; and some gentleman in London, he said, would procure him a letter that should give it a face; and he longed to see me so, he said he could not live without it; and if he could be permitted but to spend a week with me—

Cla. Well, and what answer did you make?

Dia. Oh! abused him, and refused to listen to any such thing; but—I vow I tremble while I tell it you—just before we left our house, the impudent monster arrived there, attended by a couple of servants, and is now actually coming here with my father.

Cla. Upon my word, this is a dreadful thing.

Dia. Dreadful, my dear! I happened to be at the window as he came into the court, and I declare I had like to have fainted away.

Cla. Well, Diana, with regard to your affair, I think you must find some method of immediately informing this gentleman, that you consider the outrage he has committed against you in the most heinous light, and insist upon his going away directly.

Dia. Why, I believe that will be the best way; but then he'll be begging my pardon, and asking to stay.

Cla. Why then you must tell him positively you won't consent to it; and if he persists in so extravagant a design, tell him you'll never see him again as long as you live.

Dia. Must I tell him so?

SONG.

*For my heart beats so pit-pa! throbbing,
For my heart beats whene'er he's nigh;
Then when he sues,
Can I refuse
To hear him plead?—
Not I indeed,
For my heart, &c.
When he softly sighs,
And I meet his eyes,
So well their meaning's understood;
Could I bid him go?
Ah! no, no, no,*

I'm sure I could not if I would.

For my heart, &c.

How oft have I try'd,

With our sex's pride,

And scorn, his love to treat;

But again and again,

I have found 'twas in vain,

He talks so when we meet.

Tho' my heart, &c.

[Exit.

Cl. How easy to direct the conduct of others; how hard to regulate our own. I can give my friend advice, while I am conscious of the same indiscretions in myself. Yet is it criminal to know the most worthy, most amiable man in the world, and not to be insensible to his merit? But my father, the kindest, best of fathers—will he approve the choice I have made? Nay, has he not made another choice for me? And, after all, how can I be sure that the man I love, loves me again? He never told me so; but his looks, his actions, his present anxiety, sufficiently declare what his delicacy, his generosity, will not suffer him to utter.

SONG.

Ye gloomy thoughts, ye fears perverse,

Like sullen vapours all disperse,

And scatter in the wind!

Delusive phantoms, brood of night,

No more my sickly fancy fright,

No more my reason blind.

'Tis done; I feel my soul releas'd;

The visions fly, the mists are chas'd,

Nor leave a cloud behind.

[Exit.

SCENE III.—*A side View of Sir John Flowerdale's house.*

HARMAN enters with COLONEL OLDROY.

Col. Well, and how does my old friend, Dick Rantum, do? I have not seen him these twelve years: he was an honest, worthy fellow as ever breathed; I remember he kept a girl in London, and was cursedly plagued by his wife's relations.

Har. Sir Richard was always a man of spirit, colonel.

Col. But as to this business of your's, which he tells me of in his letter—I don't see much in it: an affair with a citizen's daughter—pinked her brother in a duel—Is the fellow likely to die?

Har. Why, sir, we hope not; but as the matter is dubious, and will probably make some noise, I thought it was better to be for a little time out of the way; when hearing my case, Sir Richard Rantum mentioned you; he said, he was sure you would permit me to remain at your house for a few days, and offered me a recommendation.

Col. And there's likely to be a brat in the case; and the girl's friends are in business.—I'll tell you what will be the consequence, then; they will be for going to law with you for a maintenance; but no matter, I'll take the affair in hand for you; make me your solicitor; and, if you are obliged to pay for a single spoonful of pap, I'll be content to father all the children in the Foundling Hospital.

Har. You are very kind, sir.

Col. But hold;—hark you! you say there's money to be had;—suppose you were to marry the wench?

Har. Do you think, sir, that would be so right after what has happened? Besides, there's a strong objection;—to tell you the truth, I am honourably in love in another place.

Col. Oh! you are.

Har. Yes, sir, but there are obstacles—a father: in short, sir, the mistress of my heart lives in this very county, which makes even my present situation a little irksome.

Col. In this county? Zounds! then I am sure I am acquainted with her, and the first letter of her name is—

Har. Excuse me, sir, I have some particular reasons—

Col. But look who comes yonder;—ha, ha, ha! my son, picking his steps like a dancing-master. Pr'ythee, Harman, go into the house, and let my wife and daughter know we are come, while I go and have some sport with him; they will introduce you to sir John Flowerdale.

Har. Then, sir, I'll take the liberty—

Col. But, d'y'e hear, I must have a little more discourse with you about this girl; perhaps she's a neighbour of mine, and I may be of service to you.

Har. Well, remember, Colonel, I shall try your friendship.

SONG.

Indulgent pow'rs, if ever

You mark'd a tender vow,

O bend in kind compassion,

And hear a lover now.

For titles, wealth, and honours,

While others crowd your shrine;

I ask this only blessing,

Let her I love be mine.

[Exit Har.

Enter MR. JESSAMY and several Servants.

Col. Why, zounds! one would think you had never put your feet to the ground before; you make as much work about walking a quarter of a mile, as if you had gone a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

Mr. Jes. Colonel, you have used me extremely ill, to drag me through the dirty roads in this manner; you told me the way was all over a bowling-green; only see what a condition I am in.

Col. Why, how did I know the roads were dirty? Is that my fault? Besides, we mistook the way. Zounds! man, your legs will be never the worse when they are brushed a little.

Mr. Jes. Antoine! have you sent La Roque for the shoes and stockings? Give me the glass out of your pocket—not a dust of powder left in my hair, and the frisure as flat as the fore-top of an attorney's clerk: get your comb and pomatum; you must borrow some powder. I suppose there's such a thing as a dressing-room in the house?

Col. Ay, and a cellar too, I hope, for I want a glass of wine cursedly. But hold! hold! Frank; where are you going? Stay, and pay your devoirs here, if you please; I see there's somebody coming out to welcome us.

Enter LIONEL, DIANA, and CLARISSA.

Lio. Colonel, your most obedient. Sir John is walking with my lady in the garden, and has commissioned me to receive you.

Col. Mr. Lionel, I am heartily glad to see you; come here, Frank;—this is my son, sir.

Lio. Sir, I am exceedingly proud to—

Mr. Jes. Can't you get the powder, then?

Col. Miss Clary, my little Miss Clary, give me a kiss my dear—as handsome as an angel, by heavens. Frank, why don't you come here? this is Miss Flowerdale.

Dia. Oh heavens, Clarissa! just as I said, that impudent devil is come here with my father.

Mr. Jes. Hadn't we better go into the house ?

QUINTETTO.

Mr. Jes. *To be made in such a pickle !*

Will you please to lead the way, sir ?

Col. *No, but, if you please, you may, sir.*

For precedence none will stickle.

Dia. *Brother, no politeness ? bless me !*

Will you not your hand bestow ?

Lead the lady.

Clia. *Don't distress me ;*

Dear Diana, let him go.

Mr. Jes. *Ma'am, permit me.*

Col. *Smoke the beau.*

Cruel must I, can I bear ?

Oh adverse stars !

Oh fate severe !

Lio. } *Beset, tormented,*

and } *Each hope prevented.*

Clia. } *None but the brave deserve the fair.*

Col. *Come, ma'am, let me lead you :*

Now, sir, I precede you.

All. *Lovers must ill usage bear ;*

Oh adverse stars ! oh fate severe !

None but the brave deserve the fair.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Hall in Sir John Flowerdale's house, with the view of a grand stair-case, through an arch.*

Enter LIONEL, followed by JENNY.

Jen. Well, but, Mr. Lionel, consider ; pray consider now ; how can you be so prodigious indiscreet as you are, walking about the hall here, while the gentlefolks are within in the parlour. Don't you think they'll wonder at your getting up so soon after dinner, and before any of the rest of the company ?

Lio. For heaven's sake, Jenny, don't speak to me : I neither know where I am, nor what I am doing ; I am the most wretched and miserable of mankind.

Jen. Poor dear soul, I pity you. Yes, yes, I believe you are miserable enough, indeed ; and I assure you I have pitied you a great while, and spoke many a word in your favour, when you little thought you had such a friend in a corner.

Lio. But, good Jenny, since, by some accident or other, you have been able to discover what I would willingly hide from all the world, I conjure you, as you regard my interest, as you value your lady's peace and honour, never let the most distant hint of it escape you ; for it is a secret of that importance—

Jen. And, perhaps, you think I can't keep a secret. Ah ! Mr. Lionel, it must be hear, see, and say nothing, in this world, or one has no business to live in it ; besides, who would not be in love with my lady ? There's never a man this day alive but might be proud of it ; for she is the handsomest, sweetest temperdest, and I am sure one of the best mistresses, ever poor girl had.

Lio. Oh, Jenny, she's an angel !

Jen. And so she is indeed. Do you know that she gave me her blue silk gown to-day, and it is every crum as good as new ; and, go things as they will, don't you be fretting and vexing yourself, for I am mortally sartin she would liverer see a toad than this Jessamy. Though, I must say, to my thinking, he's

a very likely man ; and a finer pair of eye-brows, and a more delicate nose, I never saw on a face.

Lio. By heavens I shall run mad.

Jen. And why so ? It is not beauty that always takes the fancy ; moreover, to let you know, if it was, I don't think him any more to compare to you, than a thistle is to a carnation, and so's a sign ; for, mark my words, my lady loves you as much as she hates him.

Lio. What you tell me, Jenny, is a thing I neither merit nor expect. No, I am unhappy, and let me continue so ; my most presumptuous thoughts shall never carry me to a wish that may affect her quiet, or give her cause to repent.

Jen. That's very honourable of you, I must needs say ; but for all that, liking's liking, and one can't help it ; and if it should be my lady's case, it is no fault of yours. I am sure when she called me into her dressing-room, before she went down to dinner, there she stood with her eyes brim-full of tears ; and so I fell a crying for company ; and then she could not abide the chap in the parlour ; and, at the same time, she bid me take an opportunity to speak to you, and desire you to meet her in the garden this evening, after tea, for she has something to say to you.

Lio. Jenny, I see you are my friend ; for which I thank you, though I know it is impossible to do me any service : take this ring and wear it for my sake.

Jen. I am very much obliged to your honour ; I am your friend indeed. But, I say, you won't forget to be in the garden now ; and in the mean time, keep as little in the house as you can, for walls have eyes and ears ; and I can tell you the servants take notice of your uneasiness, though I am always desiring them to mind their own business.

Lio. Pray have a care, Jenny ; have a care, my dear girl ; a word may breed suspicion.

Jen. Psha ! have a care yourself ; it is you that breeds suspicion, sighing and pining about ; you look for all the world like a ghost ; and if you don't pluck up your spirits you will be a ghost soon ; letting things get the better of you. Though to be sure, when I think with myself, being crossed in love is a terrible thing. There was a young man in the town where I was born, made away with himself upon the account of it.

Lio. Things shan't get the better of me, Jenny.

Jen. No more they don't ought. And once again I say, fortune is thrown in your dish, and you are not to fling it out ; my lady's estate will be better than three livings, if Sir John could give them to you : think of that Mr. Lionel, think of that.

Lio. Think of what ?

SONG.

*Oh talk not to me of the wealth she possesses,
My hopes and my views to herself I confine ;
The splendour of riches but slightly impresses
A heart that is fraught with a passion like mine.*

*By love, only love, should our souls be cemented ;
No in'rest, no motive, but that would I own ;
With her in a cottage be blest and contented ;
And wretched without her, tho' plac'd on a throne.*

[*Exit.*]

Enter COLONEL OLDBOY.

Col. Very well, my lady ; I'll come again to you presently ; I am only going into the garden for a mouthful of air. Aha ! my little abigail ! Here Molly, Jenny, Betty ! What's your name ? Why don't you answer me, hussy, when I call you ?

Jen. If you want any thing, sir, I'll call one of the footmen.

Col. The footmen! the footmen! D—n me, I never knew one of them, in my life, that wouldn't prefer a rascal to a gentleman. Come here, you slut, put your hands about my neck and kiss me.

Jen. Who, I sir?

Col. Ay, here's money for you; what the devil are you afraid of? I'll take you into keeping: you shall go and live at one of my tenant's houses.

Jen. I wonder you a'n't ashamed, sir, to make an honest girl any such proposal; you that have a worthy gentlewoman, nay, a lady of your own.—To be sure she's a little stricken in years; but why shouldn't she grow elderly as well as yourself?

Col. Burn a lady; I love a pretty girl.

Jen. Well, then, you may go look for one, sir; I have no pretensions to the title.

Col. Why, you pert baggage! you don't know me.

Jen. What do you pinch my fingers for? yes, yes, I know you well enough, and your charekter's well known all over the country, running after poor young creatures as you do, to ruinate them.

Col. What, then people say—

Jen. Indeed, they talk very bad of you; and whatever you may think, sir, though I'm in a menial station, I'm come of people that wouldn't see me put upon; there are those that would take my part against the proudest he in the land, that should offer anything univil.

Col. Well, let me know, how does your young lady like my son?

Jen. You want to pump me, do you? I suppose you would know whether I can keep my tongue within my teeth?

Col. She doesn't like him then?

Jen. I don't say so, sir. Isn't this a shame now? I suppose to-morrow or next day it will be reported that Jenny has been talking; Jenny said that, and t'other. But here, sir, I ax you, did I tell you any such thing?

Col. Why yes, you did.

Jen. I!—Lord bless me, how can you—

Col. Ad I'll mouzie you.

Jen. Ah! ah!

Col. What do you bawl for?

Jen. Ah! ah! ah!

SONG.

*Indeed, forsooth, a pretty youth,
To play the am'rous fool;
At such an age, methinks your rage
Might be a little cool.*

*Fie, let me go, sir,
Kiss me!—No, no, sir.
You pull me and shake me,
For what do you take me,
This figure to make me?*

*I'd have you to know
I'm not for your game, sir;
Nor will I be tame, sir;
Lord! have you no shame, sir,
To tumble one so?*

[Exit.

Enter LADY MARY, DIANA, and HARMAN.

Lady M. Mr. Oldbey, won't you give me your hand to lead me up stairs, my dear? Sir, I am prodigiously obliged to you: I protest I have not been so well, I don't know when: I have had no return of my bilious complaint after dinner to-day; and eat so voraciously. Did you observe, miss? Doctor Arsenic will be quite astonished when he hears it; surely, his new invented medicine has done me a prodigious deal of service.

Col. Ah! you'll always be taking one slop or

other, till you poison yourself. Give me a pinch of your ladyship's snuff.

Lady M. This is a mighty pretty sort of man, Colonel; who is he?

Col. A young fellow, my lady, recommended to me.

Lady M. I protest he has the sweetest taste for poetry!—He has repeated to me two or three of his own things; and I have been telling him of the poem my late brother. Lord Jessamy, made on the mouse that was drowned.

Col. Ay, a fine subject for a poem; a mouse that was drowned in a—

Lady M. Hush, my dear Colonel; don't mention it; to be sure the circumstance was vastly indelicate; but for the number of lines, the poem was as charming a morsel—Pray, sir, was there any news when you left London; anything about the East Indies, the ministry, or politics of any kind? I am strangely fond of politics; but I hear nothing since my Lord Jessamy's death: he used to write to me all the affairs of the nation, for he was a very great politician himself. I have a manuscript speech of his in my cabinet; he never spoke it, but it is as fine a thing as ever came from man.

Col. What is that crawling on your ladyship's petticoat?

Lady M. Where? where?

Col. Zounds! a spider with legs as long as my arm.

Lady M. Oh, heavens! ah don't let me look at it; I sha'! faint, I shall faint! A spider! a spider! a spider! (Runs off; Har. attempts to follow her, the Col. prevents him.)

Col. Hold! zounds, let her go. I knew the spider would set her a galloping, with her d—d fuss about my brother, my Lord Jessamy. Harman, come here. How do you like my daughter? Is the girl you are in love with as handsome as this?

Har. In my opinion, sir.

Col. What, as handsome as Dy!—I'll lay you twenty pounds she has not such a pair of eyes. He tells me he's in love, Dy; raging mad for love; and, by his talk, I begin to believe him.

Dia. Now, for my part, papa, I doubt it very much; though, by what I heard the gentleman say just now within, I find he imagines the lady has a violent partiality for him; and yet he may be mistaken there, too.

Col. For shame, Dy; what the mischief do you mean? How can you talk so tartly to a poor young fellow under misfortunes? Give him your hand, and ask his pardon. Don't mind her, sir: for all this, she is as good-natured a little devil as ever was born.

Har. You may remember, sir, I told you before dinner, that I had for some time carried on a private correspondence with my lovely girl; and that her father, whose consent we despair of obtaining, is the great obstacle to our happiness.

Col. Why don't you carry her off in spite of him, then? I ran away with my wife—ask my Lady Mary, she'll tell you the thing herself. Her old, conceited lord of a father thought I was not good enough; but I mounted a garden-wall, notwithstanding their chevaux-de-frize of broken glass bottles, took her out of a three-pair of stairs window, and brought her down a ladder in my arms—by the way, she would have squeezed through a cat-hole to get at me; and I would have taken her out of the tower of London, d—me, if it had been surrounded with the three regiments of guards.

SONG.

*'Twas on a dismal night,
When scarce a star gave light,*

*And that hail came rattling down,
With peppering on my crown,
That I resolv'd upon a matter.
The matter was of love,
And I as fierce as Jove;
But my charmer was lock'd up,
At a castle's very top;
Yet I had fix'd to be at her.
A whistle then was mine,
My fair one knew the sign—
And directly to my hopes,
Threw a ladder down of ropes;
When I mount without delay, sir:
And when I got on high,
And did my charmer spy,
I took her in my arm,
And descended without harm,
And carried off, ouray, sir.*

Dia. But, surely, papa, you would not persuade the gentleman to such a proceeding as this is: consider the noise it will make in the country; and if you are known to be the adviser and abettor—

Col. Why, what do I care? I say, if he takes my advice, he'll run away with her, and I'll give him all the assistance I can.

Har. I am sure, sir, you are very kind: and, to tell you the truth, I have more than once had the very scheme in my head, if I thought it was feasible, and knew how to go about it.

Col. Feasible, and knew how to go about it! The thing's feasible enough, if the girl's willing to go off with you, and you have spirit sufficient to undertake it.

Har. O, as for that, sir, I can answer.

Dia. What, sir, that the lady will be willing to go off with you?

Har. No, ma'am, that I have spirit enough to take her, if she is willing to go; and thus far I dare venture to promise, that between this and to-morrow morning, I will find out whether she is or not.

Col. So he may; she lives but in this county; and tell her, Harman, you have met with a friend who is inclined to serve you. You shall have my post-chaise at a minute's warning; and if a hundred pieces will be of any use to you, you may command them.

Har. Are you really serious, sir?

Col. Serious! d—me if I a'n't. I have put twenty young fellows in the way of getting girls that they never would have thought of! and bring her to my house: whenever you come you shall have a supper and a bed; but you must marry her first, because my lady will be squeamish.

Dia. Well, but, my dear papa, upon my word you have a great deal to answer for: suppose it was your own case to have a daughter in such circumstances, would you be obliged to any one—

Col. Hold your tongue, hussy! who bid you put in your oar? However, Harman, I don't want to set you upon anything: 'tis no affair of mine, to be sure; I only give you advice, and tell you how I would act if I was in your place.

Har. I assure you, sir, I am quite charmed with the advice; and since you are ready to stand my friend, I am determined to follow it.

Col. You are?

Har. Positively.

Col. Say no more, then; here's my hand:—you understand me—no occasion to talk any further of it at present. When we are alone—Dy, take Mr. Harman into the drawing-room, and give him some tea. I say, Harman, mum.

Dia. You had better not give this advice.

Col. Hold your tongue, hussy.—Harman, if you don't carry her off, you dog, I'll never forgive you. [Exit.]

SONG.—LIONEL.

*O never doubt, my love, thy sorrows I'll banish,
And sweetly I'll sing while the night flies away,
And e'er the wild gloom o'er the mountain shall vanish,
Thou'lt sink on my pillow and sleep till the day.*

O never doubt, my love, &c.

*O never doubt, my love, its fondness shall bless thee,
'Twill soothe thee whene'er by this rude world oppress'd;*

*And should the cold hand of misfortune e'er press thee,
The angel of pity thou'lt find in my breast.*

O never doubt, my love, &c. [Exit.]

SCENE II.—A handsome Dressing Room.

Enter DIANA, followed by JESSAMY.

Dia. Come, brother, I undertake to be mistress of the ceremony upon this occasion, and introduce you to your first audience. Miss Flowerdale is not here, I perceive; but no matter.

Mr. Jes. Upon my word, a pretty, elegant dressing-room this; but confound our builders, or architects, as they call themselves, they are all errant stone-masons: not one of them know the situation of doors, windows, or chimnies; which are as essential to a room as eyes, nose, and mouth, to a countenance. Now, if the eyes are where the mouth should be, and the nose out of proportion and its place, *quel horrible physiognomie.*

Dia. My dear brother, you are not come here as a virtuoso to admire the temple; but as a votary to address the deity to whom it belongs. Shew, I beseech you, a little more devotion, and tell me, how do you like Miss Flowerdale? Don't you think her very handsome?

Mr. Jes. Pale:—but that I am determined she shall remedy; for, as soon as we are married, I will make her put on rouge. Let me see: has she got any in her boxes here? *Véritable toilet à la Anglaise.* Nothing but a bottle of Hungary-water, two or three rows of pins, a paper of patches, and a little bole-ammoniac by way of tooth-powder.

Dia. Brother, I would fain give you some advice upon this occasion, which may be of service to you. You are now going to entertain a young lady; let me prevail upon you to lay aside those airs, on account of which some people are impertinent enough to call you a coxcomb; for, I am afraid, she may be apt to think you a coxcomb too, as I assure you she is very capable of distinguishing.

Mr. Jes. So much the worse for me. If she is capable of distinguishing, I shall meet with a terrible repulse. I don't believe she'll have me.

Dia. I don't believe she will, indeed.

Mr. Jes. Go on, sister. Ha, ha, ha!

Dia. I protest I am serious: though, I perceive, you have more faith in the counsellor before you there, the looking-glass. But give me leave to tell you, it is not a powdered head, a laced coat, a grimace, a shrug, a bow, or a few pert phrases, learned by rote, that constitute the power of pleasing all women.

Mr. Jes. You had better return to the gentleman, and give him his tea, my dear.

Dia. These qualifications we find in our parrots and monkeys. I would undertake to teach Poll, in three weeks, the fashionable jargon of half the fine

men about town; and I am sure it must be allowed, that pug, in a scarlet coat, is a gentleman as *degagé* and alluring as most of them.

SONG.

*Good folks would you know,
How to make up a beau,
Here's one ready made to your view;
His hair he must crop,
And to finish the fop,
Waistcoat, red, yellow, or blue.
To use an eye-glass, is a very good plan,
For it makes a beau almost as big as a man.
Then his opera hat,
Like this must be flat;
On me 'twould look well, I declare;
In martial attire
Who would not admire
Diana dress'd en militaire?
Oh, then with the fiercest I'll strut and I'll scold;
Dear brother, forgive me; perhaps, I'm too bold.* [Exit.

Enter CLARISSA.

Cla. Sir, I took the liberty to desire a few moments' private conversation with you: I hope you will excuse it. [*Jes. brings down chairs.*] I am really greatly embarrassed. But, in an affair of such immediate consequence to us both—

Mr. Jes. My dear creature, don't be embarrassed before me; I should be extremely sorry to strike you with any awe; but this is a species of *mauvaise honte*, which the company I shall introduce you to will soon cure you of.

Cla. Upon my word, sir, I don't understand you.

Mr. Jes. Perhaps you may be under some uneasiness lest I should not be quite so warm in the prosecution of this affair as you could wish: it is true, with regard to quality, I might do better: and with regard to fortune full as well:—but you please me. Upon my soul, I have not met with anything more agreeable to me a great while.

Cla. Pray, sir, keep your seat.

Mr. Jes. *Mauvaise honte* again. My dear, there is nothing in these little familiarities between you and me. When we are married, I shall do everything to render your life happy.

Cla. Ah! sir, pardon me. The happiness of my life depends upon a circumstance—

Mr. Jes. Oh, I understand you. You have been told, I suppose, of the Italian opera girl. Rat people's tongues! However, 'tis true, I had an affair with her at Naples, and she is now here. But, be satisfied. I'll give her a thousand pounds, and send her about her business.

Cla. Me, sir! I protest, nobody told me. Lord! I never heard any such thing, or inquired about it.

Mr. Jes. Nor have they not been chattering to you of my affair at Pisa, with the Principessa del—

Cla. No, indeed, sir.

Mr. Jes. Well, I was afraid they might; because, in this rude country—but why silent on a sudden? Don't be afraid to speak.

Cla. No, sir; I will come to the subject on which I took the liberty to trouble you. Indeed, I have great reliance on your generosity.

Mr. Jes. You'll find me as generous as a prince, depend on't.

Cla. I am blessed, sir, with one of the best of fathers: I never yet disobeyed him; in which I have had little merit, for his commands hitherto have only been to secure my own felicity.

ACT. DRAMA.—NOS. 53 & 54.

Mr. Jes. *Apres ma chere.*

Cla. But now, sir, I am under the shocking necessity of disobeying him, or being wretched for ever.

Mr. Jes. Hem!

Cla. Our union is impossible: therefore, sir, since I cannot be your wife, let me entreat permission to make you my friend. [Exit.

Mr. Jes. Who's there?

Enter JENKINS.

Jenk. Do you call, sir?

Mr. Jes. Hark you, old gentleman; who are you?

Jenk. Sir, my name is Jenkins.

Mr. Jes. Oh! you are Sir John Flowerdale's steward; a servant he puts confidence in.

Jenk. Sir, I have served Sir John Flowerdale many years.

Mr. Jes. Then, Mr. Jenkins, I shall condescend to speak to you. Does your master know who I am? Does he know, sir, that I am likely to be a peer of Great Britain; that I have ten thousand pounds a year; that I have passed through all Europe with distinguished *eclat*; that I refused the daughter of Mynheer Van Slokenfolk, the great Dutch burgo-master; and that, if I had not had the misfortune of being bred a protestant, I might have married the niece of his present holiness the Pope, with a fortune of two hundred thousand piastres?

Jenk. I am sure, sir, my master has all the respect imaginable—

Mr. Jes. Then, sir, how comes he, after my shewing an inclination to be allied to his family; how comes he, I say, to bring me to his house to be affronted? I have let his daughter go; but I think I was in the wrong; for a woman that insults me, is no more safe than a man. I have brought a lady to reason before now, for giving me saucy language; and left her male friends to revenge it.

Jenk. Pray, good sir, what's the matter?

Mr. Jes. Why, sir, this is the matter, sir: your master's daughter, sir, has behaved to me with d—d insolence and impertinence; and you may tell Sir John Flowerdale, first with regard to her, that I think she is a silly, ignorant, awkward, ill-bred, country puss.

Jenk. Oh! sir, for heaven's sake—

Mr. Jes. And that, with regard to himself, he is, in my opinion, an old doating, ridiculous, country 'squire; without the knowledge of either men or things; and that he is below my notice, if it were not to despise him.

Jenk. Good lord! good lord!

Mr. Jes. And advise him and his daughter to keep out of my way; for, by gad, I will affront them, in the first place I meet them. And if your master is for carrying things further; tell him, I fence better than any man in Europe.

SONG.

*In Italy, Germany, France, have I been; [seen;
Where princes I've liv'd with, where monarchs I've
The great have caress'd me,
The fair have address'd me,
Nay, smiles I have had from a queen.*

*And, now, shall a pert
Insignificant flirt,
With insolence use me,
Presume to refuse me!
She fancies my pride will be hurt.
But tout au contraire,
I'm pleas'd I declare,*

*Quite happy to think I escape from the snare—
 Serviteur, Mam'selle; my claim I withdraw.
 Hey! where are my people? Fal, la, la, la, la.*
 [Exit.]

Jenk. I must go and inform Sir John of what has happened; but, I will not tell him of the outrageous behaviour of this young spark; for he is a man of spirit, and would resent it. Egad, my own fingers itched to be at him, once or twice; and, as stout as he is, I fancy these old fists would give him a bellyful. He complains of Miss Clarissa; but she is incapable of treating him in the manner he says. Perhaps she may have behaved with some coldness towards him; and yet that is a mystery to me too.
 [Exit.]

SCENE III.—Sir John Flowerdale's Garden.

Enter LIONEL, leading CLARISSA.

Lio. Hist! methought I heard a noise: should we be surprised together, at a juncture so critical, what might be the consequence? I know not how it is; but, at this, the happiest moment of my life, I feel a damp, a tremour at my heart—

Cl. Then, what should I do? If you tremble, I ought to be terrified indeed, who have discovered sentiments, which perhaps I should have hid, with a frankness that, by a man less generous, less noble-minded than yourself, might be construed to my disadvantage.

Lio. Oh! wound me not with so cruel an expression. You love me, and have condescended to confess it. You have seen my torments, and been kind enough to pity them. The world, indeed, may blame you—

Cl. And yet, was it proclaimed to the world, what could the most malicious suggest? They could but say, that truth and sincerity got the better of forms; that the tongue dared to speak the honest sensation of the mind; that while you aimed at improving my understanding, you engaged and conquered my heart.

Lio. And is it—is it possible?

Cl. Be calm, and listen to me: what I have done has not been lightly imagined, nor rashly undertaken: it is the work of reflection, or conviction; my love is not a sacrifice to my own fancy, but a tribute to your worth; did I think there was a more deserving man in the world—

Lio. If to doat on you more than life be to deserve you, so far I have merit; if to have no wish, no hope, no thought but you, can entitle me to the envied distinction of a moment's regard, so far I dare pretend.

Cl. That I have this day refused a man, with whom I could not be happy, I make no merit: born for quiet and simplicity, the crowds of the world, the noise attending pomp and distinction have no charms for me: I wish to pass my life in rational tranquillity, with a friend, whose virtues I can respect, whose talents I can admire; who will make my esteem the basis of my affection.

Lio. O charming creature! Yes, let me indulge the flattering idea; formed with the same sentiments, the same feelings, the same tender passion for each other—nature designed us to compose that sacred union, which nothing but death can annul.

Cl. One only thing remember. Secure in each other's affections, here we must rest; I would not give my father a moment's pain, to purchase the empire of the world.

Lio. Command, dispose of me as you please:

angels take cognizance of the vows of innocence and virtue; and I will believe that our's are already registered in heaven.

Cl. I will believe so too.

SONG.

*Go, and on my truth relying,
 Comfort to your cares applying,
 Bid each doubt and sorrow flying,
 Leave to peace and love your reason.*

*Go, and may the Pow'rs that hear us,
 Still, as kind protectors near us,
 Through our troubles safely steer us,
 To a port of joy and rest.* [Exit.]

Enter Sir JOHN FLOWERDALE.

Sir J. Who's there? *Lionel?*

Lio. Heavens! 'tis Sir John Flowerdale.

Sir J. Who's there?

Lio. 'Tis I, sir; I am here, Lionel.

Sir J. My dear lad, I have been searching for you this half-hour, and was at last told that you had come into the garden. I have a piece of news, which I dare swear will shock and surprise you; my daughter has refused Colonel Oldboy's son, who is this minute departed the house in violent resentment of her ill-treatment.

Lio. Perhaps, sir, the gentleman may have been too impetuous, and offended Miss Flowerdale's delicacy; certainly nothing else could occasion—

Sir J. Heaven only knows. I think, indeed, there can be no settled aversion; and surely her affections are not engaged elsewhere.

Lio. Engaged, sir! No, sir.

Sir J. I think not, Lionel.

Lio. You may be positive, sir. I'm sure—

Sir J. O worthy young man! whose integrity, openness, and every good quality, have rendered dear to me as my own child; I see this affair troubles you as much as it does me.

Lio. It troubles me, indeed, sir.

Sir J. However, my particular disappointment ought not to be detrimental to you, nor shall it. I well know how irksome it is to a generous mind to live in a state of dependence, and have long had it in my thoughts to make you easy for life.

Lio. Sir John, the situation of my mind at present is a little disturbed. Spare me—I beseech you, spare me; why will you persist in a goodness that makes me ashamed of myself?

Sir J. There is an estate in this county which I purchased some years ago; by me it will never be missed, and whoever marries my daughter will have little reason to complain of my disposing of such a trifle for my own gratification. On the present marriage, I intended to perfect a deed of gift in your favour, which has been for some time prepared; my lawyer has this day completed it, and it is your's, my dear Lionel, with every good wish that the warmest friend can bestow.

Lio. Sir, if you presented a pistol with a design to shoot me, I would submit to it: but you must excuse me, I cannot lay myself under more obligations.

Sir J. Your delicacy carries you too far. In this I confer a favour on myself: however, we'll talk no more on the subject at present; let us walk towards the house, our friends will depart else without my bidding them adieu. [Eeunt.]

Enter DIANA and CLARISSA.

Dia. So, then, my dear Clarissa, you really give

credit to the ravings of that French wretch, with regard to a plurality of worlds?

Cl. I don't make it an absolute article of belief; but I think it an ingenious conjecture, with great probability on its side.

Dia. And we are a moon to the moon! Nay, child, I know something of astronomy; but that—that little shining thing there, which seems not much larger than a silver plate, should, perhaps, contain great cities like London;—and who can tell but they may have kings there, and parliaments, and plays, and operas, and people of fashion! Lord, the people of fashion in the moon must be strange creatures.

Cl. Methinks Venus shines very bright in yonder corner.

Dia. Venus! O pray let me look at Venus; I suppose, if there are any inhabitants there, they must be all lovers.

Enter LIONEL.

Lio. Was ever such a wretch? I can't stay a moment in a place. Where is my repose? Fled with my virtue. Was I then born for falsehood and dissimulation? I was, I was! and I live to be conscious of it. To impose upon my friend! to betray my benefactor, and lie, to hide my ingratitude!—a monster in a moment. No, I may be the most unfortunate of men, but I will not be the most odious; while my heart is yet capable of dictating what is honest, I will obey its voice. [*Aside.*]

Enter Colonel Oldboy and HARMAN.

Col. Dy, where are you? What the mischief, is this a time to be walking in the garden? The coach has been ready this half hour, and your mama is waiting for you.

Dia. I am learning astronomy, sir. Do you know, papa, the moon is inhabited?

Col. Hussy, you are half a lunatic yourself: come here, things have gone just as I imagined they would; the girl has refused your brother; I knew he must disgust her.

Dia. Women will want taste now and then, sir.

Col. But I must talk to the young lady a little.

Har. [To DIA.] Well, I have had a long conference with your father about the elopement, and he continues firm in his opinion that I ought to attempt it: in short, all the necessary operations are settled between us, and I am to leave his house to-morrow evening, if I can but persuade the young lady—

Dia. Ay, but I hope the young lady will have more sense. Lord, how can you tease me with your nonsense! Come, sir, isn't it time for us to go in? Her ladyship will be impatient.

Col. Friend Lionel, good night to you. Miss Clarissa, my dear, though I am father to the puppy who has displeased you, give me a kiss; you served him right, and I thank you for it.

QUARTETTO.

Col. *O what a night is here for love!*
Cynthia brightly shining above;
Among the trees,
To the sighing breeze,
Fountains tinkling,
Stars a twinkling;

Dia. *O what a night is here for love!*
So may the morn propitious prove;

Har. *And so it will, if right I guess;*
For sometimes light,
As well as night,
A lover's hopes may bless.

Cl. *Farewell, my friend,*
May gentle rest
Dia. *Cal'm each tumult in your breast,*
Every pain and fear remove.

Lio. *What have I done?*
Where shall I run?
With grief and shame at once oppress,
How my own upbraiding shun,
Or meet my friend's distress?

Cl. *Hark to Philonel, how sweet,*
Dia. *From yonder elm,*

Har. *Tweet, tweet, tweet, tweet.*

All. *O what a night is here for love!*
But vainly nature strives to move;
Nor nightingale among the trees,
Nor twinkling stars, nor sighing breeze,
Nor murm'ring streams,
Nor Phoebe's beams,
Can charm unless the heart's at ease.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Room in Colonel Oldboy's house.*

Enter HARMAN, with his hat, boots, and whip, followed by DIANA.

Dia. Pr'ythee, hear me.

Har. My dear, what would you say?

Dia. I am afraid of the step we are going to take; indeed, I am. 'Tis true, my father is the contriver of it; but, really, on consideration, I think I should appear less culpable if he was not so; I am at once criminal myself, and rendering him ridiculous.

Har. Do you love me?

Dia. Suppose I do, you give me a very ill proof of your love for me, when you would take advantage of my tenderness, to blind my reason: how can you have so little regard for my honour as to sacrifice it to a vain triumph?—for it is in that light I see the rash action you are forcing me to commit; nay, methinks my consenting to it should injure me in your own esteem. When a woman forgets what she owes herself, a lover should set little value upon any thing she gives to him.

Har. Can you suppose, then, can you imagine, that my passion will ever make me forget my veneration? and an elopement is nothing, when it is on the road to matrimony.

Dia. At best, I shall incur the censure of disobedience and indiscretion; and, is it nothing to a young woman, what the world says of her? Ah! my good friend, be assured, such a disregard of the world is the first step towards deserving its reproaches.

Har. But, the necessity we are under. Mankind has too much good sense, too much good-nature—

Dia. Every one has good sense enough to see other people's faults, and good nature enough to overlook their own. Besides, the most sacred things may be made an ill use of; and even marriage itself, if indecently and improperly—

Har. Come, get yourself ready: where is your band-box, hat, and cloak? Slip into the garden; be there at the iron-gate, which you shewed me just now; and, as the post-chaise comes round, I will step and take you in.

Dia. Dear Harman, let me beg of you to desist.

Har. Dear Diana, let me beg of you to go on.

Dia. I shall never have resolution to carry me through it.

Har. We shall have four horses, my dear, and they will assist us.

Dia. In short—I—cannot go with you.

Har. But before me—into the garden. Won't you?

Dia. Ha! ha! ha!

[*Exit.*]

Enter Colonel Oldboy.

Col. Heyday! what's the meaning of this? Who is it went out of the room there? Have you and my daughter been in conference, Mr. Harman?

Har. Yes, faith, sir; she has been taking me to task here very severely, with regard to this affair; and she has said so much against it, and put it into such a strange light—

Col. A busy, impertinent baggage! Egad I wish I had caught her meddling, and after I ordered her not: but you have sent to the girl, and you say she is ready to go with you; you must not disappoint her now.

Har. No, no, Colonel; I always have politeness enough to hear a lady's reasons; but constancy enough to keep a will of my own.

Col. Very well; now let me ask you: don't you think it would be proper, upon this occasion, to have a letter ready writ for the father, to let him know who has got his daughter, and so forth?

Har. Certainly, sir, and I'll write it directly.

Col. You write it! you be d—d! I won't trust you with it. I tell you, Harman, you'll commit some cursed blunder, if you don't leave the management of this whole affair to me. I have writ the letter for you myself.

Har. Have you, sir?

Col. Ay; here, read it: I think it's the thing. However, you are welcome to make any alteration.

Har. "Sir, I have loved your daughter a great while, secretly; she assures me there is no hopes of your consenting to our marriage; I therefore take her without it. I am a gentleman who will use her well: and, when you consider the matter, I dare swear you will be willing to give her a fortune; if not, you shall find, I dare behave myself like a man. A word to the wise. You must expect to hear from me in another style."

Col. Now, sir, I will tell you what you must do with this letter. As soon as you have got off with the girl, sir, send your servant back to leave it at the house, with orders to have it delivered to the old gentleman.

Har. Upon my honour, I will, Colonel.

Col. But, upon my honour, I don't believe you'll get the girl. Come, Harman, I'll bet you a buck, and six dozen of Burgundy, that you won't have spirit enough to bring this affair to a crisis.

Har. And, I say done first, Colonel.

Col. Then look into the court there, sir; a chaise, with four of the prettiest bay geldings in England, with two boys in scarlet and silver jackets, that will whisk you along.

Har. Boys, Colonel! Little cupids, to transport me to the summit of my desires.

Col. Ay, but for all that, it mayn't be amiss for me to talk to them a little out of the window for you. Dick, come hither: you are to go with this gentleman, and do whatever he bids you; and take into the chaise whoever he pleases; and drive like devils, do you hear? but be kind to the dumb beasts.

Har. Leave that to me, sir. And so, my dear Colonel—

SONG.

To fear a stranger,

Behold the soldier arm;

He knows no danger,

When honour sounds the alarm;

But dauntless goes,

Among his foes.

In Cupid's militia,

So, fearless I issue;

And, as you see,

Arm'd cap-a-pie,

Resolve on death or victory.

[*Exit.*]

Enter Lady MARY, and then JENNY.

Lady M. Mr. Oldboy, here is a note from Sir John Flowerdale; it is addressed to me, entreating my son to come over there again this morning. A maid brought it: she is in the ante-chamber. We had better speak to her. Child, child, why don't you come in?

Jen. I choose to stay where I am, if your ladyship pleases.

Lady M. Stay where you are! why so?

Jen. I am afraid of the old gentleman there.

Col. Afraid of me, hussy?

Lady M. Pray, Colonel, have patience. Afraid! Here is something at the bottom of this. What did you mean by that expression, child?

Jen. Why the Colonel knows very well, madam; he wanted to be rude with me yesterday.

Lady M. Oh, Mr. Oldboy!

Col. Lady Mary, don't provoke me, but let me talk to the girl about her business. How come you to bring this note here?

Jen. Why, Sir John gave it to me, to deliver to my uncle Jenkins, and I took it down to his house; but while we were talking together, he remembered that he had some business with Sir John, so he desired me to bring it, because he said it was not proper to be sent by any of the common servants.

Lady M. Colonel, look in my face, and help blushing, if you can.

Col. What the plague's the matter, my lady? I have not been wronging you now, as you call it.

Jen. Indeed, madam, he offered to make me his kept madam. I am sure his usage of me put me into such a twitter, that I did not know what I was doing all the day after.

Lady M. I don't doubt it, though I so lately forgave him; but, as the poet says, his sex is all deceit. Read Pamela, child, and resist temptation.

Jen. Yes, madam, I will.

Col. Why, I tell you, my lady, it was all a joke.

Jen. No, sir, it was no joke; you made me a proffer of money, so you did, whereby I told you, you had a lady of your own, and that though she was old, you had no right to despise her.

Lady M. And how dare you, mistress, make use of my name? Is it for such trollops as you to talk of persons of distinction behind their backs?

Jen. Why, madam, I only said you was in years.

Lady M. Sir John Flowerdale shall be informed of your impertinence, and you shall be turned out of the family. I see you are a confident creature, and I believe you are no better than you should be.

Jen. I scorn your words, madam.

Lady M. Get out of the room; how dare you stay in this room to talk impudently to me?

Jen. Very well, madam, I shall let my lady know how you have used me; but I shan't be turned out of my place, madam, nor at a loss, if I am; and if you are angry with every one that won't say you are

young, I believe there is very few you will keep friends with.

SONG.

*I wonder, I'm sure, why this fuss should be made;
For my part I'm neither ashamed nor afraid
Of what I have done, nor of what I have said,
A servant, I hope, is no slave;
And tho', to their shames,
Some ladies call names,
I know better how to behave.
Times are not so bad,
If occasion I had,
Nor my character such I need starve on't;
And for going away,
I don't want to stay,
And so I'm your ladyship's servant.*

[Exit.

Enter MR. JESSAMY.

Mr. Jes. What is the matter here?

Lady M. I will have a separate maintenance; I will indeed. Only a new instance of your father's infidelity, my dear. Then with such low wretches, farmers' daughters, and servant wenches: but anything with a cap on, 'tis all the same to him.

Mr. Jes. Upon my word, sir, I am sorry to tell you, that these practices very ill suit the character which you ought to endeavour to support in the world.

Lady M. Is this a recompense for my love and regard; I, who have been tender and faithful as a turtle dove?

Mr. Jes. A man of your birth and distinction should, methinks, have views of a higher nature, than such low and vulgar libertinism.

Lady M. Consider my birth and family too: Lady Mary Jessamy might have had the best matches in England.

Mr. Jes. Then, sir, your grey hairs.

Lady M. I, that have brought you so many lovely, sweet babes!

Mr. Jes. Nay, sir, it is a reflection on me.

Lady M. The heinous sin too—

Mr. Jes. Indeed, sir, I blush for you.

Col. S'death and fire, you little effeminate puppy! do you know who you talk to? And you, madam, do you know who I am? Get up to your chamber, or rounds I'll make such a—

Lady M. Ah! my dear come away from him.

[Exit.

Enter a Servant.

Col. Am I to be tortured and called to account? How now, you scoundrel, what do you want?

Serv. A letter, sir.

Col. A letter, from whom, sirrah?

Serv. The gentleman's servant, an't please your honour, that left this just now in the post-chaise; the gentleman my young lady went away with.

Col. Your young lady, sirrah? Your young lady went away with no gentleman, you dog. What gentleman? What young lady, sirrah?

Mr. Jes. There is some mystery in this. With your leave, sir, I'll open the letter: I believe it contains no secrets.

Col. What are you going to do, you jackanapes? You shan't open a letter of mine. Dy—Diana! Somebody call my daughter to me there. To John Oldboy, Esq. Sir, I have loved your daughter a great while, secretly—consenting to our marriage—

Mr. Jes. So, so.

Col. You villain! you dog! what is it you have brought me here?

Serv. Please your honour, if you'll have patience, I'll tell your honour. As I told your honour before, the gentleman's servant that went off just now in the post-chaise, came to the gate, and left it after his master was gone. I saw my young lady go into the chaise with the gentleman.

Mr. Jes. Why, this is your own hand.

Col. Call all the servants in the house, let horses be saddled directly; every one take a different road.

Serv. Why, your honour, Dick said it was by your own orders.

Col. My orders! you rascal? I thought he was going to run away with another gentleman's daughter.

Dy—Diana Oldboy! [Exit Servant.

Mr. Jes. Don't waste your lungs to no purpose, sir; your daughter is half a dozen miles off by this time.

Col. Sirrah, you have been bribed to further the scheme of a pickpocket here.

Mr. Jes. Besides, the matter is entirely of your own contriving, as well as the letter and spirit of this elegant epistle.

Col. You are a coxcomb, and I'll disinherit you; the letter is none of my writing, it was writ by the devil, and the devil contrived it. Diana, Margaret, my Lady Mary, William, John— [Exit.

Mr. Jes. I am very glad of this; prodigiously glad of it, upon my honour. He! he! he! It will be a jest this hundred years. (Bells ring violently, on both sides.) What's the matter now? O! her ladyship has heard of it, and is at her bell; and the Colonel answers her. A pretty duet; but a little too much upon the forte methinks: it would be a diverting thing now, to stand unseen at the old gentleman's elbow. [Exit.

Enter COLONEL OLDBOY, with one boot, a great-coat on his arm, &c. followed by several Servants.

Col. She's gone, by the lord! fairly stole away, with that poaching, coney-catching rascal! However, I won't follow her; no, d—e; take my whip, and my cap, and my coat, and order the groom to unsaddle the horses; I won't follow her the length of a spur-leather. Come here, you sir, and pull off my boot; (whistles) she has made a fool of me once, she shan't do it a second time. Not but I'll be revenged too, for I'll never give her sumpence; the disappointment will put the scoundrel out of temper, and he'll thrash her half a dozen times a day: the thought pleases me, I hope he'll do it. What do you stand gaping and staring at, you impudent dogs? are you laughing at me? I'll teach you to be merry at my expense—

SONG.

*A rascal, a hussy; zounds! she that I counted
In temper so mild, so unpractis'd in evil:*

I set her a horse-back, and no sooner mounted,

Than, crack, whip and spur, she rides post to the devil.

But there let her run,

Be ruin'd, undone;

If I go to catch her,

Or back again fetch her,

I'm worse than the son of a gun.

A mischief possess'd me to marry;

And further my folly to carry,

To be still more a sot,

Sons and daughter I got,

And pretty ones, by the lord Harry.

[Exeunt.

SCENE II.—*Clarissa's Dressing-room.*

Enter CLARISSA, melancholy, with a book in her hand, meeting JENNY.

Cla. Where have you been, Jenny? I was inquiring for you; why will you go out without letting me know?

Jen. Dear madam, never anything happened so unlucky; I am sorry you wanted me. But I was sent to Colonel Oldboy's with a letter; where I have been so used! Lord have mercy upon me; quality indeed! I say quality! Pray, madam, do you think that I look anyways like an immodest parson? To be sure I have a gay air, and I can't help it, and I loves to appear a little genteelish, that's what I do.

Cla. Jenny, take away this book.

Jen. Heaven preserve me, madam, you are crying.

Cla. O my dear Jenny!

Jen. My dear mistress, what's the matter?

Cla. I am undone.

Jen. No, madam; no, lord forbid.

Cla. I am indeed. I have been rash enough to discover my weakness for a man who treats me with contempt.

Jen. Is Mr. Lionel ungrateful, then?

Cla. I have lost his esteem for ever, Jenny. Since last night, that I fatally confessed what I should have kept a secret from all the world, he has scarce condescended to cast a look at me, nor give me an answer when I spoke to him, but with coldness and reserve.

Jen. Then he is a nasty, barbarous, inhuman brute.

Cla. Hold, Jenny, hold! it is all my fault.

Jen. Your fault, madam? I wish I was to hear such a word come out of his mouth; if he was a minister to-morrow, and to say such a thing from his pulpit, and I by, I'd tell him it was false upon the spot. *(A knock.)*

Cla. Somebody's at the door; see who it is.

Jen. You in fault indeed; that I know to be the most virtuous, nicest, most delicate—*(Goes to the door.)*

Cla. How now?

Jen. Madam, it's a message from Mr. Lionel. If you are alone, and at leisure, he would be glad to wait upon you; I'll tell him, madam, that you are busy.

Cla. Where is he, Jenny?

Jen. In the study, the man says.

Cla. Then go to him, and tell him I should be glad to see him; but do not bring him up immediately, because I will stand in the balcony a few minutes for a little air.

Jen. Do so, dear madam; for your eyes are as red as ferrets; you are ready to faint too. Mercy on us, for what do you grieve and vex yourself? If I was as you—

Cla. Oh!

[Exit.]

SONG.

Why with sighs my heart is swelling,

Why with tears my eyes o'erflow;

Ask me not, 'tis past the telling,

Mute, involuntary woe.

Who, to winds and waves a stranger,

Vent'rous tempts the inconstant seas,

In each billow fancies danger,

Shrinks at every rising breeze.

[Exit.]

Enter SIR JOHN FLOWERDALE and JENKINS.

Sir J. So, then, the mystery is discovered; but is it possible that my daughter's refusal of Colonel Oldboy's son should proceed from a clandestine engagement, and that engagement with Lionel?

Jenk. Yes, sir; and it is my duty to tell you; else I would rather die than be the means of wounding the heart of my dear young lady; for if there is one upon earth of truly noble and delicate sentiments—

Sir J. I thought so once, Jenkins.

Jenk. And think so still: O good Sir John, now is the time for you to exert that character of worth and gentleness which the world so deservedly has given you. You have indeed cause to be offended; but consider, sir, your daughter is young, beautiful, and amiable; the poor youth unexperienced, sensible, and at a time of life when such temptations are hard to be resisted; their opportunities were many, their cast of thinking the same.

Sir J. Jenkins, I can allow for all these things; but the young hypocrites, there's the thing, Jenkins; their hypocrisy, their hypocrisy wounds me.

Jenk. Call it by a gentler name, sir; modesty on her part, apprehension on his.

Sir J. Then what opportunity have they had? They never were together but when my sister or myself made one of the company; besides, I had so firm a reliance on Lionel's honour and gratitude.

Jenk. Sir, I can never think that nature stamp'd that gracious countenance of his, to mask a corrupt heart.

Sir J. How! at the very time that he was conscious of being himself the cause of it, did he not shew more concern at this affair than I did? Nay, don't I tell you that last night, of his own accord, he offered to be a mediator in the affair, and desired my leave to speak to my daughter? I thought myself obliged to him, consented; and, in consequence of his assurance of success, wrote that letter to Colonel Oldboy, to desire the family would come here again to-day.

Jenk. Sir, as we were standing in the next room, I heard a message delivered from Mr. Lionel, desiring leave to wait upon your daughter. I dare swear they will be here presently; suppose we were to step into the closet, and overhear their conversation?

Sir J. What, Jenkins, after having lived so many years in confidence with my child, shall I become an eaves-dropper to detect her?

Jenk. It is necessary at present. Come in, my dear master; let us only consider that we are once young like them; subject to the same passions, the same indiscretions; and it is the duty of every man to pardon errors incident to his kind. *[Exeunt.]*

Enter CLARISSA and LIONEL, meeting.

Cla. Sir, you desired to speak to me; I need not tell you the present situation of my heart; it is full. Whatever you have to say, I beg you will explain yourself; and, if possible, rid me of the anxiety under which I have laboured for some hours.

Lio. Madam, your anxiety cannot be greater than mine. I come, indeed, to speak to you; and yet, I know not how; I came to advise you, shall I say as a friend? yes, as a friend to your glory, your felicity; dearer to me than life.

Cla. Go on, sir.

Lio. Sir John Flowerdale, madam, is such a father as few are blest with; his care, his prudence, has provided for you a match; your refusal renders him inconsolable. Listen to no suggestions that would pervert you from your duty, but make the worst of men happy by submitting to his will.

Cla. How, sir, after what passed between us yesterday evening, can you advise me to marry Mr. Jessamy?

Lio. I would advise you to marry any one, madam, rather than a villain.

Cl. A villain, sir!

Lio. I should be the worst of villains, madam, was I to talk to you in any other strain; nay, am I not a villain, at once treacherous and ungrateful? Received into this house as an asylum, what have I done? Betrayed the confidence of the friend that trusted me; endeavoured to sacrifice his peace, and the honour of his family, to my own unwarrantable desires.

Cl. Say no more, sir; say no more; I see my error too late. I have parted from the rules prescribed to my sex; I have mistaken indecorum for a laudable sincerity; and it is just I should meet with the treatment my imprudence deserves.

Lio. 'Tis I, and only I, am to blame. While I took advantage of the father's security, I practised upon the tenderness and ingenuousness of the daughter: my own imagination gone astray, I artfully laboured to lead your's after it; but here, madam, I give you back those vows which I insidiously extorted from you; keep them for some happier man, who may receive them without wounding his honour, or his peace.

Cl. For heaven's sake—

Lio. Oh! my *Clarissa*, my heart is broke; I am hateful to myself for loving you: yet, before I leave you for ever, I will once more touch that lovely hand—indulge my fondness with a last look—pray for your health and prosperity.

Cl. Can you forsake me? Have I then given my affections to a man who rejects and disregards them? Let me throw myself at my father's feet; he is generous and compassionate:—he knows your worth—

Lio. Mention it not; were you stript of fortune, reduced to the meanest station, and I monarch of the globe, I should glory in raising you to universal empire; but as it is,—farewell! farewell!

SONG.

*O dry those tears! like melted ore,
Fast dropping on my heart they fall:
Think, think, no more of me; no more
The mem'ry of past scenes recall.*

*On a wild sea of passion toss'd,
I split upon the fatal shelf;
Friendship and love at once are lost,
And now I wish to lose myself.* [Exit.

Enter *JENNY*.

Jen. O madam! I have betray'd you. I have gone and said something I should not have said to my uncle *Jenkins*; and, as sure as day, he has gone and told it all to Sir *John*.

Enter *Sir JOHN and JENKINS*.

Cl. My father!

Sir J. Go, *Jenkins*, and desire that young gentleman to come back. Stay where you are. But what have I done to my child? How have I deserved that you should treat me like an enemy? Has there been any undesigned rigour in my conduct, or terror in my looks?

Cl. Oh sir!

Enter *LIONEL*.

Jen. Here is Mr. *Lionel*.

Sir J. Come in.—When I tell you that I am instructed in all your proceedings, and that I have been ear-witness to your conversation in this place, you will, perhaps, imagine what my thoughts are of you, and the measures which justice prescribes me to follow.

Lio. Sir, I have nothing to say in my own defence; I stand before you self-convicted, self-condemned,—and shall submit, without murmuring, to the sentence of my judge.

Sir J. As for you, *Clarissa*, since your earliest infancy you have known no parent but me: I have been to you, at once, both father and mother; and that I might the better fulfil those united duties, though left a widower in the prime of my days, I would never enter into a second marriage.—I loved you for your likeness to your dear mother; but that mother never deceived me, and there the likeness fails; you have repaid my affection with dissimulation—*Clarissa*, you should have trusted me. As for you, Mr. *Lionel*, what terms can I find strong enough to paint the excess of my friendship!—I loved, I esteemed, I honoured your father; he was a brave, a generous, and a sincere man; I thought you inherited his good qualities. You were left an orphan, I adopted you; put you upon the footing of my own son; educated you like a gentleman; and designed you for a profession, to which, I thought, your virtues would have been an ornament. What return you have made me, you seem to be acquainted with yourself; and, therefore, I shall not repeat it; yet, remember, as an aggravation of your guilt, that the last mark of my bounty was conferred upon you in the very instant when you were undermining my designs. Now, sir, I have but one thing more to say to you: take my daughter: was she worth a million, she is at your service.

Lio. To me, sir?—your daughter? do you give her to me? Without fortune, without friend—without—

Sir J. You have them all in your heart; him whom virtue raises, fortune cannot abase.

Cl. O, sir, let me on my knees kiss that dear hand, acknowledge my error, and entreat forgiveness and blessing.

Sir J. You have not erred, my dear daughter; you have distinguished. It is I should ask pardon for this little trial of you; for I am happier in the son-in-law you have given me, than if you had married a prince.

Lio. My patron—my friend—my father; I would fain say something; but, as your goodness exceeds all bounds—

Sir J. I think I hear a coach drive into the court: it is Colonel *Oldboy's* family; I will go and receive them. Don't make yourself uneasy at this, we must endeavour to pacify them as well as we can. My dear *Lionel*, if I have made you happy, you have made me so; heaven bless you, my children, and make you deserving of one another.

[Exeunt *Sir JOHN and JENKINS*.

Jen. O dear, madam, upon my knees, I humbly beg your forgiveness. Dear Mr. *Lionel*, forgive me; I did not design to discover it, indeed—and you won't turn me off, madam, will you? I'll serve you for nothing.

Cl. Get up, my good *Jenny*; I freely forgive you if there is anything to be forgiven: I know you love me; and I am sure here is one who will join with me in rewarding your services.

Jen. Well, if I did not know, as sure as could be, that some good would happen, by my left eye itching this morning! [Exit.

DUET.

Lio. O bliss unexpected! my joys overpower me!
My love, my *Clarissa*, what words shall I find!
Remorse, desperation, no longer devour me—
He bless'd us, and peace is restor'd to my mind.

Cl. *He bless'd us! O rapture! Like one I recover,
Whom death had appall'd without hope, with-
out aid;
A moment depriv'd me of father and lover;
A moment restores, and my pangs are repaid.*

Lio. *Forsaken, abandoned,*

Cl. *What folly! what blindness!*

Lio. *We fortune accus'd;*

Cl. *And the fates that decreed:*

Both. *But pain was inflicted by heaven, out of kindness,
To heighten the joys that were doom'd to
Our day was o'ercast; [succeed.
But brighter the scene is,
The sky more serene is,
And softer the calm for the hurricane past.*

[*Ereunt.*]

*Enter Mr. JESSAMY, leading Lady MARY OLDBOY;
JENNY, and Sir JOHN FLOWERDALE with Colonel
OLDBOY.*

Lady M. 'Tis all in vain, my dear: set me down anywhere; I can't go a step further. I knew, when Mr. Oldboy insisted upon my coming, that I should be seized with a megrim by the way; and it's well I did not die in the coach.

Mr. Jes. But, pr'ythee, why will you let yourself be affected with such trifles? Nothing more common than for young women of fashion to go off with low fellows.

Lady M. Only feel, my dear, how I tremble! Not a nerve but what is in agitation; and my blood runs cold! cold!

Mr. Jes. Well, but Lady Mary, don't let us expose ourselves to those people; I see there is not one of the rascals about us, that has not a grin upon his countenance.

Lady M. Expose ourselves, my dear! Your father will be as ridiculous as Hudibras, or Don Quixote.

Mr. Jes. Yes, he will be very ridiculous indeed.

Enter JENKINS.

Sir J. I give you my word, my good friend and neighbour, the joy I feel upon this occasion is greatly allayed by the disappointment of an alliance with your family; but I have explained to you how things have happened. You see my situation; and, as you are kind enough to consider it yourself, I hope you will excuse it to your son.

Lady M. Sir John Flowerdale, how do you do? You see we have obey'd your summons; and I have the pleasure to assure you, that my son yielded to my entreaties with very little disagreement; in short, if I may speak metaphorically, he is content to stand candidate again, notwithstanding his late repulse,—when he hopes for an unanimous election.

Col. Well, but, my lady, you may save your rhetoric; for the borough is disposed of to a worthier member.

Mr. Jes. What do you say, sir?

Enter LIONEL, CLARISSA, and JENNY.

Sir J. Here are my son and daughter.

Lady M. Is this pretty, Sir John?

Sir J. Believe me, madam, it is not for want of a just sense of Mr. Jessamy's merit, that this affair has gone off on my side: but the heart is a delicate thing; and after it has once felt, if the object is meritorious, the impression is not easily effaced; it would, therefore, have been an injury to him, to have given him in appearance what another in reality possessed.

Mr. Jes. Upon my honour, upon my soul, Sir John, I am not in the least offended at this *contre temps*.—Pray, Lady Mary, say no more about it.

Col. Tol, lol, lol, lol.

Sir J. But, my dear Colonel, I am afraid, after all, this affair is taken amiss by you: yes, I see you are angry on your son's account; but let me repeat it, I have a very high opinion of his merit.

Col. Ay! that's more than I have. Taken amiss! I don't take anything amiss; I never was in better spirits, or more pleased in my life.

Sir J. Come, you are uneasy at something, Colonel.

Col. Me! Gad, I am not uneasy. Are you a justice of peace? Then you could give me a warrant, couldn't you? You must know, Sir John, a little accident has happen'd in my family since I saw you last, and you and I may shake hands.—Daughters, sir, daughters! Your's has snap'd at a young fellow without your approbation; and how do you think mine has serv'd me this morning?—Only run away with the scoundrel I brought to dinner here yesterday.

Sir J. I am excessively concerned.

Col. Now I'm not a bit concern'd. No, d—n me, I am glad it has happened; yet, thus far, I'll confess, I should be sorry that either of them would come in my way, because a man's temper may sometimes get the better of him; and I believe I should be tempted to break her neck, and blow his brains out.

Cl. But pray, sir, explain this affair.

Col. I can explain it no further;—Dy, my daughter Dy, has run away from us.

Enter DIANA and HARMAN.

Dia. No, my dear papa, I am not run away; and, upon my knees, I entreat your pardon for the folly I have committed: but, let it be some alleviation, that duty and affection were too strong to suffer me to carry it to extremity; and, if you knew the agony I have been in, since I saw you last—

Lady M. How's this?

Har. Sir, I restore your daughter to you; whose fault, as far as it goes, I must also take upon myself. We have been known to each other for some time; as Lady Richly, your sister, in London, can acquaint you.

Col. Dy, come here. Now, you rascal, where's your sword? If you are a gentleman, you shall fight me; if you are a scrub, I'll horsewhip you. Shut the door there, don't let him escape.

Har. Sir, don't imagine I want to escape; I am extremely sorry for what has happened, but am ready to give you any satisfaction you think proper.

Col. Follow me into the garden, then. Zounds! I have no sword about me. Sir John Flowerdale, lend us a case of pistols, or a couple of guns; and, come and see fair play.

Cl. My dear papa!

Lady M. Mr. Oldboy, if you attempt to fight, I shall expire.

Sir J. Pray Colonel, let me speak a word to you in private.

Col. Slugs and a saw-pit.

Mr. Jes. What business are you of, friend?

Har. My chief trade, sir, is plain dealing; and as that is a commodity you have no reason to be very fond of, I would not advise you to purchase any of it by impertinence.

Col. And is this what you would advise me to?

Sir J. It is, indeed, my dear old friend; as things are situated, there is, in my opinion, no other prudent method of proceeding; and it is the method I would adopt myself, was I in your case.

Col. Why, I believe you are in the right of it; say what you will for me, then.

Sir J. Well, young people, I have been able to use a few arguments which have softened my neighbour here; and, in some measure, pacified his resentment. I find, sir, you are a gentleman by your connections?

Har. Sir, till it is found that my character and family will bear the strictest scrutiny, I desire no favour; and for fortune—

Col. Oh! rot your fortune, I don't mind that; I know you are a gentleman, or Dick Rantum would not have recommended you. And so, Dy, kiss and be friends.

Mr. Jes. What, sir, have you no more to say to the man who has used you so ill?

Col. Us'd me ill! That's as I take it; he has done a mettled thing; and, perhaps, I like him the better for it: it's long before you would have spirit enough to run away with a wench. Harman, give me your hand; let's hear no more of this now. Sir John Flowerdale, what say you? shall we spend the day together, and dedicate it to love and harmony?

Sir J. With all my heart.

Col. Then take off my great coat.

QUARTETTO.

Lio. Come then, all ye social pow'rs,
Shed your influence o'er us,
Crown with bliss the present hours,
And lighten those before us.
May the just, the generous, kind,
Still see that you regard 'em;
And Lionels for ever find
Clarissas to reward 'em.

Cl. Love, thy godhead I adore,
Source of sacred passion;
But will never bow before
Those idols—wealth, or fashion.
May, like me, each maiden wise,
From the fop defend her;
Learning, sense, and virtue prize,
And scorn the vain pretender.

Har. Why the plague should men be sad,
While in time we moulder?
Grave or gay, or vex'd or glad,
We ev'ry day grow older.
Bring the flask, the music bring,
Joy will quickly find us;
Drink, and laugh, and dance, and sing,
And cast our cares behind us.

Dia. How shall I escape—so naught,
On filial laws to trample?
I'll e'en curtsy, own my fault,
And plead papa's example.
Parents, 'tis a hint to you,
Children oft are shameless;
Oft transgress—the thing's too true,
But are you always blameless?

Sir J. { One word more before we go;
& { Girls and boys, have patience;
Col. { You to friends must something owe,
{ As well as to relations.
{ These kind gentlemen address—
{ What, though we forgave 'em,
{ Still they must be lost, unless
{ You lend a hand to save 'em. [Exeunt.

THE END.

THE HYPOCRITE;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS,

BY ISAAC BICKERSTAFF.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SIR JOHN LAMBERT
COLONEL LAMBERT
DOCTOR CANTWELL
DARNLEY
MAWORM
SEYWARD

OLD LADY LAMBERT
LADY LAMBERT
CHARLOTTE
BETTY

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A hall in Sir John Lambert's house.*

Enter Sir JOHN LAMBERT, followed by Colonel LAMBERT.

Col. Lamb. Pray consider, sir.

Sir J. Lamb. So I do, sir, that I am her father, and will bestow her as I please.

Col. Lamb. I do not dispute your authority, sir; but as I am your son, too, I think it my duty to be concerned for your honour. Have not you countenanced his addresses to my sister? Has not she received them? Mr. Darnley's birth and fortune are well known to you; and I dare swear, he may defy the world to lay a blemish on his character.

Sir J. Lamb. Why then, sir, since I am to be catechised, I must tell you, I do not like his character; he is a world-server, a libertine, and has no more religion than you have.

Col. Lamb. Sir, we neither of us think it proper to make a boast of our religion; but, if you will please to inquire, you will find that we go to church as orderly as the rest of our neighbours.

Sir J. Lamb. Oh! you go to church; you go to church. Wonderful! wonderful! to bow, and grin, and cough, and sleep: a fine act of devotion, indeed!

Col. Lamb. Well, but, dear sir—

Sir J. Lamb. Colonel, you are an atheist.

Col. Lamb. Pardon me, sir, I am none. It is a character I abhor; and next to that, I abhor the character of an enthusiast.

Sir J. Lamb. Oh! you do so? An enthusiast!

this is the fashionable phrase, the by-word, the nickname that our pleasure-loving generation give to those few who have a sense of true sanctity.

Col. Lamb. Say canting, sir.

Sir J. Lamb. I tell you what, son, as I have told you more than once, you will draw some heavy judgment on your head some day or other.

Col. Lamb. So says the charitable Doctor Cantwell; you have taken him into your house, and, in return, he gives over half your family to the devil.

Sir J. Lamb. Do not abuse the Doctor, Colonel; it is not the way to my favour. I know you cannot bear him, because he is not one of your mincing preachers: he holds up the glass to your enormities, shews you to yourselves in your genuine colours.

Col. Lamb. I always respect piety and virtue, sir; but there are pretenders to religion, as well as to courage; and as we never find the truly brave to be such as make much noise about their valour, so, I apprehend, the truly good seldom or never deal much in grimace.

Sir J. Lamb. Very well, sir; this is very well.

Col. Lamb. Besides, sir, I would be glad to know, by what authority the Doctor pretends to exercise the clerical function? It does not appear clearly to me that he ever was in orders.

Sir J. Lamb. That is no business of your's, sir. But I am better informed. However, he has the call of zeal.

Col. Lamb. Zeal!

Sir J. Lamb. Why, Colonel, you are in a passion.

Col. Lamb. I own I cannot see with temper, sir, so many religious mountebanks impose on the unwary multitude; wretches, who make a trade of religion, and show an uncommon concern for the next world, only to raise their fortunes with greater security in this.

Sir J. Lamb. Colonel, let me hear no more; I see you are too hardened to be converted now; but since you think it your duty, as a son, to be concerned for my errors, I think it is as much mine, as a father, to be concerned for your's. If you think fit to amend them, so; if not, take the consequence.

Col. Lamb. Well, sir, may I ask you without offence, if the reasons you have given me are your only reasons for discountenancing Mr. Darnley's addresses to my sister?

Sir J. Lamb. Are they not flagrant? Would you have me marry my daughter to a pagan?

Col. Lamb. He intends this morning paying his

respects to you, in hopes to obtain your final consent; and desired me to be present as a mediator of articles between you.

Sir J. Lamb. I am glad to hear it.

Col. Lamb. That's kind, indeed, sir.

Sir J. Lamb. May be not, sir; for I will not be at home when he comes; and because I will not tell a lie for the matter, I will go out this moment.

Col. Lamb. Nay, dear sir—

Sir J. Lamb. And, do you hear? because I will not deceive him either, tell him I would not have him lose his time in fooling after your sister,—in short, I have another man in my head for her. [*Exit.*]

Col. Lamb. Another man! It would be worth one's while to know him. Pray, heaven, this canting hypocrite have not got some beggarly rascal in his eye for her. I must rid the house of him at any rate, or all the settlement I can hope for, from my father, is a castle in the air. My sister may be ruined, too. [*CHARLOTTE sings without.*] Here she comes. If there be another man in the case, she, no doubt, can let me into the secret.

Enter CHARLOTTE.

Sister, good morrow; I want to speak with you.

Charl. Pr'ythee, then, dear brother, don't put on that wise, politic face, as if your regiment were going to be disbanded, or sent to the West Indies, and you obliged to follow it.

Col. Lamb. Come, come; a truce with your railery; what I have to ask of you is serious; and I beg you would be so in your answer.

Charl. Well, then, provided it be not upon the subject of love, I will be so: but make haste too, for I have not had my tea yet.

Col. Lamb. Why, it is, and it is not, on that subject.

Charl. Oh! I love a riddle, dearly. Let's hear it.

Col. Lamb. Nay, psha! if you'll be serious, say so.

Charl. Oh lord! sir, I beg your pardon—there's my whole form and features totally disengaged and lifeless, at your service; now, put them in what posture of attention you may think fit. [*Leaning against him awkwardly.*]

Col. Lamb. Was there ever such a giddy devil? Pr'ythee, stand up. I have been talking with my father, and he declares, positively, you shall not receive any further addresses from Mr. Darnley.

Charl. Are you serious?

Col. Lamb. He said so this minute, and with some warmth.

Charl. I'm glad on't, with all my heart.

Col. Lamb. How! glad!

Charl. To a degree. Do you think a man has any more charms for me for my father's liking him? No, sir; if Mr. Darnley can make his way to me now, he is obliged to me, and to me only. Besides, now, it may have the face of an amour indeed; now one has something to struggle for; there's difficulty, there's danger, there's the dear spirit of contradiction in it, too. Oh! I like it mightily!

Col. Lamb. I am glad this does not make you think the worse of Darnley; but a father's consent might have clapped a pair of horses more to your coach, perhaps, and the want of it may pinch your fortune.

Charl. Burn fortune! Am not I a fine woman? and have not I twenty thousand pounds in my own hands?

Col. Lamb. Yes, sister, but with all your charms, you have had them in your possession almost these four years.

Charl. Psha! and have not I had the full swing of my own airs and humours these four years? But

if I humour my father, I warrant he'll make it three or four thousand more, with some unlick'd lout; a comfortable equivalent, truly! No, no; let him light his pipe with his consent, if he please. Wilful against wise, for a wager.

Col. Lamb. But pray, sister, has my father ever proposed any other man to you?

Charl. Another man! let me know why you ask, and I'll tell you.

Col. Lamb. Why, the last words he said to me were, that he had another man in his head for you.

Charl. And who is it? who is it, dear brother?

Col. Lamb. Why, you don't so much as seem surprised!

Charl. No, but I'm impatient, and that's as well.

Col. Lamb. Why, how now, sister?

Charl. Why sure, brother, you know very little of female happiness, if you suppose the surprise of a new lover ought to shock a woman of my temper. Don't you know that I'm a coquette?

Col. Lamb. If you are, you'll be the first that ever was sincere enough to own her being so.

Charl. To a lover, I grant you; but not to you; I make no more of you than a sister; I can say any thing to you.

Col. Lamb. I should have been better pleased, if you had not owned it to me; it is a hateful character.

Charl. Ay, it's no matter for that; it's violently pleasant, and there's no law against it, that I know of.

Col. Lamb. Darnley's likely to have a hopeful time with you.

Charl. Well, but don't you really know who it is my father intends me?

Col. Lamb. Not I really; but I imagined you might, and therefore thought to advise with you about it.

Charl. Nay, he has not opened his lips to me yet. Are you sure he's gone out?

Col. Lamb. You are very impatient to know, methinks; what have you to do to concern yourself about any man but Darnley?

Char. Oh, lud! Oh, lud! Pr'ythee, brother, don't be so wise; if you had an empty house to let, would you be displeased to hear there were two people about it? Besides, to be a little serious, Darnley has a tincture of jealousy in his temper, which nothing but a substantial rival can cure.

Col. Lamb. Oh! your servant, madam! now you talk reason. I am glad you are concerned enough for Darnley's faults, to think them worth your mending—ha, ha!

Charl. Concerned! why, did I say that? Look you, I'll deny it all to him; well, if I ever be serious with him again—

Col. Lamb. Here he comes; be as merry with him as you please.

Charl. Psha! [*CHARLOTTE sits down, takes a book, and reads.*]

Enter DARNLEY.

Darn. My dear Colonel, your servant.

Col. Lamb. I am glad you did not come sooner; for, in the humour my father left me, 'twould not have been a proper time for you to have pressed your affair. I touched upon it, but, I'll tell you more presently; in the meantime, lose no ground with my sister.

Darn. I shall always think myself obliged to your friendship, let my success be what it may. Madam, your most obedient. What have you got there, pray?

Charl. [*Reading.*] Her lively looks a sprightly mind disclose;

Quick as her eyes, and as unfixed as those.

Darn. Pray, madam, what is it?

Charl. *Favours to none, to all she smiles extends;—*

Darn. Nay, I will see.

Char. *Ofi she rejects, but never once offends.*

Col. Lamb. Have a care; she has dipped into her own character, and she'll never forgive you, if you don't let her go through with it.

Darn. I beg your pardon, madam.

Charl. *Bright as the sun, her eyes the gazers strike,*

And, like the sun, they shine on all alike. Um!—

Darn. That is something like, indeed.

Col. Lamb. You would say so, if you knew all.

Darn. All what? Pray what do you mean?

Col. Lamb. Have a little patience; I'll tell you immediately.

Char. *If to her share some female errors fall,*

Look on her face, and you'll forget them all.

Is not that natural, Mr. Darnley?

Darn. For a woman to expect, it is indeed.

Charl. And can you blame her, when 'tis at the same time a proof of the poor man's passion, and her power?

Darn. So then, you think the greatest compliment a lover can make his mistress is to give up his reason to her.

Charl. *(Rises.)* Certainly; for what have your lordly sex to boast of but your understanding? and till that's entirely surrendered to her discretion, while the least sentiment holds out against her, a woman must be downright vain to think her conquest completed.

Darn. There we differ, madam; for, in my opinion, nothing but the most excessive vanity could value or desire such a conquest.

Charl. Oh! d'ye hear him, brother? The creature reasons with me! Nay, has the effrontery to think me in the wrong, too! Oh, lud! he'd make a horrid tyrant: positively, I won't have him.

Darn. Well, my comfort is, no other man will easily know whether you'll have him or not.

Charl. Am not I a horrid vain, silly creature, Mr. Darnley?

Darn. A little bordering on the baby, I must own.

Charl. Lud! how can you love a body so, then? but I don't think you love me, though, do you?

Darn. Yes, 'faith, I do; and so shamefully, that I'm in hopes you doubt it.

Charl. Poor man! he'd fain bring me to reason.

Darn. I would, indeed. Nay, were it but possible to make you serious only when you should be so, I should think you the most amiable—

Charl. Oh, lud! he's civil—

Darn. Come, come, be generous, and swear at least you'll never marry another.

Charl. Ah, lud! now you have spoiled all again; besides, how can I be sure of that, before I have seen the other man my brother spoke to me of?

Darn. What riddle's this?

Col. Lamb. I told you, you did not know all. To be serious, my father went out but now, on purpose to avoid you. In short, he absolutely retracts his promises; says he would not have you fool away your time after my sister; and in plain terms told me he had another man in his head for her.

Darn. Another man! who? what is he? did not he name him?

Col. Lamb. No; nor has he yet spoken of him to my sister.

Darn. This is unaccountable! What can have given him this sudden turn?

Col. Lamb. Some whim our conscientious Doctor has put into his head, I'll lay my life.

Darn. He! He can't be such a villain; he professes a friendship for me.

Col. Lamb. So much the worse.

Darn. But on what pretence, what grounds, what reason? What interest can he have to oppose me?

Col. Lamb. Are you really now as unconcerned as you seem to be?

Charl. You are a strange dunce, brother; you know no more of love than I do of a regiment. You shall see now how I'll comfort him. Poor Darnley. Ha, ha, ha!

Darn. I don't wonder at your good humour, madam, when you have so substantial an opportunity to make me uneasy for life.

Charl. Oh, lud! how sententious he is! Well, his reproaches have that greatness of soul, the confusion they give is insupportable. Betty! is the tea ready?

Enter BETTY.

Betty. Yes, madam.

Charl. Mr. Darnley, your servant.

[Exit with Betty.]

Col. Lamb. So! you have made a fine piece of work on't indeed?

Darn. Dear Tom, pardon me if I speak a little freely; I own, the levity of her behaviour, at this time, gives me harder thoughts than I once believed it possible to have of her.

Col. Lamb. Indeed, my friend, you mistake her.

Darn. Nay, nay; had she any real concern for me, the apprehension of a man's addresses, whom yet she never saw, must have alarmed her to some degree of seriousness.

Col. Lamb. Not at all; for let this man be whom he will, I take her levity as a proof of her resolution to have nothing to do with him.

Darn. And pray, sir, may I not as well suspect, that this artful delay of her good nature to me now is meant as a provisional defence against my reproaches, in case, when she has seen this man, she should think it convenient to prefer him?

Col. Lamb. No, no; she's giddy, but not capable of so studied a falsehood.

Darn. But still, what could she mean by going away so abruptly?

Col. Lamb. You grew too grave for her.

Darn. Why, who could bear such trifling?

Col. Lamb. You should have laughed at her.

Darn. I can't love at that easy rate.

Col. Lamb. No; if you could, the uneasiness would lie on her side.

Darn. Do you, then, really think she has anything in her heart for me?

Col. Lamb. Ay, marry, sir. Ah! if you could but get her to own that seriously now, lud! how you could love her!

Darn. And so I could by heaven!

Col. Lamb. Well, well; I'll undertake for her; if my father don't stand in the way, we are well enough.

Darn. What says my lady? You don't think she's against us?

Col. Lamb. I dare say she is not; she's of so soft, so sweet a disposition.

Darn. Pray, how came so fine a woman to marry your father, with such a vast inequality of years?

Col. Lamb. Want of fortune, Frank: she was poor and beautiful, he rich and amorous; she made him happy, and he made her—

Darn. A lady.

Col. Lamb. And a jointure: now she's the only one in the family that has power with our precise Doctor; and I dare engage, she'll use it with him to

persuade my father from anything that is against your interest. By the way, you must know, I have some shrewd suspicion, that this sanctified rogue is in love with her.

Darn. In love!

Col. Lamb. You shall judge by the symptoms; but hush! here he comes, with my grandmother: step this way, and I'll tell you. *[Ereunt.]*

Enter Doctor CANTWELL and Old Lady LAMBERT, followed by SEYWARD.

Dr. Cant. Charles, step up into my study; bring down a dozen more of those manuals of devotion, with the last hymn I composed; and when he calls, give them to Mr. Mawworm: and, harkye! if any one inquire after me, say I am gone to Newgate and the Marshalsea, to distribute alms. *[Exit Seyward.]*

Old Lady Lamb. Well, but worthy Doctor, why will you go to the prisons yourself? Cannot you send the money? Ugly distempers are often caught there; have a care of your health; let us keep one good man, at least, among us.

Dr. Cant. Alas! madam, I am not a good man; I am a guilty, wicked sinner, full of iniquity; the greatest villain that ever breathed; every instant of my life is crowded with stains; it is one continued series of crimes and defilements: you do not know what I am capable of: you indeed take me for a good man; but the truth is, I am a worthless creature.

Old Lady Lamb. Have you, then, stumbled? Alas! if it be so, who shall walk upright? What horrid crime have you been hurried into, that calls for this severe self-crimination?

Dr. Cant. None, madam, that perhaps humanity may call very enormous; yet am I sure that my thoughts never stray a moment from celestial contemplations? Do they not sometimes, before I am aware, turn to things of this earth? Am I not often awary, and surprised into wrath? Nay, the instance is recent; for, last night, being snarled at and bit by Minxy, your daughter-in-law's lap-dog, I am conscious I struck the little beast with a degree of passion, for which I have never been able to forgive myself since.

Old Lady Lamb. Oh! worthy, humble soul! this is a slight offence, which your suffering and mortifications may well atone for.

Dr. Cant. No, madam, no; I want to suffer; I ought to be mortified; and I am obliged now to tell you, that, for my soul's sake, I must quit your good son's family: I am pampered too much here; live too much at my ease.

Old Lady Lamb. Good Doctor!

Dr. Cant. Alas! madam, it is not you that should shed tears; it is I that ought to weep; you are a pure woman.

Old Lady Lamb. I pure! Who? I! No, no: sinful, sinful; but do not talk of quitting our family; what will become of us? for friendship, for charity—

Dr. Cant. Enough; say no more, madam; I submit; while I can do good it is my duty.

Enter Colonel LAMBERT and DARNLEY.

Col. Lamb. Your ladyship's most humble servant.

Old Lady Lamb. Grandson, how do you do?

Darn. Good day to you, Doctor.

Dr. Cant. Mr. Darnley, I am your most humble servant; I hope you and the good Colonel will stay and join in the private duties of the family.

Old Lady Lamb. No, Doctor, no; it is too early, the sun has not risen upon them; but I doubt not, the day will come.

Dr. Cant. I warrant they will go to a play now!

Old Lady Lamb. Would they? I am afraid they would.

Darn. Why, I hope it is no sin, madam; if I be not mistaken, I have seen your ladyship at a play.

Old Lady Lamb. Me, sir! see me at a play! You may have seen the prince of darkness, or some of his imps, in my likeness, perhaps.

Darn. Well, but, madam—

Old Lady Lamb. Mr. Darnley, do you think I would commit a murder?

Dr. Cant. No, sir, no; these are not the plants usually to be met with in that rank soil; the seeds of wickedness indeed sprout up every where too fast; but a play-house is the devil's hot-bed.

Col. Lamb. And yet, Doctor, I have known some of the leaders of your tribe, as scrupulous as they are, who have been willing to gather fruit there for the use of the brethren, as in case of a benefit.

Dr. Cant. The charity covereth the sin; and it may be lawful to turn the wages of abomination to the comfort of the righteous.

Col. Lamb. Ha, ha, ha!

Dr. Cant. Reprobate! reprobate!

Col. Lamb. What is that you mutter, sirrah?

Old Lady Lamb. Oh, heavens!

Darn. Let him go, Colonel.

Col. Lamb. A canting hypocrite!

Dr. Cant. Very well, sir; your father shall know my treatment. *[Exit.]*

Old Lady Lamb. Let me run out of the house; I shall have it fall upon my head, if I stay among such wicked wretches. Oh! grandson, grandson! *[Exit.]*

Darn. Was there ever so insolent a rascal?

Col. Lamb. The dog will one day provoke me to beat his brains out.

Darn. But what the devil is he? Whence comes he? What is his original? How has he so ingratiated himself with your father, as to get footing in your house?

Col. Lamb. Oh! sir, he is here in quality of chaplain; he was first introduced by the good old lady that's just gone out. You know, she has been a long time a frequenter of our modern conventicles; where, it seems, she got acquainted with this sanctified pastor. His disciples believe him a saint; and my poor father, who has been for some time tainted with their pernicious principles, has been led into the same snare.

Darn. Ha! here's your sister again.

Enter CHARLOTTE and Doctor CANTWELL.

Charl. You'll find, sir, I will not be used thus; nor shall your credit with my father protect your insolence to me.

Col. Lamb. What's the matter?

Charl. Nothing. Pray, be quiet; I don't want you; stand out of the way. How durst you bolt with such authority into my chamber, without giving me notice?

Darn. Confusion!

Col. Lamb. Hold! if my father don't resent this, 'tis then time enough for me to do it.

Dr. Cant. Compose yourself, madam; I came by your father's desire, who being informed that you were entertaining Mr. Darnley, grew impatient, and gave his positive commands that you attend him instantly, or he himself, he says, will fetch you.

Darn. Ay, now the storm is rising.

Dr. Cant. So, for what I have done, madam, I had his authority, and shall leave him to answer you.

Charl. 'Tis false! He gave you no authority to insult me; or if he had, did you suppose I would

bear it from you? What is it you presume upon? your function? Does that exempt you from the manners of a gentleman?

Dr. Cant. Shall I have an answer to your father, lady?

Charl. I'll send him none by you.

Dr. Cant. I shall inform him so. [Exit.]

Charl. A saucy puppy!

Col. Lamb. Pray, sister, what has the fellow done to you?

Charl. Nothing.

Darn. I beg you would tell us, madam.

Charl. Nay, no great matter; but I was sitting carelessly in my dressing-room, a—a fastening my garter, and this impudent cur comes bounce in upon me.

Darn. The rogue must be corrected.

Col. Lamb. Yet, egad! I cannot help laughing at the accident! what a ridiculous figure must she make! Ha, ha!

Charl. Ah! you are as impudent as he, I think.

Darn. Dear Tom, speak to her before she goes.

Charl. What does he say, brother?

Col. Lamb. Why, he wants to have me speak to you, and I would have him do it himself.

Charl. Ay; come, do, Darnley; I am in a good humour now.

Darn. Oh! Charlotte, my heart is bursting!

Charl. Well, well; out with it, then.

Darn. Your father now, I see, is bent on parting us; nay, what's worse, perhaps will give you to another. I cannot speak; imagine what I want from you.

Charl. Well, Oh, lud! one looks so silly tho' when one is serious. Oh, gad! in short, I cannot get it out.

Col. Lamb. I warrant you; try again.

Charl. Oh, lud! well, if one must be teased, then, why he must hope, I think.

Darn. Is it possible! thus—

Col. Lamb. Buz! not a syllable; she has done very well. I bar all heroics; if you press it too far, I'll hold six to four she's off again in a moment.

Darn. I'm silenced.

Charl. Now am I on tip-toe to know what old fellow my father has found out for me.

Darn. I'll give something to know him.

Charl. He's in a terrible fuss at your being here, I find.

Col. Lamb. 'Sdeath! here he comes!

Charl. Now we are all in a fine pickle!

[Enter Sir JOHN LAMBERT hastily; looks sternly at DARNLEY; takes CHARLOTTE under his arm, and carries her off. Col. LAMBERT and DARNLEY exeunt.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Ante-chamber in Sir John Lambert's House.*

Enter SEYWARD, with a writing in his hand, from the folding doors.

Seyw. 'Tis so: I have long suspected where his zeal would end—in the making of his private fortune. But, then, to found it on the ruin of his patron's children! I shudder at the villainy! What desperation may a son be driven to, so barbarously disinherited! Besides, his daughter, fair Charlotte, too, is wronged; wronged in the tenderest point: for so extravagant is this settlement, that it leaves

her not a shilling unless she marry with the Doctor's consent, which is intended, by what I have heard, as an expedient to oblige her to marry the Doctor himself. Now, 'twere but an honest part, to let Charlotte know the snare that is laid for her. This deed's not signed, and may yet be prevented. It shall be so. Yes, charming creature, I adore you; and, though I am sensible my passion is without hope, I may indulge it thus far at least,—I may have the merit of serving you, and perhaps the pleasure to know you think yourself obliged by me.

Enter Sir JOHN LAMBERT, Lady LAMBERT, and CHARLOTTE.

Sir J. Lamb. Oh! Seyward, your uncle wants you to transcribe some hymns.

Seyw. Sir, I'll wait on him.

Charl. A pretty well-bred fellow, that.

Sir J. Lamb. Ay, ay; but he has better qualities than his good-breeding.

Charl. He's always clean, too.

Sir J. Lamb. I wonder, daughter, when you will take notice of a man's real merit. Humph! well-bred and clean, forsooth! Would not one think, now, she was describing a coxcomb? When do you hear my wife talk at this rate? and yet she is as young as your fantastical ladyship.

Lady Lamb. Charlotte is of a cheerful temper, my dear; but I know you don't think she wants discretion.

Sir J. Lamb. I shall try that presently; and you, my dear, shall judge between us. In short, daughter, your course of life is but one continued round of playing the fool to no purpose; and therefore I am resolved to make you think seriously, and marry.

Charl. That I shall do before I marry, sir, you may depend upon it.

Sir J. Lamb. Humph! that I am not so sure of; but you may depend upon my having thought seriously, and that's as well: for the person I intend you is, of all the world, the only man who can make you truly happy.

Charl. And of all the world, sir, that's the only man I'll positively marry.

Lady Lamb. You have rare courage, Charlotte; if I had such a game to play, I should be frightened out of my wits.

Charl. Lud! madam, he'll make nothing of it, depend upon it.

Sir J. Lamb. Mind what I say to you. This wonderful man, I say, first, in his public character, is religious, zealous and charitable.

Charl. Very well, sir.

Sir J. Lamb. In his private character, sober.

Charl. I should hate a sot.

Sir J. Lamb. Chaste.

Charl. A-hem!

[Stifling a laugh.]

Sir J. Lamb. What is it you sneer at, madam? You want one of your fine gentlemen rakes, I suppose, that are snapping at every woman they meet with.

Charl. No, no, sir; I am very well satisfied. I—I should not care for such a sort of a man, no more than I should for one that every woman was ready to snap at.

Sir J. Lamb. No; you'll be secure from jealousy; he has experience, ripeness of years; he is almost forty-nine. Your sex's vanity will have no charms for him.

Charl. But all this while, sir, I don't find that he has charms for our sex's vanity. How does he look? Is he tall, well made? Does he dress, sing, talk, laugh, and dance well? Has he good hair, good teeth, fine eyes? Does he keep a chaise,

coach, and *ris-a-vis*? Has he six prancing ponies? Does he wear the prince's uniform, and subscribe to Brookes's?

Sir J. Lamb. Was there ever so profligate a creature! What will this age come to?

Lady Lamb. Nay, Charlotte, here I must be against you. Now you are blind, indeed. A woman's happiness has little to do with the pleasure her husband takes in his own person.

Sir J. Lamb. Right!

Lady Lamb. It is not how he looks, but how he loves, is the point.

Sir J. Lamb. Good again!

Lady Lamb. And a wife is much more secure that has charms for her husband, than when the husband has only charms for her.

Sir J. Lamb. Admirable! go on, my dear.

Lady Lamb. Do you think a woman of five-and-twenty may not be much happier with an honest man of fifty, than the finest woman of fifty with a young fellow of five-and-twenty?

Sir J. Lamb. Mark that!

Charl. Ay; but when two five-and-twenties come together, dear papa, you must allow they've a chance to be fifty times as pleasant and frolicsome.

Sir J. Lamb. Frolicsome! Why, you sensual idiot, what have frolics to do with solid happiness? I am ashamed of you. Go; you talk worse than a girl at a boarding-school. Frolicsome! as if marriage were only a license for two people to play the fool according to law. Methinks, madam, you have a better example of happiness before your face. Here's one has ten times your understanding, and she, you find, has made a different choice.

Charl. Lud! sir, how you talk! you don't consider people's tempers. I don't say my lady is not in the right; but then, you know, papa, she's a prude, and I am a coquette: she becomes her character very well, I don't deny it; and I hope everything I do is as consistent with mine. Your wise people may talk what they will, but 'tis constitution governs us all; and be assured, you will no more be able to bring me to endure a man of forty-nine, than you can persuade my lady to dance in church to the organ.

Sir J. Lamb. Why, you wicked wretch! could anything persuade you to do that?

Charl. Lud! sir, I won't answer for what I might do, if the whim were in my head; besides, you know I always loved a little flirtation.

Sir J. Lamb. Oh, horrible! flirtation! My poor sister has ruined her; leaving her fortune in her own hands has turned her brain. In short, Charlotte, your sentiments of life are shameful, and I am resolved upon your instant reformation; therefore, as an earnest of your obedience, I shall first insist that you never see young Darnley more; for, in one word, the good and pious Doctor Cantwell's the man that I have decreed for your husband.

Charl. Ho, ho, ho!

Sir J. Lamb. 'Tis very well; this laugh you think becomes you, but I shall spoil your mirth. No more; give me a serious answer.

Charl. I ask your pardon, sir: I should not have smiled, indeed, could I have supposed it possible that you were serious.

Sir J. Lamb. You'll find me so.

Charl. I'm sorry for it; but I have an objection to the Doctor, sir, that most fathers think a substantial one.

Sir J. Lamb. Name it.

Charl. Why, sir, we know nothing of his fortune: he's not worth a groat.

Sir J. Lamb. That's more than you know, madam; I am able to give him a better estate than I am afraid you'll deserve.

Charl. How?—Sir!

Sir J. Lamb. I have told you what's my will, and shall leave you to think on't.

Enter SEYWARD.

Seyw. Sir, if you be at leisure, the Doctor desires to speak with you upon business of importance.

Sir J. Lamb. I will come to him immediately. [*Exit SEYWARD.*] Daughter, I am called away, and therefore have only time to tell you, as my last resolution, Doctor Cantwell is your husband, or I'm no more your father. [*Exit.*]

Charl. Oh! madam, I am at my wits' end; not for the little fortune I may lose in disobeying my father, but it startles me to find what a dangerous influence this fellow has over all his actions.

Lady Lamb. Here's your brother.

Enter Colonel LAMBERT.

Col. Lamb. Madam, your most obedient. Well, sister, is the secret out? Who is this pretty fellow my father has picked up for you?

Charl. Even our agreeable Doctor.

Col. Lamb. You are not serious?

Lady Lamb. He's the very man, I can assure you, sir.

Col. Lamb. Confusion! What! would the cormorant devour the whole family? Your ladyship knows he is secretly in love with you, too.

Lady Lamb. Fie, fie, Colonel!

Col. Lamb. I ask your pardon, madam, if I speak too freely; but I am sure, by what I have seen, your ladyship must suspect something of it.

Lady Lamb. I am sorry anybody else should see it: but I must own, his behaviour to me of late, both in private and before company, has been something warmer than I thought became him.

Col. Lamb. How are these opposites to be reconciled? Can the rascal have the assurance to think both points are to be carried?

Charl. Truly, one would not suspect the gentleman to be so tergagant.

Col. Lamb. Especially while he pretends to be so shocked at all indecent amours. In the country, he used to make the maids lock up the turkey-cocks every Saturday night, for fear they should gallant the hens on a Sunday.

Lady Lamb. Oh! ridiculous!

Col. Lamb. Upon my life, madam, my sister told me so.

Charl. I tell you so! You impudent—

Lady Lamb. Fie, Charlotte! he only jests with you.

Charl. How can you be such a monster to stay playing the fool here, when you have more reason to be frightened out of your wits? You don't know, perhaps, that my father declares he'll settle a fortune upon this fellow, too.

Col. Lamb. What do you mean?

Lady Lamb. 'Tis too true; 'tis not three minutes since he said so.

Col. Lamb. Nay, then, it is time indeed his eyes were opened; and give me leave to say, madam, 'tis only in your power.

Lady Lamb. What is't you propose?

Col. Lamb. Why, if this fellow, which I'm sure of, be really in love with you, give him a fair opportunity to declare himself, and leave me to make my advantage of it.

Lady Lamb. I should be loth to do a wrong thing.

Charl. Dear madam, it is the only way in the world to expose him to my father.

Lady Lamb. I'll think of it.

Col. Lamb. Pray do, madam; but, in the meantime, I must leave you: poor Darnley stays for me at the Smyrna, and will sit upon thorns till I bring him an account of his new rival.

Charl. Well, well, get you gone, then; here is my grandmother. [Exit Col. LAMB.]

Enter Old Lady LAMBERT.

Lady Lamb. This is kind, madam; I hope your ladyship's come to dine with us.

Old Lady Lamb. No: don't be afraid: only in my way from Tottenham Court, I just called to see whether any dreadful accident had happened to the family since I was here last.

Lady Lamb. Accident, did your ladyship say?

Old Lady Lamb. I shall be sorry, daughter, but not surprised, when I hear it; for there are goings on under this roof, that will bring temporal punishments along with them.

Lady Lamb. Indeed, madam, you astonish me!

Old Lady Lamb. We'll drop this subject; and I beg leave to address myself to you, Miss Charlotte; I see you have a bit of lace upon your neck; I desire to know what you wear it for?

Charl. Wear it for, madam? It is the fashion.

Old Lady Lamb. In short, I have been at my linen-drawer's to-day, and have brought you some thick muslin, which I desire you will make handkerchiefs of; for I must tell you that slight covering is indecent, and gives much offence.

Lady Lamb. Indecent, did your ladyship say?

Old Lady Lamb. Yes, daughter-in-law. Doctor Cantwell complains to me that he cannot sit at table, the sight of her bare neck disturbs him so; and he's a good man, and knows what indecency is.

Charl. Yes, indeed; I believe he does, better than any one in this house. But you may tell the Doctor from me, madam, that he is an impudent coxcomb—a puppy—and deserves to have his bones broken.

Old Lady Lamb. Fie, Charlotte, fie! He speaks but for your good, and this is the grateful return you make.

Charl. Grateful return, madam! how can you be so partial to that hypocrite? The Doctor is one of those who start at a feather. Poor good man! yet he has his vices of a graver sort.

Old Lady Lamb. Come, come; I wish you would follow his precepts, whose practice is conformable to what he teaches. Virtuous man! Above all sensual regards, he considers the world merely as a collection of dirt and pebble-stones. How has he weaned me from temporal connexions! My heart is now set upon nothing sublunary; and, I thank heaven! I am so insensible to everything in this vain world, that I could see you, my son, my daughters, my brothers, my grand-children, all expire before me; and mind it no more than the going out of so many snuffs of candle.

Charl. Upon my word, madam, it is a very humane disposition you have been able to arrive at; and your family is much obliged to the Doctor for his instructions.

Old Lady Lamb. Well, child, I have nothing more to say to you at present; heaven mend you, that's all.

Lady Lamb. Pray, madam, stay and dine with us.

Old Lady Lamb. No, daughter; I have said it, and you know I never tell a lie; but here's my son, if you'll give me leave, I'll stay and speak to him.

Lady Lamb. Your ladyship's time is your own.

Charl. Ay, and here's that abominable Doctor. This fellow puts me beyond my patience.

[Exit with Lady LAMBERT.]

Enter Sir JOHN LAMBERT and Dr. CANTWELL.

Sir J. Lamb. Oh, madam, madam! I'm glad you're here to join me in solicitations to the Doctor. Here is my mother, friend, my mother! a pious woman; you will hear her, more worthy to advise you than I am.

Dr. Cant. Alas! the dear good lady, I will kiss her hand. But what advice can she give me? The riches of this world, sir, have no charms for me; I am not dazzled with their false glare; and were I, I repeat it, to accept of the trust you want to repose in me, heaven knows, it would only be lest the means should fall into wicked hands, who would not lay it out as I should do, for the glory of heaven, and the good of my neighbour.

Old Lady Lamb. What is the matter, son?

Dr. Cant. Nothing, madam, nothing. But you were witness how the worthy Colonel treated me this morning. Not that I speak it on my own account; for to be reviled is my portion.

Sir J. Lamb. Oh! the villain! the villain!

Dr. Cant. Indeed, I did not think he had so hard a nature.

Old Lady Lamb. Ah! your charitable heart knows not the rancour that is in his. His wicked sister, too, has been here this moment abusing this good man.

Dr. Cant. Oh! sir, 'tis plain, 'tis plain; your whole family are in a combination against me; your son and daughter hate me: they think I stand between them and your favour; and indeed it is not fit I should do so; for, fallen as they are, they are still your children, and I an alien, an intruder, who ought in conscience to retire and heal these unhappy breaches.

Old Lady Lamb. See, if the good man does not wipe his eyes!

Dr. Cant. Oh, heavens! the thought of their ingratitude wounds me to the quick; but I'll remove this eye-sore. Here, Charles!

Enter SEYWARD.

Sir J. Lamb. For goodness sake—

Dr. Cantwell. Bring me that writing I gave you to lay up this morning.

Sir J. Lamb. Make haste, good Charles; it shall be signed this moment. [Exit SEYWARD.]

Dr. Cant. Not for the world, Sir John: every minute tends to corroborate my last intentions; I must not, will not take it, with the curses of your children.

Sir J. Lamb. But, consider, Doctor; shall my wicked son then be heir to my lands, before repentance has entitled him to favour? No, let him depend upon you whom he has wronged; perhaps, in time, he may reflect on his father's justice, and be reconciled to your rewarded virtues. If heaven should at last reclaim him, in you, I know, he still would find a fond forgiving father.

Dr. Cant. The imagination of so blessed an hour softens me to a tenderness I cannot support!

Old Lady Lamb. Oh! the dear good man!

Sir J. Lamb. With regard to my daughter, Doctor, you know she is not wronged by it; because, if she prove not obstinate, she may still be happy.

Old Lady Lamb. Yes; but the perverse wretch slights the blessing you propose for her.

Dr. Cant. We must allow, madam, female modesty a time, which often takes the likeness of dis-

taste; the commands of your good son might too suddenly surprise her. Maids must be gently dealt with, and might I humbly advise—

Sir J. Lamb. Any thing you will; you shall govern me and her.

Dr. Cant. Then, sir, abate of your authority, and let the matter rest awhile.

Sir J. Lamb. Suppose we were to get my wife to speak to her; women will often hear from their own sex what, sometimes, even from the man they like, will startle them.

Dr. Cant. Then, with your permission, sir, I will take an opportunity of talking to my lady.

Sir J. Lamb. She's now in her dressing room; I'll go and prepare her for it. *[Exit.]*

Dr. Cant. You are too good to me, sir; too bountiful.

Enter SEYWARD.

Seyw. Sir, Mr. Mawworm is without, and would be glad to be permitted to speak with you.

Old Lady Lamb. Oh! pray, Doctor, admit him; I have not seen Mr. Mawworm this great while; he's a pious man, though in an humble estate. Desire the worthy creature to walk in. *[Exit SEYWARD.]*

Enter MAWORM.

How do you do, Mr. Mawworm?

Maw. Thank your ladyship's axing, I'm but deadly poorish, indeed; the world and I can't agree.—I have got the books, Doctor; and Mrs. Grunt bid me give her sarvice to you, and thanks you for the eighteen-pence.

Dr. Cant. Hush! friend Mawworm, not a word more; you know I hate to have my little charities blazed about: a poor widow, madam, to whom I sent my nite.

Old Lady Lamb. Give her this. *(Offering a purse to Mawworm.)*

Dr. Cant. I'll take care it shall be given to her. *(Takes the purse.)*

Old Lady Lamb. But what is the matter with you, Mr. Mawworm?

Maw. I don't know what's the matter with me; I'm a breaking my heart: I think it's a sin to keep a shop.

Old Lady Lamb. Why, if you think it is a sin, indeed—Pray, what's your business?

Maw. We deals in grocery, tea, small-beer, charcoal, butter, brick-dust, and the like.

Old Lady Lamb. Well; you must consult with your friendly director here:

Maw. I want's to go a-preaching.

Old Lady Lamb. Do you?

Maw. I'm almost sure I have had a call.

Old Lady Lamb. Ay!

Maw. I have made several sermons already. I does them extrumperry, because I can't write; and now the devils in our alley says as how my head's turned.

Old Lady Lamb. Ay, devils, indeed; but don't you mind them.

Maw. No, I don't; I rebukes them, and preaches to them, whether they will or not. We lets our house in lodgings to single men; and, sometimes, I gets them together, with one or two of the neighbours, and makes them all cry.

Old Lady Lamb. Did you ever preach in public?

Maw. I got up on Kennington Common, the last review day; but the boys threw brick-bracks at me, and pinned crackers to my tail; and I have been afraid to mount, your ladyship, ever since.

ACT. DRAMA.—NOS. 55 & 56.

Old Lady Lamb. Do you hear this, Doctor? throw brick-bats at him, and pin crackers to his tail! Can these things be stood by?

Maw. I told them so; says I, "I does nothing clandestinely; I stands here contagious to his majesty's guards, and I charges you upon your appeals not to mislist me."

Old Lady Lamb. And it had no effect?

Maw. No more than if I spoke to so many post-esses; but if he advises me to go a-preaching, and quit my shop, I'll make an excessance farther into the country.

Old Lady Lamb. An excursion you would say.

Maw. I am but a sheep, but my bleatings shall be heard afar off, and that sheep shall become a shepherd; nay, if it be only, as it were, a shepherd's dog, to bark the stray lambs into the fold.

Old Lady Lamb. He wants method, Doctor.

Dr. Cant. Yes, madam, but there is matter; and I despise not the ignorant.

Maw. He's a saint.

Dr. Cant. Oh!

Old Lady Lamb. Oh!

Maw. If ever there was a saint, he's one. Till I went after him, I was little better than the devil; my conscience was tanned with sin, like a piece of neat's leather, and had no more feeling than the sole of my shoe; always a roving after fantastical delights. I used to go, every Sunday evening, to the Three Hats, at Islington; it's a public-house; mayhap your ladyship may know it: I was a great lover of skittles, too, but now I can't bear them.

Old Lady Lamb. What a blessed reformation!

Maw. I believe, Doctor, you never knowed as how I was instigated one of the stewards of the reforming society. I convicted a man of five oaths, on last Thursday was a se'nnight, at the Pewter-platter, in the Borough; and another of three, while he was playing trap-ball in St. George's Fields: I bought this waistcoat out of my share of the money.

Old Lady Lamb. But how do you mind your business?

Maw. We have lost almost all our customers; because I keeps extorting them whenever they come into the shop.

Old Lady Lamb. And how do you live?

Maw. Better than ever we did: while we were worldly-minded, my wife and I (for I am married to as likely a woman as you shall see in a thousand) could hardly make things do at all; but since this good man has brought us into the road of the righteous, we have always plenty of every thing; and my wife goes as well dressed as a gentlewoman. We have had a child, too.

Old Lady Lamb. Merciful!

Maw. And between you and me, Doctor, I believe Susy's breeding again.

Dr. Cant. Thus it is, madam: I am constantly told, though I can hardly believe it, a blessing follows wherever I come.

Maw. And yet, if you would hear how the neighbours reviles my wife; saying as how she sets no store by me, because we have words now and then; but, as I says, if such was the case, would she ever have out me down that there time as I was moloncholy, and she found me hanging behind the door? I don't believe there's a wife in the parish would have done so by her husband.

Dr. Cant. I believe 'tis near dinner-time; and Sir John will require my attendance.

Maw. Oh! I am troublesome: nay, I only come to you, Doctor, with a message from Mrs. Grunt.

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I wish your ladyship heartily and heartily farewell; Doctor, a good day to you.

Old Lady Lamb. Mr. Mawworm, call on me some time this afternoon : I want to have a little private discourse with you ; and pray, my service to your spouse.

Maw. I will, madam ; you are a malefactor to all goodness ; I'll wait upon your ladyship ; I will, indeed. (*Going, returns.*) Oh ! Doctor, that's true ; Susy desired me to give her kind love and respects to you. [*Exit.*]

Dr. Cant. Madam, if you please, I will lead you into the parlour.

Old Lady Lamb. No, Doctor ; my coach waits at the door.

Enter SEYWARD.

Dr. Cant. Charles, you may lay those papers by again, but in some place where you'll easily find them ; for I believe we shall have occasion for them some time this afternoon.

Seyw. I'll take care, sir. [*Ereunt Doctor and Old Lady Lamb.*] Occasion for them this afternoon ! Then there's no time to be lost ; the coast is clear, and this is her chamber. What's the matter with me ? The thought of speaking to her throws me into a disorder. There's nobody within, I believe ; I'll knock again.

Enter BETTY.

Is your lady busy ?

Betty. I believe she's only reading, sir.

Seyw. Will you do me the favour to let her know, if she be at leisure, I beg to speak with her upon some earnest business ?

Enter CHARLOTTE.

Charl. Who's that ?

Betty. She's here. Mr. Seyward, madam, desires to speak with you.

Charl. Oh ! your servant, Mr. Seyward. Here, take this odious Homer, and lay him up again ; he tires me. [*Exit Betty.*] How could the blind wretch make such a horrid fuss about a fine woman, for so many volumes together, and give us no account of her amours ! You have read him, I suppose, in the Greek, Mr. Seyward ?

Seyw. Not lately, madam.

Charl. But do you violently admire him now ?

Seyw. The critics say he has his beauties, madam ; but Ovid has always been my favourite.

Charl. Ovid ! oh ! he is ravishing !

Seyw. So art thou, to madness. (*Aside.*)

Charl. Lud ! how could one do to learn Greek ? Were you a great while about it ?

Seyw. It has been half the business of my life, madam.

Charl. That's cruel now ; then you think one could not be mistress of it in a month or two ?

Seyw. Not easily, madam.

Charl. They tell me it has the softest tone for love of any language in the world. I fancy I could soon learn it. I know three words of it already.

Seyw. Pray, madam, what are they ?

Charl. Stay, let me see—oh, ay ! *Zoe kai psuche.* *Seyw.* I hope you know the English of them, madam.

Charl. Oh, lud ! I hope there is no harm in them. I'm sure I heard the Doctor say it to my lady. Pray, what is it ?

Seyw. You must first imagine, madam, a tender lover, gazing on his mistress ; and then, indeed, they have a softness in them ; as thus, *Zoe kai psuche* ! My life, my soul !

Charl. Oh ! the impudent young rogue ! how his eyes spoke, too ! What the deuce can he want with me ? It always ran in my head that this fellow had something in him above his condition ; I'll know immediately. (*Aside.*) Well, but your business with me, Mr. Seyward ? You have something of love in your head, I'll lay my life on't.

Seyw. I never yet durst own it, madam.

Charl. Why, what's the matter ?

Seyw. My story is too melancholy to entertain a mind so much at ease as your's.

Charl. Oh ! I love melancholy stories, of all things. Pray, how long have you lived with your uncle, Mr. Seyward ?

Seyw. With Doctor Cantwell, I suppose you mean, madam ?

Charl. Ay.

Seyw. He's no uncle of mine, madam.

Charl. You surprise me ! not your uncle ?

Seyw. No, madam ; but that's not the only character the Doctor assumes, to which he has no right.

Charl. Lud ! I am concerned for you.

Seyw. So you would, madam, if you knew all.

Charl. I am already ; but if there be any further particulars of your story, pray, let me hear them ; and should any services be in my power, I am sure you may command them.

Seyw. You treat me with so kind, so gentle a hand, that I will unbosom myself to you. My father, madam, was the younger branch of a genteel family in the north ; his name, Trueman ; but dying while I was yet in my infancy, I was left wholly dependant on my mother ; a woman really pious and well-meaning, but—in short, madam, Doctor Cantwell fatally got acquainted with her, and as he is now your father's bosom counsellor, soon became her's. She died, madam, when I was but eight years old ; and then, I was, indeed, left an orphan.

Charl. Poor creature ! Lud ! I cannot bear it.

Seyw. She left Doctor Cantwell her sole heir and executor ; but I must do her the justice to say, I believe it was in the confirmation that he would take care of, and do justice to me ; and, indeed, he has so far taken care of me, that he sent me to a seminary abroad, and for these three years last past has kept me with him.

Charl. A seminary ! Oh, heavens ! But why have you not striven to do yourself justice ?

Seyw. Thrown so young into his power as I was, unknown and friendless, to whom could I apply for succour ? Nay, madam, I will confess that, on my return to England, I was at first tainted with his enthusiastic notions myself ; and, for some time, as much imposed upon by him, as others ; till, by degrees, as he found it necessary to make use of, or totally discard me, (which last he did not think prudent to do,) he was obliged to unveil himself to me in his proper colours ; and I believe I can inform you of some parts of his private character, that may be the means of detecting one of the wickedest impostors that ever practised upon credulity.

Charl. But how has the wretch dared to treat you ?

Seyw. In his ill and insolent humours, madam, he has sometimes the presumption to tell me, that I am the object of his charity ; and I own, madam, that I am humbled in my opinion, by his having drawn me into a connivance at some actions, which I can't look back on without horror.

Charl. Indeed, you can't tell how I pity you ; and, depend upon it, if it be possible to serve you, by getting you out of the hands of this monster, I will. *Seyw.* Once more, madam, let me assure you, that

your generous inclination would be a consolation to me in the worst misfortunes; and, even in the last moment of painful death, would give my poor heart a joy.

Charl. Lud! the poor unfortunate boy loves me, too! What shall I do with him? Pray, Mr. Seyward, what paper is that you have in your hand? Is it relative to—

Seyw. Another instance of the conscience and gratitude which animate our worthy Doctor.

Charl. You frighten me! Pray, what is the purport of it? Is it neither signed nor sealed?

Seyw. No, madam; therefore, to prevent it, by this timely notice, was my business here with you. Your father gave it to the Doctor first, to shew his counsel; who having approved it, I understand this evening it will be executed.

Charl. But what is it?

Seyw. It grants to Doctor Cantwell, in present, four hundred pounds per annum, of which this very house is part; and, at your father's death, invests him in the whole remainder of his freehold estate. For you, indeed, there is a charge of four thousand pounds upon it, provided you marry with the Doctor's consent; if not, 'tis added to my lady's jointure; but your brother, madam, is, without conditions, utterly disinherited.

Charl. I am confounded! What will become of us? My father, now I find, was serious. Oh! this insinuating hypocrite! Let me see—ay, I will go this minute. Sir, dare you trust this in my hands for an hour only?

Seyw. Anything to serve you. [*Bell rings.*]

Charl. Hark! they ring to dinner: pray, sir, step in: say I am obliged to dine abroad; and whisper one of the footmen to get a chair immediately; then do you take a proper occasion to slip out after me to Mr. Double's chambers in the Temple; there I shall have time to talk further with you. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Dressing-room.

Enter CHARLOTTE and BETTY.

Charl. Has any one been to speak with me, Betty?

Betty. Only Mr. Darnley, madam; he said he would call again, and bade his servant stay below, to give him notice when you came home.

Charl. You don't know what he wanted?

Betty. No, madam; he seemed very uneasy at your being abroad.

Charl. Well, go; I'll see him. [*Exit BETTY.*]
Ten to one but his wise head has found out something to be jealous of: if he let me see it, I shall be sure to make him infinitely easy. Here he comes.

Enter DARNLEY.

Darn. Your humble servant, madam.

Charl. Your servant, sir.

Darn. You have been abroad, I hear?

Charl. Yes, and now I am come home, you see.

Darn. You seem to turn upon my words, madam. Is there anything particular in them?

Charl. As much as there is in my being abroad, I believe.

Darn. Might I not say you have been abroad, without giving offence?

Charl. And might I not as well say, I was come home, without your being so grave upon it?

Darn. Do you know anything that should make me grave?

Charl. I know, if you be so, I am the worst person in the world you can possibly shew it to.

Darn. Nay, I don't suppose you do anything you won't justify.

Charl. Oh! then, I find I have done something you think I can't justify.

Darn. I don't say that neither. Perhaps I am wrong in what I have said; but I have so often been used to ask pardon for your being in the wrong, that I am resolved henceforth never to rely on the insolent evidence of my own senses.

Charl. You don't know, now, perhaps, that I think this pretty smart speech of your's is very dull; but, since that's a fault you can't help, I will not take it ill. Come now, be as sincere on your side, and tell me seriously, is not what real business I had abroad the very thing you want to be made easy in?

Darn. If I thought you would make me easy, I would own it.

Charl. Now do we come to the point. To-morrow morning, then, I give you my word, to let you know it all; till then, there is a necessity for its being a secret; and I insist upon your believing it.

Darn. But pray, madam, what am I to do with private imagination in the meantime? That is not in my power to confine; and sure, you won't be offended if, to avoid the tortures that may give me, I beg you'll trust me with the secret now.

Charl. Don't press me; for positively, I will not.

Darn. Will not! Cannot have been a kinder term. Is my disquiet of so little moment to you?

Charl. Of none, while your disquiet dares not trust the assurances I have given you. If you expect I should confide in you for life, don't let me see you dare not take my word for a day; and, if you be wise, you'll think so fair a trial a favour. Come, come; there's nothing shews so low a mind, as those grave and insolent jealousies.

Darn. However, madam, mine you won't find so low as you imagine; and since I see your tyranny arises from your mean opinion of me, 'tis time to be myself, and disavow your power. You use it now beyond my bearing; not only impose on me to disbelieve my senses, but do it with such an imperious air, as if my manly reason were your slave—and this despicable frame, that follows you, durst shew no signs of life but what you vouchsafe to give it.

Charl. You are in the right. Go on; suspect me still; believe the worst you can; 'tis all true; I don't justify myself. Why do you trouble me with your complaints? If you be master of that manly reason you have boasted, give a manly proof of it; at once resume your liberty; despise me; go off in triumph now, like a king in a tragedy.

Darn. Is this the end of all, then? And are those tender protestations you have made me, (for such I thought them,) when, with a kind of reluctance, you gave me something more than hope—what, all—oh, Charlotte!—all come to this?

Charl. Oh, lud! I am growing silly; if I hear on, I shall tell him everything; 'tis but another struggle, and I shall conquer it. [*Aside.*] So, you are not gone, I see.

Darn. Do you, then, wish me gone, madam?

Charl. Your manly reason will direct you.

Darn. This is too much; my heart can bear no more. What, am I rooted here?

Enter SEYWARD.

Charl. At last, I am relieved. Well, Mr. Seyward, is it done?

Seyw. I did not stir from the desk till it was entirely finished.

Charl. Where's the original?

Seyw. This is it, madam.

Charl. Very well; that, you know, you must keep; but come, we must lose no time; we will examine this in the next room. Now I feel for him. [*Exit.*]

Darn. This is not to be borne. Pray, Mr. Charles, what private business have you with that lady?

Seyw. Sir!

Darn. I must know, young man.

Seyw. Not quite so young, but I can keep a secret, and a lady's, too. You'll excuse me, sir. [*Exit.*]

Darn. 'Sdeath! I shall be laughed at by everybody; I shall be distracted. This young fellow should repent his pertness, did not this house protect him. This is Charlotte's contrivance to distract me; but—but what? Oh! I have love enough to bear this, and ten times as much.

Enter Colonel LAMBERT.

Col. Lamb. What, in raptures?

Darn. Pr'ythee—I am unfit to talk with you.

Col. Lamb. What, is Charlotte in her airs again?

Darn. I know not what she is.

Col. Lamb. Do you know where she is?

Darn. Retired this moment to her chamber with the young fellow there, the Doctor's nephew.

Col. Lamb. Why, you are not jealous of the Doctor, I hope?

Darn. Perhaps she'll be less reserved to you, and tell you wherein I have mistaken her.

Col. Lamb. Poor Frank! Every plot I lay upon my sister's inclination for you, you are sure to ruin by your own conduct.

Darn. I own I have too little temper, and too much real passion, for a modish lover.

Col. Lamb. Come, come; make yourself easy once more; I'll undertake for you. If you'll fetch a cool turn in the park, upon Constitution-hill, in less than half an hour I'll come to you, and make you perfectly easy.

Darn. Dear Tom, you are a friend, indeed! I have a thousand things—but you shall find me there. [*Exit.*]

Enter CHARLOTTE and SEYWARD.

Col. Lamb. How now, sister! what have you done to Darnley? The poor fellow looks as if he had killed your parrot.

Charl. Psha! you know him well enough; I've only been setting him a love-lesson; it a little puzzles him to get through it at first, but he'll know it all by to-morrow. You will be sure to be in the way, Mr. Seyward.

Seyw. Madam, you may depend upon me; I have my full instructions. [*Exit.*]

Col. Lamb. Oh, ho! here's the business, then; and it seems that Darnley was not to be trusted with it. Ha, ha! And, pr'ythee, what is the mighty secret that is transacted between Seyward and you?

Charl. That's what he would have known, indeed; but you must know, I don't think it proper to let you tell him either, for all your sly manner of asking.

Col. Lamb. Pray, take your own time, dear madam; I am not in haste to know, I assure you.

Charl. Well, but, hold! on second thoughts, you shall know part of this affair between Seyward and me; nay, I give you leave to tell Darnley, too, on some conditions: 'tis true, I did design to have surprised you; but now my mind's altered, that's enough.

Col. Lamb. Ay, for any mortal's satisfaction: but here comes my lady.

Enter Lady LAMBERT.

Lady Lamb. Away, away, Colonel and Charlotte, both of you away this instant.

Charl. What's the matter, madam?

Lady Lamb. I am going to put the Doctor to his trial, that's all. I have considered the proposal you have made me to-day, Colonel, and am convinced it ought not to be delayed an instant; so, just now, I told the Doctor, in a half-whisper, that I should be glad to have a word in private with him here; and he said he would wait upon me presently. But must I play a traitorous part now, and, instead of persuading you to the Doctor, persuade the Doctor against you?

Charl. Dear madam, why not? One moment's truce with the prude, I beg of you; don't startle at his first declaration, but let him go on, till he shews the very bottom of his ugly heart.

Lady Lamb. I warrant you, I'll give a good account of him; but, as I live, here he comes!

Charl. Come, then, brother, you and I will be comrade, and steal off. [*Exit with Col. LAMB.*]

Enter Doctor CANTWELL.—Col. LAMB. listening.

Dr. Cant. Here I am, madam, at your ladyship's command; how happy am I that you think me worthy.

Lady Lamb. Please to sit, sir. [*They sit.*]

Dr. Cant. Well, but, dear lady—Ah! you can't conceive the joyousness I feel at this so much desired interview. Ah, ah! I have a thousand friendly things to say to you. And how stands your precious health? Is your naughty cold abated yet? I have scarce closed my eyes these two nights with my concern for you.

Lady Lamb. Your charity is too far concerned for me.

Dr. Cant. Ah! don't say so; don't say so: you merit more than mortal man can do for you.

Lady Lamb. Indeed you overrate me.

Dr. Cant. I speak it from my heart: indeed, indeed, indeed I do. [*Pressing her hand.*]

Lady Lamb. Oh, dear! you hurt my hand, sir.

Dr. Cant. Impute it to my zeal, and want of words for expression: precious soul! I would not harm you for the world; no, it would be the whole business of my life—

Lady Lamb. But to the affair I would speak to you about.

Dr. Cant. Ah! thou heavenly woman!

[*Placing his hand on her knee.*]

Lady Lamb. Your hand need not be there, sir.

Dr. Cant. I was admiring the softness of this silk. They are, indeed, come to prodigious perfection in all manufactures: how wonderful is human art! here it disputes the prize with nature. That all this soft and gaudy lustre should be brought from the labours of a poor worm!

Lady Lamb. But our business, sir, is upon another subject. Sir John informs me, that he thinks himself under no obligations to Mr. Darnley, and, therefore, resolves to give his daughter to you.

Dr. Cant. Such a thing has been mentioned, madam; but to deal sincerely with you, that is not the happiness I sigh after; there is a soft and serious excellence for me, very different from what your step-daughter possesses.

Lady Lamb. Well, sir, pray be sincere, and open your heart to me.

Dr. Cant. Open my heart! Can you, then, sweet lady, be yet a stranger to it? Has no action of my life been able to inform you of my real thoughts?

Lady Lamb. Well, sir; I take all this, as I sup-

pose you intend it, for my good and spiritual welfare.

Dr. Cant. Indeed I mean you cordial service.

Lady Lamb. I dare say you do: you are above the low momentary views of this world.

Dr. Cant. Why, I should be so: and yet, alas! I find this mortal clothing of my soul is made like other men's, of sensual flesh and blood, and has its frailties.

Lady Lamb. We all have those; but your's are well corrected by your divine and virtuous contemplations.

Dr. Cant. Alas! madam, my heart is not of stone. I may resist; call all my prayers, my fastings, tears, and penance, to my aid; but yet I am not an angel. I am still but a man; and virtue may strive, but nature will be uppermost. I love you, then, madam.

Lady Lamb. (*They rise.*) Hold, sir! Suppose I now should let my husband, your benefactor, know the favour you design him.

Dr. Cant. You cannot be so cruel!

Lady Lamb. Nor will, on this condition; that you instantly renounce all claim and title to Charlotte, and use your utmost interest with Sir John, to give her, with her full fortune, to Mr. Darnley.

Colonel LAMBERT advances between them.

Col. Lamb. Villain, monster, perfidious and ungrateful traitor! Your hypocrisy, your false zeal is discovered; and I am sent here, by the hand of insulted heaven, to lay you open to my father, and expose you to the world.

Dr. Cant. Ah!

Lady Lamb. Oh! unthinking Colonel!

Col. Lamb. Well, sir, what have you to say for yourself?

Dr. Cant. I have nothing to say to you, Colonel, nor for you; but you shall have my prayers.

Col. Lamb. Why, you profligate hypocrite! Do you think to carry off your villainy with that sanctified air?

Dr. Cant. I know not what you mean, sir. I have been in discourse here with my good lady, by permission of your worthy father.

Col. Lamb. Dog! did my father desire you to talk of love to my lady?

Dr. Cant. Call me not dog, Colonel. I hope we are both brother Christians. Yes, I will own I did beg leave to talk to her of love; for, alas! I am but a man; yet, if my passion for your dear sister, which I cannot control, be sinful—

Lady Lamb. (*Aside to the Colonel.*) Your noise, I perceive, is bringing up Sir John. Manage with him as you will, at present; I will withdraw; for I have an after-game to play, which may yet put this wretch effectually into our power. [*Erit.*]

Enter Sir JOHN LAMBERT.

Sir J. Lamb. What uproar is this?

Col. Lamb. Nothing, sir, nothing; only a little broil of the good Doctor's here. You are well rewarded for your kindness; and he would fain pay it back, with triple interest, to your wife: in short, sir, I took him here in the very fact of making a criminal declaration of love to my lady.

Dr. Cant. Why, why, Sir John, would you not let me leave your house? I knew some dreadful method would be taken to drive me hence. Oh! be not angry, good Colonel; but, indeed, and indeed, you use me cruelly.

Sir J. Lamb. Horrible, wicked creature! Doctor, let me hear it from you.

Dr. Cant. Alas! sir, I am in the dark as much as you; but it should seem, for what purpose he best knows, your son hid himself somewhere hereabouts; and while I was talking to my lady, rushed in upon us. You know the subject, sir, on which I was to entertain her; and I might speak of my love to your daughter with more warmth than, perhaps, I ought; which the Colonel overhearing, might possibly imagine I was addressing my lady herself; for I will not suspect—no, heaven forbid! I will not suspect that he would intentionally forge a falsehood to dishonour me.

Sir J. Lamb. Now, vile detractor of all virtue! is your outrageous malice confounded? What he tells you is true; and has been talking to my lady by my consent; and what he said, he said by my orders. Good man! be not concerned, for I see through their vile designs. Here, thou curse of my life, if thou art not lost to conscience, and all sense of honour, repair the injury you have attempted, by confessing your rancour, and throwing yourself at his feet.

Dr. Cant. Oh! Sir John—for my sake—I will throw myself at the Colonel's feet; nay, if that will please him, he shall tread on my neck.

Sir J. Lamb. What! mute, defenceless, hardened in thy malice?

Col. Lamb. I scorn the imputation, sir; and with the same repeated honesty avow (however cunningly he may have devised this gloss) that you are deceived. What I tell you, sir, is true; these eyes, these ears, were witnesses of his audacious love, without the mention of my sister's name: directly, plainly, grossly tending to abuse the honour of your bed.

Sir J. Lamb. Villain! this instant leave my sight, my house, my family, for ever!

Dr. Cant. Hold, good Sir John! I am now recovered from my surprise; let me, then, be an humble mediator. On my account, this must not be. I grant it possible, your son loves me not, but you must grant it, too, as possible he might mistake me; to accuse me, then, was but the error of his virtue: you ought to love him, and thank him for his watchful care.

Sir J. Lamb. Hear this, perverse and reprobate! Couldst thou wrong such more than mortal virtue?

Col. Lamb. Wrong him! The hardened impudence of this painted charity—

Sir J. Lamb. Peace, graceless infidel!

Col. Lamb. No, sir; though I would hazard life to gain you from the clutches of that wretch, I could die to reconcile my duty to your favour; yet on the terms his villainy offers, it is merit to refuse it: but, sir, I'll trouble you no more; to-day is his, to-morrow may be mine. [*Erit.*]

Sir J. Lamb. Come, my friend; we'll go this instant, and sign the settlement; for that wretch ought to be punished, who, I now see, is incorrigible, and given over to perdition.

Dr. Cant. And do you think I take your estate with such views? No, sir, I receive it, that I may have an opportunity to rouse his mind to virtue, by shewing him an instance of the forgiveness of injuries; the return of good for evil.

Sir J. Lamb. Oh! my dear friend! my stay and my guide! I am impatient till the affair be concluded.

Dr. Cant. The will of heaven be done in all things.

Sir J. Lamb. Poor dear man! [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A Parlour in Sir John Lambert's house.*

Enter CHARLOTTE and SEYWARD.

Charl. You were witness, then?

Seyw. I saw it signed, sealed, and delivered, madam.

Charl. And all passed without the least suspicion? *Seyw.* Sir John signed it with such earnestness, and the Doctor received it with such seeming reluctance, that neither had the curiosity to examine a line of it.

Charl. Well, Mr. Seyward, whether it succeeds to our ends or not, we have still the same obligation to you. You saw with what friendly warmth my brother heard your story; and I don't in the least doubt his being able to do something for you.

Seyw. What I have done, my duty bound me to; but, pray, madam, give me leave, without offence, to ask you one innocent question.

Charl. Freely.

Seyw. Have you never suspected, that in all this affair, I have had some secret, stronger motive than barely duty?

Charl. Yes: but have you been in no apprehension I should discover that motive?

Seyw. Pray, pardon me; I see already I have gone too far.

Charl. Not at all; it loses you no merit with me; nor is it in my power to use any one ill that loves me, unless I loved that one again; then, indeed, there might be danger. Come, don't look grave; my inclinations to another shall not hinder me paying every one what's due to their merit; I shall, therefore, always think myself obliged to treat your misfortunes and your modesty with the utmost tenderness.

Seyw. Your good opinion is all I aim at.

Charl. Ay, but the more I give it you, the better you'll think of me still; and then I must think the better of you again, and you the better of me upon that, too; and so, at last, I shall think seriously, and you'll begin to think ill of me: but I hope, Mr. Seyward, your good sense will prevent all this.

Seyw. I see my folly, madam, and blush at my presumption. I humbly take my leave. [*Exit.*]

Charl. Well, he's a pretty young fellow, after all; and the very first, sure, that ever heard reason against himself with so good an understanding. Lud! how one may live and learn! I could not believe that modesty in a young fellow could have been so amiable; and though I own there is I know not what of dear delight in indulging one's vanity with them, yet, upon serious reflection, I must confess, that truth and sincerity have a thousand charms beyond it. I believe I had as good confess all this to Darnley, and e'en make up the bustle with him, too; but then he will so tease one for instances of real inclination! Oh, gad! I can't bear the thought on't; and yet, we must come together, too. Well, nature knows the way, to be sure, and so I'll e'en trust to her for it.

Enter Lady LAMBERT.

Lady Lamb. Dear Charlotte, what will become of us?

Charl. Pray, explain, madam.

Lady Lamb. In spite of all I could urge, he has consented that the Doctor shall this minute come, and be his own advocate with you.

Charl. I'm glad on't: for the beast must come like a bear to the stake I'm sure he knows I shall bait him.

Lady Lamb. No matter for that; he presses it, to keep Sir John still blind to his wicked designs upon me; therefore, I come to give you notice, that you might be prepared to receive him.

Charl. I'm obliged to your ladyship. Our meeting will be a tender scene, no doubt on't.

Lady Lamb. I think I hear the Doctor coming up stairs. My dear girl, at any rate keep your temper. I shall expect you in my dressing-room, to tell me the particulars of your conduct. [*Exit.*]

Charl. He must have a great deal of impudence, to come in this manner to me.

Enter BETTY, introducing Dr. CANTWELL.

Betty. Dr. Cantwell desires to be admitted, madam.

Charl. Let him come in. Your servant, sir. Give us chairs, Betty, and leave the room. [*Exit Betty.*] Sir, there's a seat. What can this ugly cur say to me? He seems a little puzzled. (*Aside.*)

Dr. Cant. (*They sit.*) Lookye! young lady, I am afraid, notwithstanding your good father's favour, I am not the man you would desire to be alone with upon this occasion.

Charl. Your modesty is pleased to be in the right.

Dr. Cant. I am afraid, too, notwithstanding all my endeavours to the contrary, that you entertain a pretty bad opinion of me.

Charl. A worse, sir, of no mortal breathing.

Dr. Cant. Which opinion is immovable?

Charl. No rock so firm.

Dr. Cant. I am afraid, then, it will be a vain pursuit, when I solicit you, in compliance with my worthy friend's desire, and my own inclinations, to become my partner in that blessed estate, in which we may be a comfort and support to each other.

Charl. I would die rather than consent to it.

Dr. Cant. In other words, you hate me.

Charl. Most transcendently!

Dr. Cant. Well, there is sincerity, at least, in your confession: you are not, I see, totally deprived of all virtue; though, I must say, I never could perceive in you but very little.

Charl. Oh, fie! you flatter me.

Dr. Cant. No; I speak it with sorrow, because you are the daughter of my best friend. But how are we to proceed, now? Are we to preserve temper?

Charl. Oh! never fear me, sir; I shall not fly out; being convinced that nothing gives so sharp a point to one's aversion as good breeding; as, on the contrary, ill manners often hide a secret inclination.

Dr. Cant. Well, then, young lady, be assured, so far am I from the unchristian disposition of returning injuries, that your antipathy to me causes no hatred in my soul towards you; on the contrary, I would willingly make you happy, if it may be done according to my conscience, with the interest of heaven in view.

Charl. Why, I can't see, sir, how heaven can be any way concerned in a transaction between you and me.

Dr. Cant. When you marry any other person, my consent is necessary.

Charl. So I hear, indeed! But, pray, Doctor, how could your modesty receive so insolent a power, without putting my poor father out of countenance with your blushes?

Dr. Cant. I sought it not; but he would crowd it in among other obligations. He is good-natured; and I foresaw it might serve to pious purposes.

Charl. I don't understand you.

Dr. Cant. I take it for granted, that you would marry Mr. Darnley. Am I right?

Charl. Once in your life, perhaps you are.

Dr. Cant. Nay, let us be plain. Would you marry him?

Charl. You're mighty nice, methinks. Well, I would.

Dr. Cant. Then I will not consent.

Charl. You won't?

Dr. Cant. My conscience will not suffer me. I know you to be both luxurious and worldly-minded; and you would squander upon the vanities of the world, those treasures which ought to be better laid out.

Charl. Hum! I believe I begin to conceive you.

Dr. Cant. If you can think of any project to satisfy my conscience, I am tractable. You know there is a considerable moiety of your fortune which goes to my lady, in case of our disagreement.

Charl. That's enough, sir. You think we should have a fellow-feeling in it. At what sum do you rate your concurrence to my inclinations? That settled, I am willing to strike the bargain.

Dr. Cant. What do you think of half?

Charl. How! two thousand pounds! [*Rises.*]

Dr. Cant. Why, you know, you gain two thousand pounds; and, really, the severity of the times for the poor, and my own stinted pittance, which cramps my charities, will not suffer me to require less. [*Rises.*]

Charl. But how is my father to be brought into this?

Dr. Cant. Leave that to my management.

Charl. And what security do you expect for the money?

Dr. Cant. Oh! Mr. Darnley is wealthy: when I deliver my consent in writing, he shall lay it down to me in bank-bills.

Charl. Pretty good security! On one proviso, though.

Dr. Cant. Name it.

Charl. That you immediately tell my father that you are willing to give up your interest to Mr. Darnley.

Dr. Cant. Hum! Stay—I agree to it: but, in the meantime, let me warn you, child, not to expect to turn that, or what has now passed between us, to my confusion, by sinister construction, or evil representation to your father. I am satisfied of the piety of my own intentions, and care not what the wicked think of them; but force me not to take advantage of Sir John's good opinion of me, in order to shield myself from the consequences of your malice.

Charl. Oh! I shall not stand in my own light: I know your conscience and your power too well, dear Doctor.

Dr. Cant. Well, let your interest sway you. Thank heaven! I am actuated by more worthy motives.

Charl. No doubt on't.

Dr. Cant. Farewell, and think me your friend.

[*Exit.*]

Charl. What this fellow's original was I know not; but, by his conscience and cunning, he would make an admirable Jesuit.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Madam, Mr. Darnley.

Charl. Desire him to walk in.

[*Exit Serv.*]

Enter DARNLEY.

Darn. To find you thus alone, madam, is a happiness I did not expect, from the temper of our last parting.

Charl. I should have been as well pleased, now, to have been thanked as reproached for my good-nature; but you will be in the right, I find.

Darn. Indeed you take me wrong. I literally meant that I was afraid you would not so soon think I had deserved this favour.

Charl. Well, but were you not silly, now?

Darn. Come, you shall not be serious: you can't be more agreeable.

Charl. Oh! but I am serious.

Darn. Then I'll be so. Do you forgive me all?

Charl. What?

Darn. Are we friends, Charlotte?

Charl. Oh, lud! but you have told me nothing of poor Seyward.

Darn. Must you needs know that, before you answer me?

Charl. Lud! you are never well till you have talked one out of countenance.

Darn. Come, I won't be too particular: you shall answer nothing. Give me but your hand only.

Charl. Psha! I won't pull off my glove, not I.

Darn. I'll take it as it is, then.

Charl. Lud! there, there; eat it, eat it.

Darn. And so I could, by heaven!

Charl. Oh! my glove, my glove, my glove! You are in a perfect storm. Lud! if you make such a rout with one's hand only, what would you do if you had one's heart?

Darn. That's impossible to tell. But you were asking me of Seyward, madam.

Charl. Oh! ay, that's true. Well, now you are very good again. Come, tell me all the affair, and then, you shall see—how I will like you.

Darn. There is not much to tell; only this: we met the attorney-general, to whom he has given a very sensible account of himself, and the Doctor's proceedings. The attorney-general seems very clear in his opinion, that, as the Doctor, at the time of the death of Seyward's mother, was intrusted with her whole affairs, the court of equity will oblige him to be accountable.

Charl. If Seyward do not recover his fortune, you must absolutely get him a commission, and bring him into acquaintance.

Darn. Upon my word, I will.

Charl. And shew him to all the women of taste; and I'll have you call him my pretty fellow, too.

Darn. I will, indeed. But hear me.

Charl. You can't conceive how pretty he makes love.

Darn. Not so well as you make your defence, Charlotte.

Charl. Lud! I had forgotten; he is to teach me Greek, too.

Darn. Trifling tyrant! How long, Charlotte, do you think you can find new evasions for what I say to you?

Charl. Lud! you are horrid silly; but since 'tis love that makes you such a dunce, poor Darnley! I forgive you.

Enter Colonel LAMBERT behind.

Darn. That's kind, however. But, to complete my joy, be kinder yet, and—

Charl. Oh! I can't, I can't. Lud! did you ever ride a horse-match?

Darn. Was ever so wild a question?

Charl. Because, if you have, it runs in my head that you galloped a mile beyond the winning-post, to make sure on't.

Darn. Now I understand you. But since you will have me touch every thing so very tenderly

Charlotte, how shall I find proper words to ask you the lover's last necessary question?

Charl. Oh! there are a thousand points to be adjusted before that's answered.

Col. Lamb. [Advancing.] Name them this moment; for, positively, this is the last time of asking.

Charl. Psha! who sent for you?

Col. Lamb. I only came to teach you to speak plain English, my dear.

Charl. Lud! mind your own business, can't you?

Col. Lamb. So I will; for I will make you do more of your's in two minutes, than you would have done without me in a twelvemonth. Why, how now! do you think the man's to dangle after your ridiculous airs for ever?

Charl. This is mighty pretty!

Col. Lamb. You'll say so on Thursday se'nnight; for, let affairs take what turn they will in the family, that's positively your wedding-day. [*CHAR. attempts to go.*] Nay, you shan't stir.

Char. Was ever such assurance?

Darn. Upon my life, madam, I'm out of countenance; I don't know how to behave myself.

Charl. No, no; let him go on, only—this is beyond whatever was known, sure!

Col. Lamb. Ha, ha! if I were to leave you to yourselves, what a couple of pretty out-of-countenance figures you would make! humming and ha'ing upon the vulgar points of jointure and pin-money! Come come; I know what's proper on both sides; you shall leave it to me.

Darn. I would rather Charlotte would name her own terms to me.

Col. Lamb. Have you a mind to any thing particular, madam?

Charl. Why, sure! What, do you think I'm only to be filled out as you please, and sweetened and sipped up like a dish of tea?

Col. Lamb. Why, pray, madam, when your tea is ready, what have you to do but to drink it? But you, I suppose, expect a lover's heart, like your lamp, should always be flaming at your elbow; and when it's ready to go out, you indolently supply it with the spirit of contradiction.

Char. And, so, you suppose that your assurance has made an end of this matter?

Col. Lamb. Not till you have given him your hand upon it.

Charl. That, then, would complete it?

Col. Lamb. Perfectly.

Charl. Why, then, take it, Darnley. Now, I presume, you are in high triumph, sir. [*To the Col.*]

Col. Lamb. No, sister: now you are consistent with the good sense I always thought you mistress of.

Charl. And now, I beg we may separate; for our being seen together, at this critical juncture, may give that devil, the Doctor, suspicion of a confederacy, and make him set some engine to work that we are not aware of.

Col. Lamb. It's a very proper caution. Come along, Darnley: nay, you must leave her now, whatever violence you do yourself.

Charl. Ay, ay, take him with you, brother; or, stay, Darnley; if you please, you may come along with me. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Parlour in Sir John Lambert's House.

Enter DARNLEY and CHARLOTTE.

Charl. But, really, will you stand to the agreement though, that I have made with the Doctor?

Darn. Why not? You shall not break your word upon my account, though he might be a villain you gave it to. Suppose I should talk with Sir John myself? 'Tis true, he has slighted me of late.

Charl. No matter; here he comes. This may open another scene of action to that I believe my brother's preparing for.

Enter Sir JOHN and Lady LAMBERT.

Sir J. Lamb. Mr. Darnley, I'm glad I have met you here.

Darn. I have endeavoured twice to-day, sir, to pay my respects to you.

Sir J. Lamb. Sir, I'll be plain with you; I went out to avoid you: but where the welfare of a child is concerned, you must not take it ill if we don't stand upon ceremony. However, since I have reason now to be more in temper than, perhaps, I was at that time, I shall be glad to talk with you.

Darn. I take it as a favour, sir.

Sir J. Lamb. You must allow, Mr. Darnley, that conscience is the rule which every honest man ought to walk by.

Darn. 'Tis granted, sir.

Sir J. Lamb. Then give me leave to tell you, sir, that giving you my daughter would be to act against that conscience I pretend to, whilst I thought you an ill lover; and, consequently, the same tie obliges me to bestow her on a better man.

Darn. Well,—but, sir, come to the point. Suppose the Doctor (whom I presume you intend her for) actually consents to give me up his interest?

Sir J. Lamb. But why do you suppose, sir, he will give up his interest?

Darn. I only judge from what your daughter tells me, sir.

Sir J. Lamb. My daughter?

Darn. I appeal to her.

Charl. And I appeal even to yourself, sir. Has not the Doctor, just now, in the garden, spoken in favour of Mr. Darnley to you? Nay, pray, sir, be plain; because more depends on that than you can easily imagine or believe.

Sir J. Lamb. What senseless insinuation have you got into your head now?

Charl. Be so kind, sir, first to answer me, that I may be better able to inform you.

Sir J. Lamb. Well, I own he has declined his interest in favour of Mr. Darnley; but I must tell you, madam, that he did it in so modest, so friendly, so good-natured, so conscientious a manner, that I now think myself more than ever bound in honour to espouse him.

Charl. But now, sir, (only for argument's sake,) suppose I could prove that all this seeming virtue was artificial; that his regard for Mr. Darnley was neither founded upon modesty, friendship, good-nature, nor conscience; or, in short, that he has, like a villain, bartered, bargained, to give me to Mr. Darnley for half the four thousand pounds you valued his consent at; I say, sir, suppose this could be proved, where would be his virtue then?

Sir J. Lamb. It is impious to suppose it.
Charl. Then, sir, from what principle must you suppose that I accuse him?

Sir J. Lamb. From an obstinate prejudice to all that's good and virtuous.

Charl. That's too hard, sir. But the worst your opinion can provoke me to, is to marry Mr. Darnley without either his consent or your's.

Sir J. Lamb. What! do you brave me, madam?

Charl. No, sir; but I scorn a lie; and will so far vindicate my integrity, as to insist on your believing me; if not, as a child you abandon I have a right to throw myself into other arms for protection.

Darn. Dear Charlotte, how your spirit charms me!

Sir J. Lamb. I am confounded! These tears cannot be counterfeit, nor can this be true.

Lady Lamb. Indeed, my dear, I fear it is. Give me leave to ask you one question: in all our mutual course of happiness, have I ever yet deceived you with a falsehood?

Sir J. Lamb. Never.

Lady Lamb. Would you, then, believe me, should I accuse him even of crimes which virtue blushes but to mention?

Sir J. Lamb. To what extravagance would you drive me?

Lady Lamb. I would before have undeceived you, when his late artifice turned the honest duty of your son into his own reproach and ruin; but knowing then your temper was inaccessible, I durst not offer it. But suppose I should be able to let you see his villainy, make him repeat his odious love to me in your own hearing; at once throw off the mask, and shew the barefaced traitor?

Sir J. Lamb. Is it possible?

Lady Lamb. But then, sir, I must prevail on you to descend to the poor shifts we are reduced to.

Sir J. Lamb. All; to any thing, to ease me of my doubts. Make me but witness of this fact, and I shall soon accuse myself, and own my folly equal to his baseness.

Lady Lamb. Behind that screen you may easily conceal yourself.

Sir J. Lamb. Be it so.

Lady Lamb. Mr. Darnley, shall we beg your leave; and you, Charlotte, take the least suspected way to send the Doctor to me directly.

Charl. I have a thought will do it, madam.

Sir J. Lamb. Oh, Charlotte! Oh, Mr. Darnley!

Darn. Have but resolution, sir, and fear nothing.

[Exit with CHARLOTTE.]

Lady Lamb. Now, sir, you are to consider what a desperate disease I have undertaken to cure; therefore, be sure to keep close and still; and when the proof is full, appear at your discretion.

Sir J. Lamb. Fear not; I will conform myself. Yet be not angry, my love, if in a case like this, where I should not believe even him accusing you; be not angry, I say, if I have also charity enough to hope you may yet be deceived in what you charge him with, till the evidence of my own senses assures me to the contrary.

Lady Lamb. 'Tis just.

Sir J. Lamb. Hark! I think I hear him coming.

Lady Lamb. Now, my dear, remember your promise to have patience.

Sir J. Lamb. Rely upon it.

Lady Lamb. To your post, then. [Sir JOHN goes behind the screen.]

Enter Doctor CANTWELL, with a book.

Dr. Cant. Madam, your woman tells me, that being here and alone, you desired to speak with me.

Lady Lamb. I did, sir; but that we may be sure that we are alone, pray, shut the outward door; another surprise might ruin us. Is all safe?

Dr. Cant. [Fastens the door.] I have taken care, madam.

Lady Lamb. But I am afraid I interrupt your meditations.

Dr. Cant. No, madam, no; I was only looking over some pious exhortations here, for the use of a society of chosen brethren.

Lady Lamb. Ah! Doctor, what have you done to me? The trouble of my mind, since our last unfortunate conference, is not to be expressed. You, indeed, discovered to me what, perhaps, for my own peace, 'twere better I had never been acquainted with; but I had not sufficient time to lay my heart open to you.

Dr. Cant. Whither, madam, would you lead me?

Lady Lamb. I have been uneasy, too, not knowing how far you might mistake my behaviour on the last accident that happened; but I was really so shocked, so terrified, I knew not what I was doing; only, had I joined in your defence against the Colonel, it would have been evident I was his enemy, and I have uses for his friendship. Silence, therefore, was my only prudent part; and I knew your credit with Sir John needed no support.

Dr. Cant. Let me presume, then, to hope, that what I did, you judge was self-defence, and pure necessity.

Lady Lamb. And, perhaps, after all, the accident was lucky; for Sir John, in order to obviate any ill construction that may be put upon it, insists now that we should be more together, to let the world see his confidence in us both. This relieves us from restraint, and I now dare tell you—but, no—I won't—

Dr. Cant. But, why, madam? let me beseech you—

Lady Lamb. No; besides, why need you ask me?

Dr. Cant. Ah! do not endeavour to decoy my foolish heart, too apt to flatter itself. You cannot, sure, think kindly of me? [Gins so.]

Lady Lamb. Well, well; I would have you imagine—

Dr. Cant. Besides, may I not with reason suspect, that this apparent goodness is but artifice, a shadow of compliance, meant only to persuade me from your daughter?

Lady Lamb. Methinks this doubt of me seems rather founded on your settled resolution not to resign her. I am convinced of it. I can assure you, sir, I should have saved you this trouble, had I known how deeply you were engaged to her. [Weeps.]

Dr. Cant. Tears! then I must believe you; but, indeed, you wrong me. To prove my innocence, it is not an hour since I pressed Sir John to give Charlotte to young Darnley.

Lady Lamb. Mere artifice! you knew that modest resignation would make Sir John warmer in your interest.

Dr. Cant. No, indeed, indeed. I had other motives, which you may hereafter be made acquainted with, and will convince you—

Lady Lamb. Well, sir; now I'll give you reason to guess why, at our last meeting, I pressed you so warmly to resign Charlotte.

Dr. Cant. Ah, dear! ah, dear!

Lady Lamb. You cannot blame me for having opposed your happiness, when my own, perhaps, depended upon it.

Dr. Cant. Spare me, spare me! you kill me with this kindness.

Lady Lamb. But, now that I have discovered my weakness, be secret; for the least imprudence—

Dr. Cant. It is a vain fear.

Lady Lamb. Call it not vain: my reputation is dearer to me than life.

Dr. Cant. Where can it find so sure a guard? The grave austerities of my life will dumbfound suspicion, and your's may defy detraction.

Lady Lamb. Well, Doctor, 'tis you must answer for my folly.

Dr. Cant. I take it all upon myself.

Lady Lamb. But there's one thing still to be afraid of.

Dr. Cant. Nothing, nothing.

Lady Lamb. My husband—Sir John.

Dr. Cant. Alas! poor man, I will answer for him. Between ourselves, madam, your husband is weak; I can lead him by the nose anywhere.

Sir JOHN LAMBERT advances between them.

Sir J. Lamb. No, caitiff! I'm to be led no further.

Dr. Cant. Ah! woman!

Sir J. Lamb. Is this your sanctity? this your doctrine? these your meditations?

Dr. Cant. Is, then, my brother in a conspiracy against me?

Sir J. Lamb. Your brother! I have been your friend, indeed, to my shame; your dupe; but your spell has lost its hold: no more canting; it will not serve your turn any longer.

Lady Lamb. Now, heaven be praised!

Dr. Cant. It seems you want an excuse to part with me.

Sir J. Lamb. Ungrateful wretch! But why do I reproach you? Had I not been the weakest of mankind, you never could have proved so great a villain. Get out of my sight! leave my house! Of all my follies, which is it tells you that, if you stay much longer, I shall not be tempted to wrest you out of the hands of the law, and punish you as you deserve?

Dr. Cant. Well; but first, let me ask you, sir, who it is you menace? Consider your own condition, and where you are.

Sir J. Lamb. What would the villain drive at? Leave me; I forgive you; but once more I tell you, seek some other place, out of my house. This instant be gone, and see my shameful face no more.

Dr. Cant. Nay, then, 'tis my duty to exert myself, and let you know that I am master here. Turn you out, sir! This house is mine! and now, sir, at your peril, dare to insult me.

Sir J. Lamb. Oh, heavens! 'tis true! whither shall I fly to hide me from the world?

Lady Lamb. Whither are you going, sir?

Sir J. Lamb. I know not; but here, it seems, I am a trespasser; the master of the house has warned me hence; and, since the right is now in him, 'tis just I should resign it.

Lady Lamb. You shall not stir. He dares not act with such abandoned insolence. No, sir; possession still is your's. If he pretend a right, let him by open course of law maintain it.

Dr. Cant. Ha! Here, Seyward! [Exit.

Enter MAWWORM.

Sir J. Lamb. Who is this fellow? What do you want, man?

Maw. My lady, come up.

Enter Old Lady LAMBERT.

Old Lady Lamb. How now!

Maw. He wants to know who I be.

Old Lady Lamb. The gentleman is a friend of mine, son. I was carrying him in a coach to attend a controversy that's to be held this evening, at the

reverend Mr. Scruple's, about an affair of simony, and called to take up the Doctor. But what strange tales are these I hear below?

Sir J. Lamb. The Doctor is a villain, madam: I have detected him: detected him in the horrible design of seducing my wife.

Maw. It's impossible!

Sir J. Lamb. What do you say, man?

Maw. I say, it's impossible! He has been locked up with my wife for hours together, morning, noon, and night; and I never found her the worse for him.

Old Lady Lamb. Ah! son, son!

Sir J. Lamb. What is your ladyship going to say now?

Old Lady Lamb. The Doctor is not in fault.

Sir J. Lamb. 'Slife, madam!

Old Lady Lamb. Oh! he swears, he swears! Years in growing good, we become profligate in a moment. If you swear again, I won't stay in the house.

Maw. Nor I neither. Aren't you ashamed of yourself? have you no commensuration on your soul? Ah! poor wicked sinner, I pity you.

Sir J. Lamb. 'Sdeath and the devil!

Maw. If you swear any more, I'll inform against you.

Sir J. Lamb. Why would you bring this idiot, madam?

Maw. Ay, do despise me, I'm the prouder for it; I likes to be despised.

Enter CHARLOTTE.

Charl. Oh! dear papa, I shall faint away; there's murder doing.

Sir J. Lamb. Who, where, what is it?

Charl. The Doctor, sir, and Seyward, were at high words just now in the garden; and, upon a sudden, there was a pistol fired between them. Oh! I'm afraid poor Seyward is killed.

Sir J. Lamb. How!

Charl. Oh! here he comes himself; he'll tell you more.

Enter Dr. CANTWELL, DARNLEY, SEYWARD, and Servants.

Darn. [Speaking as he enters.] Here, bring in this ruffian; this is villainy beyond example.

Sir J. Lamb. What means this outrage?

Lady Lamb. I tremble.

Seyw. Don't be alarmed, madam; there is no mischief done; what was intended, the Doctor here can best inform you.

Sir J. Lamb. Mr. Darnley, I am ashamed to see you.

Maw. So you ought; but this good man is ashamed of nothing.

Dr. Cant. Alas! my enemies prevail.

Seyw. In short, gentlemen, the affair is circumstantially this: the Doctor called me out into the pavilion in the garden; appeared in great disorder; told me there was a sudden storm raised, which he was not sufficiently prepared to weather. He said, his dependance was upon me; and, at all events, I must be ready to swear, when he called upon me, I had seen him pay Sir John several large sums of money. He talked confusedly about giving value for an estate; but I boldly refused to perjure myself; and told him, on the contrary, I was satisfied he had fleeced Sir John of several large sums, under the pretence of charitable uses, which he secretly converted to his own. This stung him, and he fastened at my throat. Then, indeed, all temper left me; and disengaging myself from his hold, with a home-

Now I struck him down. At this, grown desperate, he ran with fury to some pistols that hung above the chimney; but, in the instant he reached one, I seized upon his wrist; and, as we grappled, the pistol firing to the ceiling, alarmed the family.

Old Lady Lamb. This is a lie, young man; I see the devil standing at your elbow.

Mau. So do I, with a great big pitchfork, pushing him on.

Dr. Cant. Well, what have you more against me? Darn. More, sir, I hope, is needless; but, if Sir John be yet unsatisfied—

Sir J. Lamb. Oh! I have seen too much.

Dr. Cant. I demand my liberty.

Sir J. Lamb. Let him go.

Enter Colonel LAMBERT, and Attendants.

Col. Lamb. Hold, sir! not so fast; you can't pass.

Dr. Cant. Who, sir, shall dare to stop me?

Col. Lamb. Within, there!

Enter TIPSTAFF.

Tipstaff. Is your name Cantwell, sir?

Dr. Cant. What if it be, sir?

Tipstaff. Then, sir, I have my lord chief justice's warrant against you.

Dr. Cant. Against me?

Tipstaff. Yes, sir, for a cheat and impostor.

Old Lady Lamb. What does he say?

Sir J. Lamb. Dear son, what is this?

Col. Lamb. Only some actions of the Doctor's, sir, which I have affidavits in my hand here to prove, from more than one credible witness; and I think it my duty to make the public acquainted with them: if he can acquit himself of them, so; if not, he must take the consequence.

Dr. Cant. Well, but stay; let the accusations against me be what they will, by virtue of this conveyance, [producing it,] I am still master here; and, if I be forced to leave the house myself, I will shut up the doors; nobody shall remain behind.

Sir J. Lamb. There, there, indeed, he stings me to the heart! for that rash act, reproach and endless shame will haunt me!

Charl. No, sir; be comforted. Even there, too, his wicked hopes must leave him; for know, the fatal deed, which you intended to sign, is here, even yet unsealed and innocent. [Producing it.]

Sir J. Lamb. What mean you?

Charl. I mean, sir, that this deed, by accident, falling into this gentleman's hands, his generous concern for our family discovered it to me; and, that, in concert, we procured that other to be drawn exactly like it: which, in your impatience to execute, passed, unsuspected, for the original. Their only difference is, that wherever here you read the Doctor's name, there you'll find my brother's.

Dr. Cant. Come, sir, lead me where you please.

[Exit, guarded.]

Old Lady Lamb. I don't know what to make of all this.

Mau. [Mounts a form behind the screen, and looks over; throws about his arms, and delivers the following rhapsody.] Stay, stay, you infatuated wretches! you know not what ye do. The Doctor is innocent: I say he is innocent! Touch not a hair of his precious head; rumple not one curl of his gracious wig! He's a saint! if ever there was a saint, he is one! But, ye will be the sufferers. I have one great and glorious consolation—I say, one glorious consolation!—you'll all go to the devil! I shall go up, but you'll go down. And, when you see me mount, and leave ye to your fate, you'll want my aid! you'll want me to take you with me! you'll cling to me! you'll attempt to lay hold of the skirts of my coat! but, I'll fling ye all; for I'll wear a spencer! [Exit with Old Lady LAMB.]

Charl. Now, Darnley, I hope I have made some atonement for your jealousy.

Darn. You've banished it for ever! This was beyond yourself surprising.

Col. Lamb. Sister—

Charl. Come, no set speeches; if I deserve your thanks, return them in friendship to your first pre-server.

Col. Lamb. The business of my life shall be to merit it.

Seyv. And mine to speak my sense of obligations.

Sir J. Lamb. Oh! my child, for my deliverance I can only reward you here. [Giving her hand to DARNLEY.] For you, my son, whose filial virtue I have injured, this honest deed shall in every article be ratified. And, for the sake of that hypocritical villain, I declare, that from henceforward I renounce all pious folks; I will have an utter abhorrence for everything that bears the appearance—

Charl. Nay, now, my dear sir, I must take the liberty to tell you you carry things too far, and go from one extreme to another. What! because a worthless wretch has imposed upon you under the fallacious shew of austere grimace, will you needs have it, everybody is like him? confound the good with the bad, and conclude there are no truly religious in the world? Leave, my dear sir, such rash conclusions to fools and libertines. Let us be careful to distinguish between virtue and the appearance of it. Guard, if possible, against doing honour to hypocrisy; but, at the same time, let us allow there is no character in life greater or more valuable than that of the truly devout; nor anything more noble, or more beautiful, than the fervour of a sincere piety.

[Exit.]

THE WONDER;

A WOMAN KEEPS A SECRET:

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS,

BY MRS. CENTLIVRE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DON FELIX
DON LOPEZ
FREDERICK
COLONEL BRITON
DON PEDRO
GIBBY
LISSARDO
ALGUAZIL
VASQUEZ

DONNA VIOLENTE
DONNA ISABELLA
INIS
FLORA

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Street.

Enter DON LOPEZ, meeting FREDERICK.

Fred. My lord, Don Lopez.

Lop. How d'y'e, Frederick?

Fred. At your lordship's service. I am glad to see you look so well, my lord. I hope Antonio's out of danger?

Lop. Quite contrary; his fever increases, they tell me; and the surgeons are of opinion his wound is mortal.

Fred. Your son, Don Felix, is safe, I hope?

Lop. I hope so too; but they offer large rewards to apprehend him.

Fred. When heard your lordship from him?

Lop. Not since he went: I forbade him writing till the public news gave him an account of Antonio's health. Letters might be intercepted, and the place of his abode discovered.

Fred. Your caution was good, my lord. Though I am impatient to hear from Felix, yet his safety is my chief concern.

Lop. If Antonio dies, Felix shall for England.—You have been there; what sort of people are the English?

Fred. My lord, the English are, by nature, what the ancient Romans were by discipline—courageous, bold, hardy, and in love with liberty.

Lop. I like their principles: who does not wish for freedom in all degrees of life? though common prudence sometimes makes us act against it, as I am now obliged to do; for I intend to marry my daughter to Don Guzman, whom I expect from Holland every day, whither he went to take possession of a large estate left him by his uncle.

Fred. You will not surely sacrifice the lovely Isabella to avarice, and a fool? Pardon the expression, my lord, but my concern for your beautiful daughter transports me beyond that good manners which I ought to pay your lordship's presence.

Lop. I can't deny the justness of the character, Frederick; but you are not insensible what I have suffered by these wars: and he has two things which render him very agreeable to me for a son-in-law—he is rich and well-born; as for his being a fool, I don't conceive how that can be any blot in a husband who is already possessed of a good estate. A poor fool is, indeed, a very scandalous thing, and so are your poor wits in my opinion, who have nothing to be vain of but the inside of their skulls. Now, for Don Guzman—I know I can rule him as I think fit. This is acting the politic part, Frederick, without which it is impossible to keep up the port of this life.

Fred. But have you no consideration for your daughter's welfare, my lord?

Lop. Is a husband of twenty thousand crowns a year no consideration? Now I think it a very good consideration.

Fred. One way, my lord. But what will the world say of such a match?

Lop. Sir, I value not the world a button.

Fred. I cannot think your daughter can have any inclination for such a husband.

Lop. There, I believe, you are pretty much in the right, though it is a secret which I never had

the curiosity to inquire into, nor I believe ever shall. Inclination, quotha! Parents would have a fine time on't if they consulted their children's inclinations! No, no, sir, it is not a father's business to follow his children's inclinations till he makes himself a beggar.

Fred. But this is of another nature, my lord.

Lop. Look ye, sir; I resolve she shall marry Don Guzman, the moment he arrives. Though I could not govern my son, I will my daughter, I assure you.

Fred. This match, my lord, is more preposterous than that which you proposed to your son, from whence arose this fatal quarrel. Don Antonio's sister, Elvira, wanted beauty only, but Guzman every thing but—

Lop. Money—and that will purchase every thing; and so adieu. *[Exit.]*

Fred. Monstrous! these are the resolutions which destroy the comforts of matrimony. Lissardo! from whence came you?

Enter LISSARDO, in a riding habit.

Liss. That letter will inform you, sir.

Fred. I hope your master's safe?

Liss. I left him so. I have another to deliver, which requires haste. Your most humble servant, sir. *[Bowing.]*

Fred. To Violante, I suppose?

Liss. The same. *[Exit.]*

Fred. *[Reads.]* "Dear Frederick,—The two chief blessings of this life are a friend and a mistress; to be debarred the sight of these is not to live. I hear no thing of Antonio's death, and therefore resolve to venture to thy house this evening, impatient to see Violante, and embrace my friend. Yours, FELIX." 'Pray heaven he comes undiscovered! Ha! Colonel Briton!

Enter Colonel BRITON.

Col. B. Frederick, I rejoice to see thee. *[Shake hands.]*

Fred. What brought you to Lisbon, Colonel?

Col. B. *La fortune de la guerre*, as the French say. I have commanded these three last years in Spain; but my country has thought fit to strike up a peace, and give us good Protestants leave to hope for Christian burial; so I resolved to take Lisbon in my way home.

Fred. If you are not provided of a lodging, Colonel, pray command my house while you stay.

Col. B. If I were sure I should not be troublesome, I would accept your offer, Frederick.

Fred. So far from trouble, Colonel, I shall take it as a particular favour. What have we here?

Col. B. My footman—this is our country dress, you must know; which, for the honour of Scotland, I make all my servants wear.

Enter GIBBY, in an Highland dress.

Gibby. What maud I de with the horses, and like yer honour? They will tack could gin they stand in the causeway.

Fred. Oh, I'll take care of them. What, ho! Vasquez!

Enter VASQUEZ.

Put those horses, which that honest fellow will show you, into my stable, do you hear? and feed them well.

Vas. Yes, sir. Sir, by my master's orders, I am, sir, your most obsequious humble servant. *[To GIBBY.]* Be pleased to lead the way.

Gibby. 'Sbleed! gang your gate, sir, and I shall follow ye. I se to hungry to feed on compliments.

[Exeunt GIBBY and VASQUEZ.]

Fred. *[Surveying GIBBY as he passes.]* Ha! ha! a comical fellow! Well, how do you like our country, Colonel?

Col. B. Why, 'faith, Frederick, a man might pass his time agreeably enough within side of a nunnery; but to behold such troops of soft, plump, tender, melting, wishing, nay, willing girls too, through a damned grate, gives us Britons strong temptations to plunder. Hark ye, hast thou never a pretty acquaintance now that thou wouldst consign over to a friend for half an hour, ha?

Fred. 'Faith, Colonel, I am the worst pimp in Christendom; you had better trust to your own luck—the women will soon find you out, I warrant you.

Col. B. Ay, but it is dangerous foraging in an enemy's country; and, since I have some hopes of seeing my own again, I had rather purchase my pleasure than run the hazard of a stiletto in my guts. Wilt thou recommend me to a wife then, ha, friend?

Fred. She must be very handsome, I suppose?

Col. B. The handsomer the better.

Fred. And rich, I suppose?

Col. B. Oh, very rich—I shall never be able to swallow the matrimonial pill, if it be not well gilded.

Fred. Pugh! beauty will make it slide down nimbly.

Col. B. At first, perhaps, it may; but the second or third dose will choke me. I confess, Frederick, women are the prettiest playthings in nature; but gold, substantial gold! gives them the air, the mien, the shape, the grace, and beauty of a goddess.

Fred. And has not gold the same divinity in their eyes, Colonel?

Col. B. Too often—

None marry now for love—no, that's a jest:

The self-same bargain serves for wife and beast.

Fred. You are always gay, Colonel. Come, shall we take a refreshing glass at my house, and consider what has been said?

Col. B. I have two or three compliments to discharge for some friends, and then I shall wait on you with pleasure. Where do you live?

Fred. At yon corner house, with the green rails.

Col. B. In the close of the evening I will endeavour to kiss your hand. Adieu! *[Exit.]*

Fred. I shall expect you with impatience. *[Exit.]*

SCENE II.—A Room in Don Lopez's House.

Enter ISABELLA and INIS.

Inis. For goodness' sake, Madam, where are you going in this pet?

Isab. Any where to avoid matrimony. The thoughts of a husband are as terrible to me as the sight of a hobgoblin.

Inis. Ay, of an old husband; but, if you may choose for yourself, I fancy matrimony would be no such frightful thing to you.

Isab. You are pretty much in the right, Inis: but to be forced into the arms of an idiot, who has neither person to please the eye, sense to charm the ear, nor generosity to supply these defects! Ah, Inis! what pleasant lives women lead in England, where duty wears no fetter but inclination! The custom of our country enslaves us from our very cradles, first to our parents, next to our husbands; and, when heaven is so kind as to rid us of both these, our brothers

still usurp authority, and expect a blind obedience from us; so that, maids, wives, or widows, we are little better than slaves to the tyrant, man. Therefore, to avoid their power, I resolve to cast myself into a monastery.

Inis. That is, you'll cut your own throat to avoid another's doing it for you. Ah, madam, those eyes tell me you have no nun's flesh about you. A monastery, quotha! Odslife, Madam, you are the first woman that ever despised in a Christian country. Were I in your place—

Isab. Why, what would your wisdom do if you were?

Inis. I'd embark with the first fair wind with all my jewels, and seek my fortune on t'other side the water: no shore can treat you worse than your own. There's ne'er a father in Christendom should make me marry any man against my will.

Isab. I am too great a coward to follow your advice. I must contrive some way to avoid Don Guzman, and yet stay in my own country.

Enter DON LOPEZ.

Lop. Must you so, mistress? but I shall take care to prevent you. [*Aside.*] Isabella, whither are you going, my child?

Isab. To church, sir?

Inis. The old rogue has certainly overheard her! [*Aside.*]

Lop. Your devotion must needs be very strong, or your memory very weak, my dear. Why, vespers are over for this night. Come, come, you shall have a better errand to church than to say your prayers there. Don Guzman is arrived in the river, and I expect him a-shore to-morrow!

Isab. Ha! to-morrow!

Lop. He writes me word that his estate in Holland is worth twelve thousand crowns a-year, which, together with what he had before, will make thee the happiest wife in Lisbon.

Isab. And the most unhappy woman in the world. [*Takes his hand.*] Oh, sir! if I have any power in your heart—if the tenderness of a father be not quite extinct—hear me with patience.

Lop. No objection against the marriage, and I will hear whatsoever thou hast to say.

Isab. That's torturing me on the rack, and forbidding me to groan. Upon my knees I claim the privilege of flesh and blood. [*Kneels.*]

Lop. I grant it; thou shalt have an armful of flesh and blood to-morrow. Flesh and blood, quotha!—Heaven forbid I should deny thee flesh and blood, my girl.

Inis. Here's an old dog for you!

[*Aside.*]

Isab. Do not mistake, sir. The fatal stroke which separates soul and body, is not more terrible to the thoughts of sinners, than the name of Guzman to my ear.

Lop. Puh, puh! you lie, you lie!

Isab. My frightened heart beats hard against my breast, as if it sought a passage to your feet, to beg you'd change your purpose.

Lop. A very pretty speech this; if it were turned into blank verse, it would serve for a tragedy. Why, thou hast more wit than I thought thou hadst, child. I fancy this was all *extempore*; I don't believe thou didst ever think one word on't before.

Inis. Yes, but she has, my lord; for I have heard her say the same things a thousand times.

Lop. How, how! What, do you top your second-hand jests upon your father, hussy, who knows better what's good for you than you do yourself? Remember, 'tis your duty to obey.

Isab. [*Rising.*] I never disobeyed before, and I wish I had not reason now; but nature hath got the better of my duty, and makes me loathe the harsh commands you lay.

Lop. Ha! ha!—Very fine! ha! ha!

Isab. Death itself would be more welcome.

Lop. Are you sure of that?

Isab. I am your daughter, my lord, and can boast as strong a resolution as yourself. I'll die before I'll marry Guzman.

Lop. Say you so? I'll try that presently. [*Draws.*] Here, let me see with what dexterity you can breathe a vein now. [*Offers her his sword.*] The point is pretty sharp—'Twill do your business, I warrant you.

Inis. [*Going between them.*] Bless me, sir! What do you mean, to put a sword into the hands of a desperate woman?

Lop. Desperate! ha, ha, ha! you see how desperate she is. What, art thou frightened, little Bell, ha?

Isab. I confess I am startled at your morals, sir.

Lop. Ay, ay, child, thou hadst better take the man; he'll hurt thee least of the two.

Isab. I shall take neither, sir: death has many doors; and, when I can live no longer with pleasure, I shall find one to let him in at without your aid.

Lop. Say'st thou so, my dear Bell? Ods, I'm afraid thou art a little lunatic, Bell. I must take care of thee, child. I shall make bold to secure thee, my dear; I'll seek if locks and bars can keep thee till Guzman come. Go, get into your chamber:

[*Locks her in.*]

There I'll your boasted resolution try,

And see who'll get the better, you or I.

[*Drives off Inis, and exit.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Room in Don Pedro's House.

Enter DONNA VIOLANTE, reading a Letter, and FLORA following.

Flora. What, must that letter be read again?

Vio. Yes, and again, and again, and again, a thousand times again; a letter from a faithful lover can never be read too often; it speaks such kind, such soft, such tender things—

[*Kisses it.*]

Flora. But always the same language.

Vio. It does not charm the less for that.

Flora. In my opinion, nothing charms that does not change: and any composition of the four-and-twenty letters, after the first essay, from the same hand, must be dull, except a bank-note, or a bill of exchange.

Vio. Thy taste is my aversion.

[*Reads.*] "My all that's charming, since life' not life exiled from thee, this night shall bring me to thy arms. Frederick and thee are all I trust. These six weeks' absence have been in love's account six hundred years. When it is dark, expect the wonted signal at thy window: till when, adieu. Thine, more than his own,"

"FELIX."

Flora. Who would not have said as much to a lady of her beauty and twenty thousand pounds?—Were I a man, methinks I could have said a hundred finer things.

Vio. What would you have said?

Flora. I would have compared your eyes to the

stars, your teeth to ivory, your lips to coral, your neck to alabaster, your shape to—

Vio. No more of your bombast! truth is the best eloquence in a lover.—What proof remains ungiven of his love? When his father threatened to disinherit him for refusing Don Antonio's sister, from whence sprung this unhappy quarrel, did it shake his love for me?—and now, though strict inquiry runs through every place, with large rewards to apprehend him, does he not venture all for me?

Flora. But you know, madam, your father, Don Pedro, designs you for a nun—to be sure, you look very like a nun!—and says, your grandfather left you your fortune upon that condition.

Vio. Not without my approbation, girl, when I come to one-and-twenty, as I am informed. But, however, I shall run the risk of that. Go, call in Lissardo.

Flora. Yes, madam. Now for a thousand verbal questions. [Exit.]

Re-enter FLORA, with LISSARDO.

Vio. Well, and how do you do, Lissardo?

Liss. Ah, very weary, madam.—'Faith, thou look'st wondrous pretty, Flora! [Aside to Flora.]

Vio. How came you?

Liss. En chevalier, madam, upon a hackney jade, which they told me formerly belonged to an English colonel; but I should have rather thought she had been bred a good Roman Catholic all her lifetime—for she down'd on her knees to every stock and stone we came along by.—My chops water for a kiss; they do, Flora. [Aside to Flora.]

Flora. You'd make one believe you are wond'rous fond, now.

Vio. Where did you leave your master?

Liss. Odd, if I had you alone, housewife, I'd show you how fond I could be! [Aside to Flora.]

Vio. Where did you leave your master?

Liss. At a little farm-house, madam, about five miles off. He'll be at Don Frederick's in the evening.—Od, I will so revenge myself of those lips of thine! [To Flora.]

Vio. Is he in health?

Flora. Oh, you counterfeit wond'rous well. [To Lissardo.]

Liss. No; every body knows I counterfeit very ill. [To Flora.]

Vio. How say you? Is Felix ill? What's his distemper? ha?

Liss. A prize on't, I hate to be interrupted.—Love, madam, love. In short, madam, I believe he has thought of nothing but your ladyship ever since he left Lisbon. I am sure he could not, if I may judge of his heart by my own. [Looking lovingly upon Flora.]

Vio. How came you so well acquainted with your master's thoughts, Lissardo?

Liss. By an infallible rule, madam: words are the pictures of the mind, you know; now, to prove he thinks of nothing but you, he talks of nothing but you. For example, madam, coming from shooting, t'other day, with a brace of partridges, Lissardo, said he, go bid the cook roast me these Violantes.—I flew into the kitchen, full of thoughts of thee, cried, here, cook, roast me these Floras. [To Flora.]

Flora. Ha! ha! excellent!—You mimic your master, then, it seems.

Liss. I can do every thing as well as my master, you little rogue.—Another time, madam, the priest came to make him a visit; he called out hastily, Lissardo, said he, bring a Violante for my father to sit down on. Then he often mistook my name, ma-

dam, and called me Violante: in short, I heard it so often, that it became as familiar to me as my prayers.

Vio. You live very merrily then, it seems.

Liss. Oh, exceeding merry, madam!

[Kisses Flora's hand.]

Vio. Ha! exceeding merry!—Had you treats and balls?

Liss. Oh! yes, yes, madam, several.

Flora. You are mad, Lissardo; you don't mind what my lady says to you. [Aside to Lissardo.]

Vio. Ha! balls!—Is he so merry in my absence? And did your master dance, Lissardo?

Liss. Dance, madam! where, madam?

Vio. Why, at those balls you speak of.

Liss. Balls! what balls, madam?

Vio. Why, sure you are in love, Lissardo! Did not you say, but now, you had balls where you have been?

Liss. Balls, madam! Odslife, I ask your pardon, madam. I, I, I, had mislaid some wash-balls of my master's t'other day; and, because I could not think where I had lain them, just when he asked for them, he very fairly broke my head, madam: and now, it seems, I can think of nothing else. Alas! he dance, madam! No, no, poor gentleman, he is as melancholy as an unbraced drum.

Vio. Poor Felix! There, wear that ring for your master's sake, and let him know I shall be ready to receive him. [Exit.]

Liss. I shall, madam. [Puts on the ring.] Methinks a diamond ring is a vast addition to the little finger of a gentleman. [Admiring his hand.]

Flora. That ring must be mine.—Well, Lissardo, what haste you make to pay off arrears now! Look how the fellow stands!

Liss. [admiring his hand.] Egad, methinks I have a very pretty hand—and very white—and the shape!—Faith, I never minded it so much before.—In my opinion, it is a very fine-shaped hand—and becomes a diamond ring as well as the first grandee's in Portugal.

Flora. The man's transported! Is this your love, this your impatience?

Liss. [Takes snuff.] Now, in my mind, I take snuff with a very jaunty air.—Well, I am persuaded I want nothing but a coach and a title to make me a very fine gentleman. [Struts about.]

Flora. Sweet Mr. Lissardo! [Courtesying.] If I may presume to speak to you without affronting your little finger—

Liss. Odsso, madam, I ask your pardon.—Is it to me, or to the ring, you direct your discourse, madam?

Flora. Madam! Good lack! how much a diamond ring improves one!

Liss. Why, though I say it, I can carry myself as well as anybody.—But what wert thou going to say, child?

Flora. Why I was going to say that I fancy you had best let me keep that ring; it will be a very pretty wedding-ring, Lissardo, would it not?

Liss. Humph! ah!—But—but—but—I believe I sha'n't marry yet awhile.

Flora. You sha'n't, you say!—Very well! I suppose you design that ring for Inis.

Liss. No, no; I never bribe an old acquaintance. Perhaps I might let it sparkle in the eyes of a stranger a little, till we come to a right understanding—but then, like all other mortal things, it would return from whence it came.

Flora. Insolent!—Is that your manner of dealing?

Liss. With all! but thee—Kiss me, you little rogue, [Hugging her.]

Flora. Little rogue! Prythee, fellow, don't be so familiar: [*Pushing him away.*] If I mayn't keep your ring, I can keep my kisses.

Liss. You can, you say! Spoke with the air of a chambermaid.

Flora. Replied with the spirit of a serving-maid.

Liss. Prythee, *Flora*, don't let you and I fall out. I am in a merry humour, and shall certainly fall in somewhere.

Flora. What care I where you fall in!

Enter DONNA VIOLANTE.

Vio. Why do you keep *Lissardo* so long, *Flora*, when you don't know how soon my father may awake? His afternoon naps are never so long.

Flora. Had Don Felix been with her, she would not have thought the time long. These ladies consider nobody's wants but their own. [*Aside.*]

Vio. Go, go, let him out.

Flora. Yes, madam.

Liss. I fly, madam.

[*Exeunt LISSARDO and FLORA.*]

Vio. The day draws in, and night, the lover's friend, advances—night, more welcome than the sun to me, because it brings my love.

Flora. [*Shrieking within.*] Ah! thieves! thieves! Murder! murder!

Vio. [*Shrieking and running.*] Ah! defend me, Heaven! What do I hear! Felix is certainly pursued, and will be taken.

Enter FLORA, running.

How now? why dost stare so? Answer me quickly; what's the matter?

Flora. Oh, madam, as I was letting out *Lissardo*, a gentleman rushed between him and I, struck down my candle, and is bringing a dead person in his arms into our house.

Vio. Ha! a dead person? Heaven grant it does not prove my Felix!

Flora. Here they are, madam.

Vio. I'll retire till you discover the meaning of this accident. [*Exit.*]

Enter COLONEL BRITON, with DONNA ISABELLA in his arms; sets her down in a chair, and addresses himself to FLORA.

Col. B. Madam, the necessity this lady was under of being conveyed into some house with speed and secrecy, will, I hope, excuse any indecency I might be guilty of in pressing so rudely into this.—I am an entire stranger to her name and circumstances—'would I were so to her beauty too! [*Aside.*] I commit her, madam, to your care, and fly to make her retreat secure. If the street be clear, permit me to return, and learn from her own mouth if I can be further servicable. Pray, madam, how is the lady of this house called?

Flora. Violante, signior.

Col. B. Are you she, madam?

Flora. Only her woman, signior.

Col. B. Your humble servant, mistress. Pray be careful of the lady. [*Gives her two moidores, and Exit.*]

Flora. Two moidores! Well, he is a generous fellow! This is the only way to make one careful.

Enter DONNA VIOLANTE.

Vio. Were you distracted, *Flora*, to tell my name to a man you never saw! Unthinking wench! who knows what this may turn to?—What, is the lady dead? Ah! defend me, Heaven! 'tis *Isabella*, sister to my Felix! What has befallen her! Pray Heaven he's safe!—Run and fetch some cold water.

—Stay, stay, *Flora*.—*Isabella*, friend, speak to me; oh! speak to me, or I shall die with apprehension.

Isab. Oh, hold, my dearest father! do not force me; indeed I cannot love him.

Vio. How wild she talks!

Isab. Ha! where am I?

Vio. With one as sensible of thy pain as thou thyself canst be.

Isab. Violante! what kind star preserved and lodged me here?

Flora. It was a terrestrial star, called a man, madam; 'pray Jupiter he proves a lucky one!

Isab. Oh, I remember now. Forgive me, dear Violante; my thoughts run so much upon the danger I escaped, I forgot.

Vio. May I not know your story?

Isab. Thou art no stranger to one part of it. I have often told thee that my father designed to sacrifice me to Don Guzman, who, it seems, is just returned from Holland, and expected ashore to-morrow, the day that he has set to celebrate our nuptials. Upon my refusing to obey him, he locked me into my chamber, vowing to keep me there till he arrived, and force me to consent. I know my father to be positive, never to be won from his design; and, having no hope left me to escape the marriage, I leaped from the window into the street.

Vio. You have not hurt yourself, I hope?

Isab. No; a gentleman passing by, by accident, caught me in his arms; at first, my fright made me apprehend it was my father, till he assured me to the contrary.

Flora. He is a very fine gentleman, I promise you, madam, and a well-bred man, I warrant him. I think I never saw a grandee put his hand into his pocket with a better air in my whole lifetime; then he opened his purse with such a grace that nothing but his manner of presenting me with the gold could equal.

Vio. Go, leave us, *Flora*.—But how came you hither, *Isabella*?

Isab. I know not; I desired the stranger to convey me to the next monastery; but ere I reached the door, I saw, or fancied that I saw, *Lissardo*, my brother's man—and the thought that his master might not be far off flung me into a swoon, which is all that I can remember.—Ha! what's here? [*Takes up a letter.*] For Colonel Briton, to be left at the post-house at Lisbon. This must be dropped by the stranger who brought me hither.

Vio. Thou art fallen into the hands of a soldier; take care he does not lay thee under contribution, girl.

Isab. I find he is a gentleman, and if he is but unmarried, I could be content to follow him all the world over.—But I shall never see him more, I fear. [*Sighs and pauses.*]

Vio. What makes you sigh, *Isabella*?

Isab. The fear of falling into my father's clutches again.

Vio. Can I be servicable to you?

Isab. Yes, if you conceal me two or three days.

Vio. You may command my house and secrecy.

Isab. I thank you, Violante; I wish you would oblige me with Mrs. *Flora* awhile.

Vio. I'll send her to you.—I must watch if dad be still asleep, or here will be no room for Felix. [*Exit.*]

Isab. Well, I don't know what ails me! methinks I wish I could find this stranger out.

Enter FLORA.

Flora. Does your ladyship want me, madam?

Isab. Ay, Mrs. Flora : I resolve to make you my confidante.

Flora. I shall endeavour to discharge my duty, madam.

Isab. I doubt it not, and desire you to accept this as a token of my gratitude.

Flora. Oh, dear Signora ! I should have been your humble servant without a fee.

Isab. I believe it—But to the purpose—Do you think, if you saw the gentleman who brought me hither, you should know him again ?

Flora. From a thousand, madam ; I have an excellent memory where a handsome man is concerned. When he went away, he said he would return again immediately. I admire he comes not.

Isab. Here, did you say ? You rejoice me—though I'll not see him if he comes. Could you not contrive to give him a letter ?

Flora. With the air of a duenna !

Isab. Not in this house—you must veil, and follow him—He must not know it comes from me.

Flora. What, do you take me for a novice in love affairs ? Though I have not practised the art since I have been in Donna Violante's service, yet I have not lost the theory of a chambermaid. [*Isabella sits at a table, and writes.*] Do you write the letter, and leave the rest to me.—Here, here ; here's pen, ink, and paper.

Isab. I'll do it in a minute.

Flora. So ! this is a business after my own heart.—Love always takes care to reward his labourers, and Great Britain seems to be his favourite country.—Oh ! I long to see the other two maidens with a British air !—Methinks there's a grace peculiar to that nation in making a present.

Isab. So, I have done. Now, if he does but find this house again !

Flora. If he should not—I warrant I'll find him, if he's in Lisbon ; for I have a strong prepossession that he has two maidens as good as ever were told.

[*Puts the letter into her bosom.*]

Enter DONNA VIOLANTE.

Vio. Flora, watch my father ; he's fast asleep in his study : if you find him stir, give me notice. [*Colonel Briton taps at the window.*] Hark ! I hear Felix at the window ! admit him instantly, and then to your post. [*Exit FLORA.*]

Isab. What say you, Violante ? is my brother come ?

Vio. It is his signal at the window.

Isab. [*Kneels.*] Oh, Violante ! I conjure you, by all the love thou bear'st to Felix, by thy own generous nature—nay, more, by that unspotted virtue thou art mistress of, do not discover to my brother I am here.

Vio. Contrary to your desire, be assured I never shall. But where's the danger ?

Isab. [*Rises.*] Art thou born in Lisbon, and ask that question ? He'll think his honour blemished by my disobedience, and would restore me to my father, or kill me ; therefore, dear dear girl—

Vio. Depend upon my friendship ; nothing shall draw the secret from these lips, not even Felix, though at the hazard of his love. I hear him coming ; retire into that closet.

Isab. Remember, Violante, upon thy promise my very life depends. [*Exit.*]

Vio. When I betray thee, may I share thy fate.

Enter DON FELIX.

My Felix, my everlasting love ! [*Runs into his arms.*]

Fel. My life ! my soul ! my Violante !

Vio. What hazards dost thou run for me !—Oh, how shall I requite thee ?

Fel. If, during this tedious painful exile, thy thoughts have never wandered from thy Felix, thou hast made me more than satisfaction.

Vio. Can there be room within this heart for any but thyself ? No, if the god of love were lost to all the rest of human kind, thy image would secure him in my breast : I am all truth, all love, all faith, and know no jealous fears.

Fel. My heart's the proper sphere where love resides : could he quit that, he would be nowhere found ; and yet, Violante, I'm in doubt.

Vio. Did I ever give thee cause to doubt, my Felix ?

Fel. True love has many fears, and fear as many eyes as fame ; yet sure I think I see no fault in thee.

[*Colonel taps again.*] What's that ? [*Taps again.*]

Vio. What ! I heard nothing. [*Again.*]

Fel. Ha ! What means this signal at your window ?

Vio. Somewhat, perhaps, in passing by, might accidentally hit it ; it can be nothing else.

Cok. B. [*Within.*] Hist, hist, Donna Violante ! Donna Violante !

Fel. They use your name by accident too, do they, madam ?

Enter FLORA.

Flora. There is a gentleman at the window, madam, which I fancy to be him who brought Isabella hither. Shall I admit him ? [*Aside to Violante.*]

Vio. Admit distraction rather ! Thou art the cause of this, unthinking wretch ! [*Aside to Flora.*]

Fel. What, has Mrs. Scout brought you fresh intelligence ?

Flora. Scout ! I scorn your words, signior.

Vio. Nay, nay, nay, you must not leave me.

[*Catches hold of him.*]

Fel. Oh ! 'tis but fair to answer the gentleman, madam ! it is none of his fault that his visit proves unseasonable ! Pray let me go ; my presence is but a restraint upon you. [*Struggles to get from her.*]

Vio. Was ever accident so mischievous ! [*Aside.*]

Flora. It must be the colonel. Now, to deliver my letter to him. [*Exit, the Colonel taps louder.*]

Vio. Hark ! he grows impatient at your delay. Why do you hold the man whose absence would oblige you ? Pray, let me go, madam. Consider, the gentleman wants you at the window.

[*Struggles still.*]

Vio. It is not me he wants.

Fel. Death ! not you ! Is there another of your name in the house ? But come on, convince me of the truth of what you say ; open the window ; if his business does not lie with you, your conversation may be heard. This, and only this, can take off my suspicion. What, do you pause ? Oh ! guilt, guilt ! Have I caught you ? Nay, then, I'll leap the balcony. If I remember, this way leads to it.

[*Breaks from her, and goes to the door where Isabella is.*]

Vio. [*Stopping him at the door.*] Hold ! hold ! hold ! hold ! not for the world you enter there. Which way shall I preserve his sister from his knowledge ? [*Aside.*]

Fel. What, have I touched you ? Do you fear your lover's life ?

Vio. I fear for none but you. For goodness sake, do not speak so loud, my Felix. If my father hears you, I am lost for ever : that door opens into his apartment. [*Aside.*] What shall I do if he enters ? There he finds his sister. If he goes out he'll quarrel with the stranger. Felix ! Felix ! your curiosity shall be satisfied. [*Goes to the window and throws up the sash.*] Whoever you are, that with such insolence dare use my name, and give the neighbour-

hood pretence to reflect upon my conduct, I charge you instantly to be gone, or expect the treatment you deserve.

Col. B. [Without.] I ask pardon, madam, and will obey: but when I left this house to-night—

Fel. Good!

Vio. It is most certainly the stranger. *[Aside.]* You are mistaken in the house, suppose, sir.

Fel. No, no; he's not mistaken.—Pray, madam, let the gentleman go on.

Vio. Pray be gone, sir; I know of no business you have here.

Col. B. [Without.] I wish I did not know it neither. But this house contains my soul; then can you blame my body for hovering about it?

Fel. Excellent!

Vio. I tell you again you are mistaken; however, for your own satisfaction, call to-morrow.

Fel. Matchless impudence! An assignation before my face! No, he shall not live to meet your wishes.

Takes out a pistol, and goes towards the window; she catches hold of him.

Vio. Ah! *[Shrieks.]* Hold, I conjure you.

Col. B. To-morrow's an age, madam! may I not be admitted to-night?

Vio. If you be a gentleman, I command your absence. Unfortunate! what will my stars do with me! *[Aside.]*

Col. B. I have done—only this—be careful of my life, for it is in your keeping.

[Exit from the window.]

Fel. Pray observe the gentleman's request, madam. *[Walking off from her.]*

Vio. I am all confusion! *[Aside.]*

Fel. You are all truth, all love, all faith! Oh, thou all woman! How have I been deceived! 'Sdeath! could you not have imposed upon me for this one night? Could neither my faithful love, nor all the hazard I have run to see you, make me worthy to be cheated on?—Oh, thou—

Vio. Can I bear this from you?

Fel. *[Repeats.]* When I left this house to-night—To-night! the devil! return so soon! *[Aside.]*

Vio. Oh, Isabella! what hast thou involved me in! *Fel.* *[Repeats.]* This house contains my soul!—Sweet soul!

Vio. Yet I resolve to keep the secret. *[Aside.]*

Fel. *[Repeats.]* Be careful of my life, for it is in your keeping.—Damnation!—How ugly she appears!

Vio. Do not look so sternly on me: but believe me, Felix, I have not injured you, nor am I false.

Fel. Not false! not injured me! Oh, Violante, lost and abandoned to thy vice! Not false! Oh, monstrous!

Vio. Indeed I am not.—There is a cause which I must not reveal. Oh, think how far honour can oblige your sex—then, allow a woman may be bound by the same rule to keep a secret.

Fel. Honour! what hast thou to do with honour? Thou, that canst admit plurality of lovers?—A secret! ha! ha! ha!—His affairs are wondrous safe who trusts his secret in a woman's keeping. But you need give yourself no trouble about clearing this point, madam, for you are become so indifferent to me, that your truth and falsehood are the same.

Enter FLORA.

Flora. So, I have delivered my letter to the Colonel. Madam, your father bide me see what noise that was. For goodness sake, sir, *[To FEL.]* why do you speak so loud?

Exit FLORA.

Fel. I understand my cue, mistress; my absence is necessary; I'll oblige you.

[Going, she takes hold of him.]

Vio. Oh, let me undeceive you first!

Fel. Impossible!

Vio. 'Tis very possible, if I durst.

Fel. Durst! ha! ha! ha!—Durst, quotha!

Vio. But another time I'll tell thee all.

Fel. Nay, now or never—

Vio. Now it cannot be.

Fel. Then it shall never be.—Thou most ungrateful of thy sex, farewell. *[Breaks from her, and exit.]*

Vio. Oh, exquisite trial of my friendship! Yet not even this shall draw the secret from me.

That I'll preserve, let fortune frown or smile;
And trust to love, my love to reconcile. *[Exit.]*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—The Street.

Enter DON LOPEZ.

Lop. Was ever man thus plagued! Odsheart, I could swallow my dagger for madness! I know not what to think: sure Frederick had no hand in her escape. She must get out of the window, and she could not do that without a ladder; and who could bring it to her but him? Ay, it must be so! This graceless baggage! But I'll to Frederick immediately; I'll take the alguazil with me, and search the house; and if I find her, I'll use her—By St. Anthony, I don't know how I'll use her! *[Exit.]*

Enter Colonel BRITON, with a letter in his hand, and GIBBY following.

Col. B. Well, though I could not see my fair incognita, Fortune, to make me amends, has flung another intrigue in my way. Oh, how I love these pretty, kind, coming females, that won't give a man the trouble of racking his invention to deceive them! This letter I received from a lady in a veil—some duenna, some necessary implement of Cupid. I suppose the style is frank and easy, I hope like her that writ it.—*[Reads.]* Sir, I have seen your person, and like it—very concise—and, if you will meet me at four o'clock in the morning, upon the Terriero de Passa, half an hour's conversation will let me into your mind.—Ha, ha, ha! a philosophical wench! This is the first time I ever knew a woman had any business with the mind of a man. If your intellects answer your outward appearance, the adventure may not displease you. I expect you'll not attempt to see my face, nor offer anything unbecoming the gentleman I take you for!—Humph! the gentleman she takes me for! I hope she takes me to be flesh and blood, and then I am sure I shall do nothing unbecoming a gentleman. Well, if I must not see her face, it shall go hard if I don't know where she lives.—Gibby!

Gibby. Here, an lik her honour.

Col. B. Follow me at a good distance, do you hear, Gibby?

Gibby. In troth dee I, weel enough, sir.

Col. B. I am to meet a lady upon the Terriero de Passa.

Gibby. The deel an mine eyn gin I ken her, sir.

Col. B. But you will when you come there, sirrah.

Gibby. Like enough, sir; I have as sharp an ee tulla a bonny lass as e'er a lad in aw Scotland. And what mun I dee wi' her, sir?

Col. B. Why, if she and I part, you must watch her home, and bring me word where she lives.

Gibby. In troth sal I, sir, gin the deel tak her not.

Col. B. Come along, then; it is pretty near the time. I like a woman that rises early to pursue her inclination.

Thus we improve the pleasure of the day,
While tasteless mortals sleep their time away.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—Frederick's House.

Enter INIS and LISSARDO.

Liss. Your lady run away, and you know not whither, say you?

Inis. She never greatly cared for me, after finding you and I together. But you are very grave, methinks, Lissardo.

Liss. [Looking on the ring.] Not at all—I have some thoughts, indeed, of altering my course of living; there is a critical minute in every man's life, which, if he can but lay hold of, he may make his fortune.

Inis. Ha! what do I see? A diamond ring! Where the deuce had he that ring?—You have got a very pretty ring there, Lissardo.

Liss. Ay, the trifle is pretty enough—but the lady who gave it to me is a *bona roba* in beauty, I assure you.

[*Cocks his hat and struts.*]

Inis. I can't bear this—The lady! what lady, pray?

Liss. O fie! there's a question to ask a gentleman!

Inis. A gentleman! why the fellow's spoil'd! Is this your love for me? Ungrateful man! you'll break my heart, so you will!

[*Bursts into tears.*]

Liss. Poor tender-hearted fool!

Inis. If I knew who gave you that ring, I'd tear her eyes out, so I would!

[*Sobs.*]

Liss. So, now the jade wants a little coaxing.—Why, what dost weep for now, my dear, ha?

Inis. I suppose Flora gave you that ring, but I'll—

Liss. No, the devil take me if she did: you make me swear now.—So, they are all for the ring, but I shall bob them.—I did but joke; the ring is none of mine, it is my master's; I am to give it to be new set, that's all; therefore, pr'ythee, dry thy eyes, and kiss me; come.

Enter FLORA.

Inis. And do you really speak the truth now?

Liss. Why, do you doubt it?

Flora. So, so; very well! I thought there was an intrigue between him and Inis, for all he has sworn it so often.

[*Aside.*]

Inis. Nor ha'n't you seen Flora since you came to town?

Flora. Ha! how dares she name my name? [*Aside.*]

Liss. No, by this kiss I ha'n't. [*Kisses her.*]

Flora. Here's a dissembling varlet! [*Aside.*]

Inis. Nor don't you love her at all?

Liss. Love the devil! Why, did I not always tell thee she was my aversion?

Flora. Did you so, villain?

[*Strikes him a box on the ear.*]

Liss. Zounds, she here! I have made a fine spot of work on't!

[*Aside.*]

Inis. What's that for, ha?

[*Brushes up to her.*]

Flora. I shall tell you by and by, Mrs. Frippery, if you don't get about your business.

Inis. Who do you call Frippery, Mrs. Trollop?—Pray, get about your business, if you go to that. I hope you pretend to no right and title here!

Liss. [Walking about conceitedly.] What the

devil! do they take me for an acre of land, that they quarrel about right and title to me?

Flora. Pray, what right have you, mistress, to ask that question?

Inis. No matter for that: I can show a better title to him than you, I believe.

Flora. What, has he given thee nine months' earnest for a living title? Ha, ha!

Inis. Don't fling your flaunting jests at me, Mrs. Boldface, for I won't take them, I assure you.

Liss. So! now I'm as great as the famed Alexander. But, my dear Statira and Roxana, don't exert yourselves so much about me. Now, I fancy if you would agree lovingly together, [*Gets between them, and takes a hand of each.*] I might, in a modest way, satisfy both your demands upon me.

Flora. You satisfy! No, sirrah, I am not to be satisfied so soon as you think, perhaps!

Inis. No, nor I neither.—What! do you make no difference between us!

Flora. You pitiful fellow, you!—What! you fancy, I warrant, I gave myself the trouble of dogging you, out of love to your filthy person!—but you are mistaken, sirrah!—it was to detect your treachery.—How often have you sworn to me that you hated Inis, and only carried fair for the good cheer she gave you, but that you could never like a woman with crooked legs, you said!

Inis. How, how, sirrah! crooked legs! Odds, I could find in my heart—

[*Snatches up her petticoat a little.*]

Liss. Here's a lying young jade, now! Pr'ythee, my dear, moderate thy passion.

[*Coaxingly.*]

Inis. I'd have you to know, sirrah, my legs were never—Your master, I hope, understands legs better than you do, sirrah.

[*Passionately.*]

Liss. My master!—So, so!

[*Shaking his head and winking.*]

Flora. I am glad I have done some mischief, however.

Liss. [To INIS.] Art thou really so foolish to mind what an enraged woman says? Don't you see she does it on purpose to part you and I? [*Runs to FLORA.*] Could not you find the joke without putting yourself in a passion, you silly girl, you? Why, I saw you follow us plain enough, mun, and said all this, that you might not go back with only your labour for your pains. But you are a revengeful young slut, though, I tell you that; but come, kiss and be friends.

Flora. Don't think to coax me; hang your kisses.

Fel. [Within.] Lissardo!

Liss. Ods heart, here's my master! The devil take both these jades for me; what shall I do with them?

Inis. Ha! 'tis Don Felix's voice; I would not have him find me here with his footman for the world!

[*Aside.*]

Fel. [Within.] Why, Lissardo! Lissardo!

Liss. Coming, sir.—What a plague will you do?

Flora. Bless me, which way shall I get out?

Liss. Nay, nay, you must e'en set your quarrel aside, and be content to be mewed up in the clothes press together, or stay where you are, and face it out:—there's no help for it.

Flora. Put me anywhere rather than that; come, come, let me in.

[LISSARDO opens the press, and FLORA goes in.]

Inis. I'll see her hanged before I'll go into the place where she is.—I'll trust Fortune with my deliverance.—Here used to be a pair of back stairs—I'll try to find them out.

[*Exit*]

Enter Don FELIX and FREDERICK.

Fel. Were you asleep, sirrah, that you did not hear me call?

Liss. I did hear you, and answered you I was coming, sir.

Fel. Go, get the horses ready! I'll leave Lisbon to-night, never to see it more.

Liss. Hey-day! what's the matter now? [*Exit.*]

Fred. Pray tell me, Don Felix, what has ruffled your temper thus?

Fel. A woman—Oh, friend! who can name woman, and forget inconstancy!

Fred. This from a person of mean education were excusable; such low suspicions have their source from vulgar conversation; men of your politer taste never rashly censure. Come, this is some groundless jealousy. Love raises many fears.

Fel. No, no: my ears conveyed the truth into my heart, and reason justifies my anger. Oh, my friend! Violante's false! and I have nothing left but thee in Lisbon, which can make me wish ever to see it more, except revenge upon my rival, of whom I'm ignorant. Oh, that some miracle would reveal him to me, that I might, through his heart, punish her infidelity!

Enter LISSARDO.

Liss. Oh, sir, here's your father, Don Lopez, coming up!

Fel. Does he know that I am here?

Liss. I can't tell, sir—he ask'd for Don Frederick.

Fred. Did he see you?

Liss. No, sir; for as soon as I heard him, I ran to give my master notice.

Fel. Keep out of his sight then. [*Exit LISSARDO.*]
And, dear Frederick, permit me to retire into the next room; for I know the old gentleman will be very much displeased at my return without his leave.

[*Exit.*]

Fred. Quick, quick, begone! he is here!

Enter Don LOPEZ.

Lop. [*Speaking as he enters.*] Mr. Alguazil, wait you without till I call for you. Frederick, an affair brings me here which requires privacy—so that if you have anybody within ear-shot, pray order them to retire.

Fred. We are private, my lord; speak freely.

Lop. Why, then, sir, I must tell you, that you had better have pitched upon any man in Portugal to have injured than myself.

Fred. I understand you not, my lord.

Lop. Though I am old, I have a son! Alas, why name I him? He knows not the dishonour of my house.

Fred. Explain yourself, my lord—I am not conscious of any dishonourable action to any man, much less to your lordship.

Lop. 'Tis false; you have debauched my daughter.

Fred. My lord, I scorn so foul a charge.

Lop. You have debauched her duty, at least; therefore instantly restore her to me, or by St. Anthony I'll make you.

Fred. Restore her, my lord! where shall I find her?

Lop. I have those that will swear she is here in your house.

Fred. You are misinformed, my lord! Upon my reputation, I have not seen Donna Isabella since the absence of Don Felix.

Lop. Then pray, sir—if I am not too inquisitive, what motive had you for those objections you made against her marriage with Don Gusman yesterday?

Fred. The disagreeableness of such a match, I

feared, would give your daughter cause to curse her duty, if she complied with your demands: that was all, my lord.

Lop. And so you helped her through the window, to make her disobey?

Fred. This is insulting me, my lord, when I assure you I have neither seen, nor know anything of your daughter; if she is gone, the contrivance was her own, and you may thank your rigour for it.

Lop. Very well, sir; however, my rigour shall make bold to search your house. Here, call in the alguazil.

Flora. [*Peeping.*] The alguazil! What in the name of wonder will become of me?

Fred. The alguazil! My lord, you'll repent this.

Enter Alguazil and two Officers.

Lop. No, sir, 'tis you that will repent it. I charge you, in the king's name, to assist me in finding my daughter. Be sure you leave no part of the house unsearched. Come, follow me.

[*Goes towards the door where FELIX is; FREDERICK draws and plants himself before the door.*]

Fred. Sir, I must first know by what authority you pretend to search my house, before you enter here.

Alg. How, sir! dare you presume to draw your sword upon the representative of majesty? I am, sir, I am his majesty's alguazil, and the very quintessence of authority; therefore, put your sword up, or I shall order you to be knocked down; for know, sir, the breath of an alguazil is as dangerous as the breath of a demi-culverin.

Lop. She is certainly in that room, by his guarding the door—if he disputes your authority, knock him down, I say.

Fred. The woman you look for is not here; but there is something in this room, which I'll preserve from your sight at the hazard of my life.

Lop. Enter, I say; nothing but my daughter can be there. Force his sword from him.

[*FELIX comes out, and joins FREDERICK.*]

Fel. Villains, stand off! assassinate a man in his own house!

Lop. Oh, oh, oh, misericordia! what do I see? my son!

Alg. Ha, his son! Here's five hundred pistoles good, my brethren, if Antonio dies; and that's in the surgeon's power, and he's in love with my daughter, you know; so seize upon him.

Lop. Hold, hold! Oh that I ever was born!

Fred. Did I not tell you, you would repent, my lord? What, ho! within there!

Enter Servants.

Arm yourselves, and let not a man in or out, but Felix.

Fel. Generous Frederick!

Fred. Look ye, alguazil, when you would betray my friend, for filthy lucre, I shall no more regard you as an officer of justice, but, as a thief and robber, thus resist you.

Fel. Come on, sir, we'll show you play for the five hundred pistoles. [*They fight.*]

Lop. Hold, hold, Alguazil; I'll give you the five hundred pistoles—that is, my bond to pay upon Antonio's death, and twenty pistoles, however things go, for you and these honest fellows to drink my health.

Alg. Say you so, my lord? Why, look ye, my lord, I bear the young gentleman no ill-will, my lord. If I get but the five hundred pistoles, my

lord—why, look ye, my lord, 'tis the same thing to me whether your son be hanged or not, my lord.

Fel. Scoundrels!—

Lop. Ay, well, thou art a good-natured fellow, that's the truth on't.—Come, then, we'll away, and sign and seal this minute. Oh, Felix! why wouldst thou serve me thus? But I cannot upraid thee now, nor have I time to talk. Be careful of thyself, or thou wilt break my heart.

[*Ereunt LOPEZ, ALGUAZIL, and Attendants.*]

Fel. Now, Frederick, though I ought to thank you for your care of me, yet, till I am satisfied as to my father's accusation (for I overheard it all), I cannot return the acknowledgements I owe you. Know you aught relating to my sister?

Fred. I hope my faith and truth are known to you; and here by both I swear, I am ignorant of every thing relating to your father's charge.

Fel. Enough, I do believe thee. Oh, fortune! where will thy malice end?

Enter VASQUEZ.

Vasq. Sir, I bring you joyful news.

Fel. What's the matter?

Vasq. I am told that Don Antonio is out of danger, and now in the palace.

Fel. I wish it be true; then I'm at liberty to watch my rival, and pursue my sister. Pr'ythee, Frederick, inform thyself of the truth of this report.

Fred. I will, this minute. Do you hear? let nobody in to Don Felix till my return. [*Exit.*]

Vasq. I'll observe, sir.

Flora. [*Peeping.*] They have almost frightened me out of my wits, I'm sure—Now Felix is alone, I have a good mind to pretend I came with a message from my lady; but how, then, shall I say I came into the cupboard?

Vasq. [*Within.*] I tell you, madam, Don Felix is not here.

Vio. [*Within.*] I tell you, sir, he is here, and I will see him.

Fel. What noise is that?

Flora. [*From the closet.*] My stars! my lady here! [*Shuts the press close.*]

Enter VIOLENTE.

Vio. You are as difficult of access, sir, as a first minister of state.

Fel. If your visit was designed for Frederick, madam, he is abroad.

Vio. No, sir, the visit is to you.

Fel. You are very punctual in your ceremonies, madam.

Vio. Though I did not come to return your visit, but to take that which your civility ought to have brought me.

Fel. If my eyes, my ears, and my understanding lied, them I am in your debt; else not, madam.

Vio. I will not charge them with a term so gross to say they lied; but call it a mistake—nay, call it any thing to excuse my Felix. Could I, think ye—could I put off my pride so far, poorly to dissemble a passion which I did not feel, or seek a reconciliation with what I did not love? And no law, whilst single, binds us to obey; but your sex are, by nature and education, obliged to pay a deference to all womankind.

Fel. These are fruitless arguments. 'Tis most certain thou wert dearer to these eyes than all that heaven e'er gave to charm the sense of man; but I would rather tear them out, than suffer them to deduce my reason and enslave my peace.

Vio. Can you love without esteem? and where is the esteem for her you still suspect?—O, Felix! there is a delicacy in love which equals even a religious faith! True love never doubts the object it adores, and sceptics there will disbelieve their sight.

Fel. Your notions are too refined for mine, madam.

Enter VASQUEZ.

How now, sirrah! what do you want?

Vasq. Only my master's cloak out of this press, sir, that's all.

Fel. Make haste, then.

Vasq. [*Opens the press, sees FLORA, and roars out.*] Oh, the devil! the devil! [*Exit.*]

Flora. Discovered! nay, then, legs befriended me.

[*Runs out.*]

Vio. Ah! a woman concealed! very well, Felix.

Fel. A woman in the press!

Enter LISSARDO

Liss. Sir, the horses are—

Fel. How the devil came a woman there, sirrah?

Liss. What shall I say now?

Vio. Now, Lissardo, show your wit to bring your master off.

Liss. Off, madam? Nay, nay, nay, there—there needs no great wit to—to—to bring him off, madam: for she did come—

Fel. She did come!

Liss. That is, she did not come, as—as—as—a—a man may say directly to—to—to—to speak with my master, madam.

Vio. I see by your stammering, Lissardo, that your invention is at a very low ebb.

Fel. 'Sdeath, rascal! speak without hesitation, and the truth too, or I shall stick my spado in your guts.

Vio. No, no, your master mistakes; he would not have you speak the truth.

Fel. Madam, my sincerity wants no excuse.

Liss. [*Retiring.*] I am so confounded between one and the other, that I cannot think of a lie.

Fel. Sirrah, fetch me this woman back instantly—I'll know what business she has here.

Vio. Not a step; your master shall not be put to the blush. Come, a truce, Felix; do you ask me no more questions about the window, and I'll forgive this.

Fel. Madam, I scorn forgiveness, where I own no crime; but your soul, conscious of its guilt, would fain lay hold of this occasion to blend your treason with my innocence.

Vio. Insolent! Nay, if instead of owning your fault, you endeavour to insult my patience, I must tell you, sir, you don't behave yourself like that man of honour you would be taken for—you ground your quarrel with me upon your own inconstancy; 'tis plain you are false yourself, and would make me the aggressor. It was not for nothing the fellow opposed my entrance; this last usage has given me back my liberty, and now my father's will shall be obeyed without the least reluctance; and so your servant. [*Exit.*]

Fel. Oh, stubborn, stubborn heart! what wilt thou do?—Her father's will shall be obeyed!—Ha! that carries her to a cloister, and cuts off all my hopes at once!—By heaven she shall not, must not leave me!—No, she is not false.—Ha, villain! art thou here? [*To LISSARDO, who is going.*] Tell me this moment who this woman was, and for what intent she was here concealed, or—

Liss. Ah, good sir, forgive me, and I'll tell you the whole truth. [*Falls on his knees.*]

Fel. Out with it, then.

Liss. It—it—it was Flora, sir, Donna Violante's woman. You must know, sir, we have had a sneaking kindness for one another a great while; she was not willing you should know it; so, when she heard your voice, she ran into the clothes-press. I would have told you this at first, but I was afraid of her lady's knowing it. This is the whole truth, as I hope for a whole skin, sir.

Fel. If it be not, I'll not leave you a whole bone in it, sirrah.—Fly, [*Liss. rises.*] and observe if Violante goes directly home.

Liss. Yes, sir, yes.

Fel. Fly, you dog, fly. [*Exit LISSARDO.*] I must convince her of my faith. Oh, how irresolute is a lover's heart!—how absolute is a woman's power!

In vain we strive their tyranny to quit,

In vain we struggle, for we must submit. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—*The Terriero de Passa.*

Enter Colonel BRITON, and ISABELLA veiled.—GIBBY at a distance.

Col. B. Then you say it is impossible for me to wait on you at home, madam?

Isab. I say it is inconsistent with my circumstances, Colonel—and that way impossible for me to admit of it.

Col. B. Consent to go with me, then—I lodge at one Don Frederick's, a merchant, just by here; he is a very honest fellow, and I dare confide in his secrecy.

Isab. Ha! does he lodge there?—'Pray heaven I am not discovered! [*Aside.*]

Col. B. What say you, my charmer?—shall we breakfast together?—I have some of the best tea in the universe.

Isab. Puh! Tea! Is that the best treat you can give a lady at your lodgings, colonel?

Col. B. Well hinted—No, no, no, I have other things at thy service, child.

Isab. What are those things, pray?

Col. B. My heart, soul, and body, into the bargain.

Isab. Has the last no incumbrance upon it? Can you make a clear title, colonel?

Col. B. All freehold, child, and I'll afford thee a very good bargain. [*Embraces her.*]

Gibby. O' my saul, they mak muckle words about it—Ise sare weary with standing, Ise e'en tak a sleep. [*Lies down to sleep.*]

Isab. If I take a lease, it must be for life, colonel.

Col. B. Thou shalt have me as long, or as little time as thou wilt, my dear. Come, let's to my lodgings, and we'll sign and seal this minute.

Isab. Oh, not so fast, colonel; there are many things to be adjusted before the lawyer and the parson come.

Col. B. The lawyer and parson!—No, no, you little rogue, we can finish our affairs without the help of the law—or the gospel.

Isab. Indeed but we can't, colonel.

Col. B. Indeed!—Why, hast thou then trepanned me out of my warm bed this morning for nothing? Why, this is showing a man, half famished, a well-furnished larder, then clapping a padlock on the door, till you starve him quite.

Isab. If you can find in your heart to say grace, colonel, you shall keep the key.

Col. B. I love to see my meat before I give thanks, madam; therefore, uncover thy face, child, and I'll tell thee more of my mind—if I like you.

Isab. I dare not risk my reputation on your ifs, colonel, and so adieu. [*Going.*]

Col. B. Nay, nay, nay, we must not part.

Isab. As you ever hope to see me more, suspend your curiosity now: one step farther loses me for ever. Show yourself a man of honour, and you shall find me a woman of honour. [*Exit.*]

Col. B. Well, for once I'll trust to a blind bargain, madam—[*Kisses her hand, and parts.*] But I shall be too cunning for your ladyship, if Gibby observes my orders. Ha! what do I see? my rascal asleep! Sirrah, did not I charge you to watch the lady? And is it thus you observe my orders, ye dog?

[*Kicks him, he shrugs, rubs his eyes, and yawns.*]

Gibby. [*Rising.*] That's true, an like your honour: but I thought, that when ance ye had her in yer ane hands, ye might a' ordered her yersel weel enough without me, en ye ken, en like yer honour.

Col. B. Sirrah, hold your impertinent tongue, and make haste after her. If you don't bring me some account of her, never dare to see my face again.

[*Exit.*]

Gibby. Ay, this is bonny wark, indeed! to run three hundred miles to this wicked town, and before I can weel fill my weam, to be sent a whore-hunting after this black she devil.—What gate sall I gang to speer for this watch now? Ah, for a ruling elder—or the kirk-treasurer—or his mon—I'd gar my master mak tae o' this: but I am sure there's no sic honest folk here, or there wud na be sa mickle sculdredie.

[*VIOLANTE crosses.—GIBBY goes up to VIOLANTE.*]

Gibby. I vow, madam, but I am glad that ye and I are foregathered.

Vio. What would the fellow have?

Gibby. Nothing.—Away, madam! wo worthy yer heart, what a muckle deal o'mischief had you like to bring upon poor Gibby.

Vio. The man's drunk.

Gibby. In troth I am not—And gin I had na found ye, madam, the Lord know when I should; for my maister bade me ne'er gang hame without tidings of ye, madam.

Vio. Sirrah, get about your business, or I'll have your bones drubbed!

Gibby. Gude faith, my meister has e'en done that t'yer honds, madam.

Vio. Who is your master, sir?

Gibby. Money a ane speers the gate they ken right weel—it is na sa lang sen ye parted wi' him. I wish he ken'd ye half as weel as ye ken him.

Vio. Puh! the creature's mad, or mistakes me for somebody else; and I should be as mad as he to talk to him any longer. [*Exit.*]

Enter LISSARDO.

Liss. So, she's gone home, I see—What did that Scots fellow want with her? I'll try to find it out—perhaps I may discover something that may make my master friends with me again.

Gibby. Are ye gone, madam? a deel scope in yer company, for I'm as wise as I was. But I'll bide an see wha's hoose it is, gin I can meet with any civil body to speer at. My lad, wot ye wha lives here?

[*Turns and sees LISSARDO.*]

Liss. Don Pedro de Mendosa.

Gibby. And did you see a lady gang in but now?

Liss. Yes, I did.

Gibby. And d'ye ken her tee?

Liss. It was Donna Violante, his daughter. What the devil makes him so inquisitive? Here is something in it, that is certain. [*Aside.*] 'Tis a cold morning, brother, what think you of a dram?

Gibby. In troth, very weel, sir.

Liss. You seem an honest fellow ; pr'ythee, let's drink to our better acquaintance.

Gibby. W! all my heart, sir; gang your gate to the next house, and Ise follow ye.

Liss. Come along, then.

Gibby. Don Pedro de Mendoza! Donna Violante his daughter! that's as right as my leg, now—Ise need na mair—I'll tak a drink, and then to my maister.

Ise bring him news will make his heart full blee ;
Gin he rewards it not, deel pimp for me. [*Exit.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—Donna Violante's Lodgings.

Enter DONNA ISABELLA, *in a gay temper*, and DONNA VIOLANTE, *out of humour*.

Isab. My dear, I have been wishing for you this half hour, to tell you the most lucky adventure!

Vio. And you have pitched upon the most unlucky hour for it that you could possibly have found in the whole four-and-twenty.

Isab. Hang unlucky hours! I won't think of them—I hope all my misfortunes are past.

Vio. And mine all to come.

Isab. I have seen the man I like.

Vio. And I have seen the man that I could wish to hate.

Isab. And you must assist me in discovering whether he can like me or not.

Vio. You have assisted me in such a discovery already, I thank ye.

Isab. What say you, my dear?

Vio. I say I am very unlucky at discoveries, Isabella: I have too lately made one pernicious to my case—your brother is false.

Isab. Impossible!

Vio. Most true!

Isab. Some villain has traduced him to you.

Vio. No, Isabella, I loved too well to trust the eyes of others; I never credit the ill-judging world, or form suspicions upon vulgar censures—no, I had ocular proof of his ingratitude.

Isab. Then I am most unhappy—My brother was the only pledge of faith betwixt us; if he has forfeited your favour, I have no title to your friendship.

Vio. You wrong my friendship, Isabella; your own merit entitles you to every thing within my power.

Isab. Generous maid!—But may I not know what grounds you have to think my brother false?

Vio. Another time.—But tell me, Isabella, how can I serve you?

Isab. Thus, then—The gentleman that brought me hither I have seen and talked with upon the Terriero de Passa this morning, and I find him a man of sense, generosity, and good humour; in short, he is every thing that I could like for a husband, and I have dispatched Mrs. Flora to bring him hither: I hope you'll forgive the liberty I have taken.

Vio. Hither! to what purpose?

Isab. To the great universal purpose, matrimony.

Vio. Matrimony! why, do you design to ask him?

Isab. No, Violante, you must do that for me.

Vio. I thank you for the favour you design me, but desire to be excused—I manage my own affairs too ill to be trusted with those of other people. I can't for my life admire your conduct, to encourage a person altogether unknown to you: 'twas very imprudent to

meet him this morning, but much more so to send for him hither, knowing what inconveniency you have already drawn upon me.

Isab. I am not insensible how far my misfortunes have embarrassed you; and, if you please, will sacrifice my quiet to your own.

Vio. Unkindly urged!—Have I not preferred your happiness to every thing that's dear to me?

Isab. I know thou hast—then do not deny me this last request, when a few hours, perhaps, may render my condition able to clear thy fame, and bring my brother to thy feet for pardon.

Vio. I wish you don't repent of this intrigue. I suppose he knows you are the same woman that he brought in last night?

Isab. Not a syllable of that; I met him veiled, and, to prevent his knowing the house, I ordered Mrs. Flora to bring him in by the back door into the garden.

Vio. The very way which Felix comes: if they should meet, there would be fine work!—Indeed, my dear, I can't approve of your design.

Enter FLORA.

Flora. Madam, the Colonel waits your pleasure.

Vio. How durst you go upon such a message, mistress, without acquainting me?

Flora. So I am to be buffed for every thing.

Isab. 'Tis too late to dispute that now, dear Violante; I acknowledge the rashness of the action; but consider the necessity of my deliverance.

Vio. That, indeed, is a weighty consideration: well, what am I to do?

Isab. In the next room I'll give you instructions; in the meantime, Mrs. Flora, show the Colonel into this. [*Exit* FLORA, ISABELLA and VIOLANTE.

Re-enter FLORA, with Colonel BRITON.

Flora. The lady will wait on you presently, sir.

[*Exit.*]

Col. B. Very well—this is a fruitful soil—I have not been here quite four-and-twenty hours, and I have three intrigues upon my hands already; but I hate the chase without partaking of the game—

Enter VIOLANTE, veiled.

Ha! a fine-sized woman—'Pray heaven she proves handsome!—I am come to obey your ladyship's commands.

Vio. Are you sure of that, Colonel?

Col. B. If you be not very unreasonable, indeed, madam.—A man is but a man.

[*Takes her hand and kisses it.*]

Vio. Nay, we have no time for compliments, Colonel.

Col. B. I understand you, madam—Montrez moi votre chambre. [*Takes her in his arms.*]

Vio. Nay, nay, hold, Colonel; my bed-chamber is not to be entered without a certain purchase—

Col. B. Purchase—humph, this is some kept mistress, I suppose, who industriously lets out her leisure hours.—[*Aside.*—Look ye, madam, you must consider, we soldiers are not overstocked with money, but we make ample satisfaction in love; we have a world of courage upon our hands now, you know—then, pr'ythee use a conscience, and I'll try if my pocket can come up to your price.

Vio. Nay, don't give yourself the trouble of drawing your purse, Colonel; my design is levelled at your person, if that be at your disposal.

Col. B. Ay, that it is, 'faith, madam; and I'll settle it as firmly upon thee—

Vio. As law can do it.

Col. B. Hang law in love affairs; thou shalt have

right and title to it out of pure inclination.—A matrimonial hint again. [*Aside.*]

Vio. Then you have an aversion to matrimony, Colonel? Did you never see a woman in all your travels that you could like for a wife?

Col. B. A very odd question—Do you really expect that I should speak truth now?

Vio. I do, if you expect to be dealt with, Colonel.

Col. B. Why, then—yes.

Vio. Is she in your country, or this?

Col. B. This is a very pretty kind of catechism!—In this town, I believe, madam.

Vio. Her name is—

Col. B. Ay, how is she called, madam?

Vio. Nay, I ask you that, sir!

Col. B. Oh, oh! why she is called—Pray, madam, how is it you spell your name?

Vio. Oh, Colonel, I am not the happy woman, nor do I wish it.

Col. B. No? I am sorry for that.—What the devil does she mean by all these questions? [*Aside.*]

Vio. Come, Colonel, for once be sincere; perhaps you may not repent it.

Col. B. This is like to be but a silly adventure—here's so much sincerity required. [*Aside.*] 'Faith, madam, I have an inclination to sincerity, but I'm afraid you'll call my manners in question.

Vio. Not at all; I prefer truth before compliment in this affair.

Col. B. Why, then, to be plain with you, madam, a lady last night wounded my heart by a fall from a window, whose person I could be content to take, as my father took my mother, till death do us part. But who she is, or how distinguished, whether maid, wife, or widow, I can't inform you—perhaps you are she?

Vio. Not to keep you in suspense, I am not she; but I can give you an account of her. That lady is a maid of condition—has ten thousand pounds—and, if you are a single man, her person and fortune are at your service.

Col. B. I accept the offer with the highest transports: but say, my charming angel, art thou not she?

[*Offers to embrace her.*]

Vio. Once again, Colonel, I tell you I am not she—but at six this evening you shall find her on the Terriero de Passa, with a white handkerchief in her hand—Get a priest ready, and you know the rest.

Col. B. I shall infallibly observe your directions, madam.

Enter FLORA, hastily, and whispers VIOLANTE, who starts, and seems surprised.

Vio. Ah! Felix crossing, say you? What shall I do now?

Col. B. You seem surprised, madam.

Vio. Oh, Colonel, my father is coming hither, and if he finds you here I am ruined.

Col. B. Odslife, madam, thrust me any where! Can't I go out this way?

Vio. No, no, no,—he comes that way.—How shall I prevent their meeting?—Here, here, step into my bedchamber.

Col. B. Oh, the best place in the world, madam.

Vio. And be still, as you value her you love.—Don't stir till you've notice, as ever you hope to have her in your arms.

Col. B. On that condition I'll not breathe.

[*Exit Colonel.*]

Enter DON FELIX.—FLORA waiting in background.

Fel. I wonder where this dog of a servant is all this while.—But she is at home, I find.—How coldly

she regards me!—You look, Violante, as if the sight of me were troublesome to you.

Vio. Can I do otherwise, when you have the assurance to approach me, after what I saw to-day?

Fel. Assurance! rather call it good-nature, after what I heard last night. But such regard to honour have I, in my love to you, I cannot bear to be suspected, nor suffer you to entertain false notions of my truth, without endeavouring to convince you of my innocence; so much good-nature have I more than you, Violante. Pray give me leave to ask your woman one question—my man assures me she was the person you saw at my lodgings.

Flora. I confess it, madam, and ask your pardon.

Vio. Impudent baggage!—not to deceive me sooner! what business could you have there?

Fel. Lissardo and she, it seems, imitate you and me.

Flora. I love to follow the example of my betters, madam.

Fel. I hope I am justified.

Vio. Since we are to part, Felix, there needs no justification.

Fel. Methinks you talk of parting as a thing indifferent to you. [*Lays his hand on her arm.*] Can you forget how I have loved?

Vio. I wish I could forget my own passion: I should, with less concern, remember yours. But for Mrs. Flora—

Fel. You must forgive her.—Must, did I say? I fear I have no power to impose, though the injury was done to me.

Vio. 'Tis harder to pardon an injury done to what we love than to ourselves; but, at your request, Felix, I do forgive her. Go, watch my father, Flora, lest he should awake, and surprise us.

Flora. Yes, madam. [*Exit.*]

Fel. Dost thou, then, love me, Violante?

Vio. What need of repetition from my tongue, when every look confesses what you ask?

Fel. Oh, let no man judge of love but those who feel it! what wondrous magic lies in one kind look!—One tender word destroys a lover's rage, and melts his fiercest passion into soft complaint. Oh, the window, Violante! wouldst thou but clear that one suspicion—

Vio. Pr'ythee, no more of that, my Felix! a little time shall bring thee perfect satisfaction.

Fel. Well, Violante, on condition you think no more of a monastery, I'll wait with patience for this mighty secret.

Vio. Ah, Felix, love generally gets the better of religion in us women. [*He kisses her hand.*]

Enter FLORA, hastily

Flora. Oh, madam, madam, madam! my lord, your father, has been in the garden, and locked the back-door, and comes muttering this way into the house.

Vio. Then we are caught.—Now, Felix, we are undone.

Fel. Heavens forbid! This is most unlucky—I may conceal myself.

[*Runs to the door and pushes it open a little.*]

Vio. If he goes in, he'll find the Colonel! [*Aside.*]
—No, no, Felix, that's no safe place—[*Running to him.*]
—my father often goes thither—

Fel. Either my eye deceived me, or I saw a man within—I'll watch him close.

Flora. Oh, invention, invention!—I have it, madam.—Here, I'll fetch you a disguise. [*Exit.*]

Fel. She shall deal with the devil, if she conveys him out without my knowledge.

Enter FLORA, with a Riding-Hood.

Flora. Here, sir, put on this.

Fel. Ay, ay, any thing to avoid Don Pedro.

[They dress him in the habit of an old woman.]

Vio. Oh, quick, quick! I shall die with apprehension.

Flora. Be sure you don't speak a word.

Fel. Ay, ay, any thing to avoid Don Pedro. *[Aside.]*

Ped. *[Within.]* Violante, where are you, child?

Enter DON PEDRO.

Why, how came the garden-door open?—Ha! how now? who have we here?

Flora. 'Tis my mother, an't please you, sir.

[She and Felix both courtesies.]

Ped. Your mother! by St. Andrew, she's a strapper! why, you are a dwarf to her.—How many children have you got, good woman?

Flora. Oh dear, signior, she cannot hear you! she has been deaf these twenty years.

Ped. Alas, poor woman!—Why, you muffle her up as if she was blind too. Turn up her hood.

Vio. St. Antony forbid! Oh, sir, she has the dread-fullest unlucky eyes.—Pray don't look upon them; made her keep her hood shut on purpose.—Oh! oh! oh! oh!

Ped. Eyes!—Why, what's the matter with her eyes?

Flora. My poor mother, sir, is much afflicted with the cholick; and, about two months ago, she had it grievously in her stomach, and was over-persuaded to take a dram of filthy English geneva, which immediately flew up into her head, and caused such a defluxion in her eyes, that she could never since bear the daylight.

Ped. Say you so?—Poor woman!—Well, make her sit down, Violante, and give her a glass of wine.

Vio. Let her daughter give her a glass below, sir.—For my part, she has frightened me so I sha't be myself these two hours—I am sure her eyes are evil eyes.

Ped. Well, well, do so.—Evil eyes! there are no evil eyes, child.

Flora. Come along, mother. *[Speaks aloud.]*

Ped. Take care how you go down.

[Felix and Flora cross, and exeunt.]

Vio. I'm glad he's gone. *[Aside.]*

Ped. Hast thou heard the news, Violante?

Vio. What news, sir?

Ped. Why, Vasquez tells me that Don Lopez's daughter, Isabella, is run away from her father: that lord has very ill fortune with his children.—Well, I'm glad my daughter has no inclination to mankind, that my house is plagued with no suitors. *[Aside.]*

Vio. This is the first word ever I heard of it:—I pity her frailty—

Ped. Well said, Violante.—Next week I intend thy happiness shall begin.

Enter FLORA.

Vio. I don't intend to stay so long, thank you papa.

[Aside.]

Ped. My Lady Abbess writes word she longs to see thee, and has provided everything in order for thy reception.—Thou wilt lead a happy life, my girl—fifty times before that of matrimony—where an extravagant coxcomb might make a beggar of thee, or an ill-natured surly dog break thy heart.

Flora. Break her heart! she had as good have her bones broke as to be a nun! I am sure, I had rather of the two. You are wondrous kind, sir: but if I had such a father, I know what I would do.

Ped. Why, what would you do, minx, ha?

Flora. I would tell him I had as good a right and title to the law of nature, and the end of the creation, as he had.

Ped. You would, mistress; who the devil doubts it?—A good assurance is a chambermaid's coat of arms, and lying and contriving the supporters.—Your inclinations are on tiptoe, it seems.—If I were your father, housewife, I'd have a penance enjoined you so strict, that you should not be able to turn you in your bed for a month.—You are enough to spoil your lady, housewife, if she had not abundance of devotion.

Vio. Fie, Flora! are you not ashamed to talk thus to my father?—You said yesterday you would be glad to go with me into the monastery.

Flora. Did I? I told a great lie, then.

Ped. She go with thee! no, no, she's enough to debauch the whole convent.—Well, child, remember what I said to thee; next week—

Vio. Ay, and what I am to do this, too. *[Aside.]* I am all obedient, sir; I care not how soon I change my condition.

Flora. *[In the background.]* But little does he know what change she means. *[Aside.]*

Ped. Well, child, I am going into the country for two or three days, to settle some affairs with thy uncle, and when I return, we'll proceed for thy happiness, child.—Good b'ye, Violante; take care of thyself. *[Exeunt DON PEDRO and VIOLANTE.]*

Flora. So, now for the Colonel.—Hist, hist, Colonel!

Enter Colonel BRITON.

Col. B. Is the coast clear?

Flora. Yes, if you can climb; for you must get over the wash-house, and jump from the garden-wall, into the street.

Col. B. Nay, nay, I don't value my neck, if my incognita answers but thy lady's promise.

[Exeunt Colonel BRITON and FLORA.]

Enter DON FELIX.

Fel. I have lain perdue under the stairs till I watched the old man out. *[VIOLANTE opens the door.]* 'Sdeath! I am prevented. *[FELIX retires.]*

Enter DONNA VIOLANTE.

Vio. Now to set my prisoner at liberty. *[Goes to the door where the colonel was hid.]* Sir! sir! you may appear.

Enter DON FELIX, following her.

Fel. *[Seizes her hand.]* May he so, madam? I had cause for my suspicion, I find. Treacherous woman!

Vio. Ha! Felix here! Nay, then all is discovered!

Fel. *[draws.]* Villain, whoever thou art, come forth, I charge thee, and take the reward of thy adulterous errand.

Vio. What shall I say?

Fel. A coward! Nay, then, I'll fetch you out; think not to hide thyself; no, by St. Anthony, an altar should not protect thee! *[Exit.]*

Vio. What shall I do? I must discover Isabella, or here will be murder.

Enter FLORA.

Flora. I have helped the colonel off clear, madam.

Vio. Sayst thou so, my girl? Then I am armed.

Re-enter DON FELIX.

Fel. Where has the devil, in compliance to your sex, conveyed him from my resentment?

Vio. Him! whom do you mean, my dear inquisitive spark? *[She sits.]* Ha, ha, ha, ha! you will never leave these jealous whims.

Fel. Will you never cease to impose upon me?

Vio. You impose upon yourself, my dear. Do you think I did not see you? Yes, I did, and resolved to put this trick upon you.

Fel. Trick!

Vio. Yes, trick. I knew you'd take the hint, and soon relapse into your wonted error. How easily your jealousy is fired! I shall have a blessed life with you!

[Rises.]

Fel. Was there nothing in it, then, but only to try me?

Vio. Won't you believe your eyes?

Fel. My eyes! No, nor my ears, nor any of my senses; for they have all deceived me. Well, I am convinced that faith is as necessary in love as in religion; for the moment a man lets a woman know her conquest, he resigns his senses, and sees nothing but what she'd have him.

Vio. And as soon as that man finds his love returned, she becomes as arrant a slave as if she had already said after the priest.

Fel. [Takes her hand.] The priest, Violante, would dissipate those fears which cause these quarrels. When wilt thou make me happy?

Vio. To-morrow I will tell thee: my father is gone for two or three days to my uncle's; we have time enough to finish our affairs—But, prythee, leave me now, lest some accident should bring my father.

Fel. To-morrow, then—

Fly swift, ye hours, and bring to-morrow on!

But must I leave you now, my Violante?

Vio. You must, my Felix. We soon shall meet to part no more!

Fel. Oh, rapturous sounds! charming woman! Thy words and looks have fill'd my heart With joy, and left no room for jealousy. Do thou, like me, each doubt and fear remove, And all to come be confidence and love. [Exeunt.]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*Frederick's House.*

Enter DON FELIX and FREDERICK.

Fel. This hour has been propitious: I am reconciled to Violante, and you assure me Antonio is out of danger.

Fred. Your satisfaction is doubly mine.

Enter LISSARDO.

Fel. What haste you made, sirrah, to bring me word if Violante went home!

Liss. I can give you very good reason for my stay, sir.—Yes, sir, she went home.

Fred. Oh, your master knows that, for he has been there himself, Lissardo.

Liss. Sir, may I beg the favour of your ear?

Fel. What have you to say?

[Retire, whisper, and Felix seems uneasy]

Fred. Ha! Felix changes colour at Lissardo's news! What can it be?

Fel. A Scots footman, that belongs to Colonel Briton, an acquaintance of Frederick's, say you? The devil! If she be false, by heaven I'll trace her.—Prythee, [Comes forward.] Frederick, do you know one Colonel Briton, a Scotsman?

[Exit LISSARDO.]

Fred. Yes: why do you ask me?

Fel. Nay, no great matter; but my man tells me that he has had some little differences with a servant of his, that's all.

Fred. He is a good, harmless, innocent fellow; I am sorry for it. The colonel lodges in my house; I knew him formerly in England, and met him here by accident last night, and gave him an invitation home. He is a gentleman of good estate, besides his commission; of excellent principles, and strict honour, I assure you.

Fel. Is he a man of intrigue?

Fred. Like other men, I suppose. Here he comes.

Enter Colonel BRITON.

Colonel, I began to think I had lost you.

Col. B. And not without some reason, if you knew all.

Fel. [Retiring.] There's no danger of a fine gentleman's being lost in this town, sir.

Col. B. That compliment don't belong to me, sir; but, I assure you, I have been very near being run away with.

Fred. Who attempted it?

Col. B. 'Faith, I know not—only that she is a charming woman; I mean, as much as I saw of her.

Fel. [Coming forward.] My heart swells with apprehension!—some accidental rencounter?

Fred. A tavern, I suppose, adjusted the matter.

Col. B. A tavern! no, no, sir; she is above that rank, I assure you: this nymph sleeps in a velvet bed, and has lodgings every way agreeable.

Fel. Ha! a velvet bed! I thought you said but now, sir, you knew her not.

Col. B. No more I do, sir.

Fel. How came you then so well acquainted with her bed?

Fred. Ay, ay; come, come, unfold.

Col. B. Why, then, you must know, gentlemen, that I was conveyed to her lodgings by one of Cupid's emissaries, called a chambermaid, in a chair, through fifty blind allies—who, by the help of a key, let me into a garden.

Fel. A garden! this must be Violante's garden.

[Aside.]

Col. B. From thence she conducted me into a spacious room, then dropped me a curtesy, told me her lady would wait on me presently; so, without unveiling, modestly withdrew.

Fel. Damn her modesty! this was Flora. [Aside.]

Fred. Well, how then, colonel?

Col. B. Then, sir, immediately, from another door, issued forth a lady, armed at both eyes, from whence such showers of darts fell round me, that, had I not been covered with the shield of another beauty, I had infallibly fallen a martyr to her charms; for, you must know, I just saw her eyes—Eyes, did I say? no, no, hold; I saw but one eye, though I suppose it had a fellow equally killing.

Fel. But how came you to see her bed, sir?

Col. B. 'Sdeath! this expectation gives a thousand racks.

[Aside.]

Col. B. Why, upon her maid's giving notice her father was coming, she thrust me into the bed-chamber.

Fel. Upon her father's coming!

Col. B. Ay, so she said; but, putting my ear to the key-hole of the door, I found it was another lover.

Fel. Confound the jilt! 'twas she without dispute!

[Aside.]

Fred. Ah, poor colonel! ha! ha!

Col. I discovered they had had a quarrel; but whether they were reconciled or not I can't tell, for the second alarm brought the father in good earnest, and had like to have made the gentleman and me

acquainted, but she found some other stratagem to convey him out.

Fel. Contagion seize her, and make her body ugly as her soul! There is nothing left to doubt of now—'Tis plain 'twas she. [*Fred. and Col. laughing.*] Sure he knows me, and takes this method to insult me. 'Sdeath! I cannot bear it. [*Aside.*]

Fred. So, when she had dispatched her old lover, she paid you a visit in her bed-chamber—ha, colonel?

Col. B. No, plague take the impertinent puppy! he spoiled my diversion; and I saw her no more.

Fel. Very fine! Give me patience, Heaven, or I shall burst with rage. [*Aside.*]

Fred. That was hard.

Col. B. Nay, what was worse—But, Sir, dear sir, do hearken to this:—[*To Felix.*] The nymph that introduced me conveyed me out again, over the top of a high wall, where I ran the danger of having my neck broke, for the father, it seems, had locked the door by which I entered.

Fel. [*Turning away.*] That way I missed him—Damn her invention! [*Aside.*] Pray, colonel!—Ha! ha! ha! it's very pleasant, ha, ha!—Was this the same lady you met upon the Terriero de Passa this morning?

Col. B. 'Faith, I can't tell, sir; I had a design to know who that lady was, but my dog of a footman, whom I had ordered to watch her home, fell fast asleep. I gave him a good beating for his neglect, and I have never seen the rascal since.

Fred. Here he comes.

Enter GIBBY.

Col. B. Where have you been, sirrah?

Gibby. Troth, I've been seeking ye, an like yer honour, these two hours and mair. I bring ye glad teelings, sir.

Col. B. What, have you found the lady?

Gibby. Gude faith ha I, sir—and she's called Donna Violante, and her parent Don Pedro de Mendosa, and gin ye will gang wi' me, an like yer honour, Ise mak ye ken the hoose right weel.

Fel. Oh, torture! torture! [*Aside.*]

Col. B. Ha! Violante! that's the lady's name of the house where my incognita is; sure it could not be her; at least it was not the same house, I'm confident. [*Aside.*]

Fred. Violante! 'tis false; I would not have you credit him, colonel.

Gibby. The deel burst my bladder, sir, gin I lee.

Fel. [*Runs across to Gibby.*] Sirrah, I say you do lie, and I'll make you eat it, you dog! [*Kicks him.*] and if your master will justify you—

Col. B. Not I, faith, sir—I answer for nobody's lies but my own; if you please, kick him again.

Gibby. But gin he does Ise na tak it, sir, gin he was a thousand Spaniards. [*Walks about in a passion.*]

Col. B. I owed you a beating, sirrah, and I'm obliged to this gentleman for taking the trouble off my hands; therefore, say no more; d'ye hear, sir? [*Aside to Gibby.*]

Gibby. Troth dee I, sir, and feel tee.

[*Gibby retires to background.*]

Fred. This must be a mistake, colonel, for I know Violante perfectly well, and I am certain she would not meet you upon the Terriero de Passa.

Col. B. Don't be too positive, Frederick; now I have some reasons to believe it was that very lady.

Fel. You'd very much oblige me, sir, if you'd let me know these reasons.

Col. B. Sir!

Fel. Sir, I say, I have a right to inquire into these reasons you speak of.

Col. B. Ha! ha! really, sir, I cannot conceive how you, or any man, can have a right to inquire into my thoughts.

Fel. Sir, I have a right to every thing that relates to Violante—and he that traduces her fame, and refuses to give his reasons for it, is a villain. [*Draws.*]

Col. B. What the devil have I been doing! Now, blisters on my tongue by dozens! [*Aside.*]

Fred. Pr'ythee, Felix, don't quarrel till you know for what: this is all a mistake, I'm positive.

Col. B. Look ye, sir; that I dare draw my sword, I think will admit of no dispute. But though fighting's my trade, I'm not in love with it, and think it more honourable to decline this business than pursue it. This may be a mistake; however, I'll give you my honour never to have any affair, directly or indirectly, with Violante, provided she is your Violante; but if there should happen to be another of her name, I hope you would not engross all the Violantes in the kingdom.

Fel. Your vanity has given me sufficient reasons to believe I'm not mistaken. I'll not be imposed upon, sir.

Col. B. Nor I bullied, sir.

Fel. Bullied! 'Sdeath! such another word, and I'll nail thee to the wall.

Col. B. Are you sure of that, Spaniard? [*Draws.*]

Gibby. [*Draws.*] Say na mair, mon. O' my saul, here's twa to twa. Dinna fear, sir; Gibby stonds by ye for the honour of Scotland. [*Vapours about.*]

Fred. By St. Antony, you shan't fight [*Interposes:*] on bare suspicion: be certain of the injury, and then—

Fel. That I will this moment; and then, sir—I hope you are to be found—

Col. B. Whenever you please, sir. [*Exit Felix.*]

Gibby. Hoot awa, mon! there ne'er was a Scotsman yet that shamed to show his face. [*Strutting about.*]

Fred. So, quarrels spring up like mushrooms, in a minute. Violante and he were but just reconciled, and you have furnished him with fresh matter for falling out again; and I am certain, colonel, Gibby is in the wrong.

Gibby. Gin I be, sir, the mon that tald me leed; and gin he did, the deel be my landlord, and hell my winter-quarters, and a rape my winding-sheet, gin I dee not lick him as lang as I can haud a stick in my hond, now see ye.

Col. B. I am sorry for what I have said, for the lady's sake; but who could divine that she was his mistress? Pr'ythee, who is this warm spark?

Fred. He is the son of one of our graveeens, named Don Lopez de Pimentello; a very honest gentleman, but something passionate in what relates to his love. He is an only son, which may, perhaps, be one reason for indulging his passion.

Col. B. When parents have but one child, they either make a madman or a fool of him.

Fred. He is not the only child, he has a sister; but I think, through the severity of his father, who would have married her against her inclination, she has made her escape, and, notwithstanding he has offered five hundred pounds, he can get no tidings of her.

Col. B. Ha! how long has she been missing?

Fred. Nay, but since last night, it seems.

Col. B. Last night! The very time! How went she?

Fred. Nobody can tell; they conjecture, through the window.

Col. B. I'm transported! this must be the lady I caught. What sort of a woman is she?

Fred. Middle-sized, a lovely brown, a fine pout-

ing lip, eyes that roll and languish, and seem to speak the exquisite pleasure her arms could give.

Col. B. Oh! I am fired with this description—'tis the very she. What's her name?

Fred. Isabella. You are transported, colonel.

Col. B. I have a natural tendency in me to the flesh, thou know'st—and who can hear of charms so exquisite, and yet remain unmoved? Oh, how I long for the appointed hour! I'll to the Terriero de Passa, and wait my happiness: if she fails to meet me, I'll once more attempt to find her at Violante's, in spite of her brother's jealousy. [*Aside.*] Dear Frederick, I beg your pardon, but I had forgot I was to meet a gentleman upon business at five: I'll endeavour to despatch him, and wait upon you again as soon as possible.

Fred. Your humble servant, Colonel. [*Exit.*]

Col. B. Gibby, I have no business with you at present. You may go to the devil. [*Exit.*]

Gibby. That's well. Now will I gang and seek this loon, and gar him gang with me to Don Pedro's hoose. Gin he'll no gang of himself, Ise gar him gang by the lug, sir. Gadswarbit! Gibby hates a leer. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—Violante's Lodgings.

Enter VIOLANTE and ISABELLA.

Isab. The hour draws on, Violante, and now my heart begins to fail me; but I resolve to venture, for all that.

Vio. What, does your courage sink, Isabella?

Isab. Only the force of resolution a little retreated; but I'll rally it again, for all that.

Enter FLORA.

Flora. Don Felix is coming up, madam.

Isab. My brother! which way shall I get out?—Despatch him as soon as you can, dear Violante.

[*Exit into the closet.*]

Vio. I will.

Enter FELIX in a surly humour.

Felix, what brings you back so soon? did I not say to-morrow?

Fel. My passion chokes me; I cannot speak—Oh, I shall burst!

[*Aside—Throws himself into a chair.*]

Vio. Bless me! are you not well, my Felix?

Fel. Yes—No—I don't know what I am.

Vio. Hey-day! what's the matter now? another jealous whim?

Fel. With what an air she carries it!—I'm astonished at her impudence! [*Aside.*]

Vio. If I were in your place, Felix, I'd choose to stay at home when these fits of spleen were upon me, and not trouble such persons as are not obliged to bear with them.

[*Here he affects to be careless of her.*]

Fel. I am very sensible, madam, of what you mean: I disturb you, no doubt; but were I in a better humour, I should not incommode you less: I am too well convinced you could easily dispense with my visits.

Vio. When you behave yourself as you ought to do, no company so welcome—but when you reserve for me your ill-nature, I wave your merit, and consider what's due to myself. And I must be free to tell you, Felix, that these humours of yours will abate, if not absolutely destroy, the very principles of love.

Fel. [*Rising.*] And I must be so free to tell you, madam, that, since you have made such ill returns

to the respect that I have paid you, all you do shall be indifferent to me for the future; and you shall find me abandon your empire with so little difficulty, that I'll convince the world your chains are not so hard to break as your vanity would tempt you to believe.—I cannot brook the provocation you give.

Vio. This is not to be borne—Insolent! you abandon! you! whom I have so often forbade ever to see me more! Have you not fallen at my feet? implored my favour and forgiveness? did you not trembling wait, and wish, and sigh, and swear yourself into my heart? Ungrateful man! if my chains are so easily broken as you pretend, then you are the silliest coxcomb living you did not break them long ago; and I must think him capable of brooking anything, on whom such usage could make no impression.

Fel. I always believed, madam, my weakness was the greatest addition to your power; you would be less imperious had my inclination been less forward to oblige you. You have indeed forbade me your sight, but your vanity even then assured you I would return, and I was fool enough to feed your pride. Your eyes, with all their boasted charms, have acquired their greatest glory in conquering me—and the brightest passage of your life is wounding this heart with such arms as pierce but few persons of my rank.

[*Walks about.*]

Vio. Matchless arrogance! True, sir, I should have kept measures better with you, if the conquest had been worth preserving; but we easily hazard what gives us no pain to lose. As for my eyes, you are mistaken if you think they have vanquished none but you: there are men above your boasted rank who have confessed their power, when their misfortune in pleasing you made them obtain such a disgraceful victory.

Fel. Yes, madam, I am no stranger to your victories. *Vio.* And what you call the brightest passage of my life is not the least glorious part of yours.

Fel. Ha, ha! don't put yourself in a passion, madam; for, I assure you, after this day, I shall give you no trouble. You may meet your sparks on the Terriero de Passa at four in the morning, without the least regard to me,—for when I quit your chamber, the world sha'n't bring me back.

Vio. I am so well pleased with your resolution, I don't care how soon you take your leave. But what you mean by the Terriero de Passa at four in the morning, I can't guess.

Fel. No, no, no! not you. You were not upon the Terriero de Passa at four this morning!

Vio. No, I was not; but if I were, I hope I may walk where I please, and at what hour I please, without asking your leave?

Fel. Oh, doubtless, madam!—and you might meet Colonel Briton there, and afterwards send your emissary to fetch him to your house—and, upon your father's coming in, thrust him into your bed-chamber—without asking my leave! 'Tis no business of mine, if you are exposed among all the footmen in town—nay, if they ballad you, and cry you about at a half-penny a-piece—they may, without my leave!

Vio. Audacious!—don't provoke me—don't: my reputation is not to be sported with [*going up to him,*] at this rate—no, sir, it is not. [*Bursting into tears.*] Inhuman Felix! [*Sits.*] Oh, Isabella! what a train of ills hast thou brought on me— [*Aside.*]

Fel. Ha! I cannot bear to see her weep—a woman's tears are far more fatal than our swords. [*Aside.*]—Oh, Violante!—Sdeath! what a dog am I! Now have I no power to stir.—Dost not thou

know such a person as Colonel Briton? Pr'ythee, tell me. [*Going to her.*] Didst thou not meet him at four this morning upon the Terriero de Passa?

Vio. Were it not to clear my fame, I would not answer thee, thou black ingrate!—but I cannot bear to be reproached with what I even blush to think of, much less to act. By heaven! I have not seen the Terriero de Passa this day.

Fel. Did not a Scotch footman attack you in the street neither, Violante?

Vio. Yes—but he mistook me for another—or he was drunk, I know not which.

Fel. And do not you know this Scotch colonel?

Vio. Pray ask me no more questions: this night shall clear my reputation, and leave you without excuse for your base suspicions. More than this, I shall not satisfy you—therefore, pray leave me.

Fel. Didst thou ever love me, Violante?

Vio. I'll answer nothing—You was in haste to be gone just now; I should be very well pleased to be alone, sir.

[*Sits down.*]

Fel. I shall not interrupt your contemplation.—Stubborn to the last.

[*Aside.*]

Vio. Did ever woman involve herself as I have done!

Fel. Now would I give one of my eyes to be friends with her, for something whispers to my soul she is not guilty.—[*He pauses, then takes a chair, and sits by her at a little distance, looking at her some time without speaking, then draws a little nearer to her.*]—Give me your hand at parting, however, Violante, won't you—[*He lays his hand upon her knee several times,*] won't you—won't you—won't you?

Vio. [*Half regarding him.*] Won't I do what?

Fel. You know what I would have, Violante.—Oh, my heart!

Vio. [*Smiling.*] I thought my chains were easily broken.

[*Lays her hand into his.*]

Fel. [*Draws his chair close to her, and kisses her hand.*] Too well thou knowest thy strength.—Oh, my charming angel! my heart is all thy own. Forgive my hasty passion—'tis the transport of a love sincere. Oh, Violante! Violante!

Pedro. [*Within.*] Bid Sancho get a new wheel to my chariot presently.

Vio. Bless me, my father returned; what shall we do now, Felix? We are ruined past redemption.

Fel. No, no, no, my love, I can leap from the closet window. [*Runs to the door where ISABELLA is, who claps to the door, and bolts it within.*] Confusion! somebody bolts the door within. Oh, Violante! hast thou again sacrificed me to my rival?

[*Draws.*]

Vio. By heaven, thou hast no rival in my heart! Let that suffice. Nay, sure, you will not let my father find you here—Distraction!

Fel. Indeed but I shall—unless you command this door to be opened, and that way conceal me from his sight. [*He struggles with her to come at the door.*]

Vio. Hear me, Felix—though I were sure the refusing what you ask would separate us for ever, by all that's powerful, you shall not enter here. Either you do love me, or you do not: convince me by your obedience.

Fel. That's not the matter in debate—I will know who is in this closet, let the consequence be what it will. Nay, nay, you strive in vain—I will go in.

Vio. You shall not go—

Fel. I will go in.

Enter DON PEDRO.

Ped. Hey-day! what's here to do? I will go in,—and you sha'n't go in,—and I will go in. Why, who are you, sir?

Fel. 'Sdeath! what shall I say now?

Ped. Don Felix! Pray, what's your business in my house—ha, sir?

Vio. Oh, sir! what miracle returned you home so soon? Some angel 'twas that brought my father back, to succour the distressed. This ruffian, he—I cannot call him gentleman—has committed such an uncommon rudeness, as the most profligate wretch would be ashamed to own.

Fel. What does she mean?

[*Aside.*]

Vio. As I was at my devotion in my closet, I heard a loud knocking at my door, mixed with a woman's voice, which seemed to imply she was in danger. I flew to the door with the utmost speed, where a lady, veiled, rushed in upon me; who, falling on her knees, begged my protection from a gentleman who, she said, pursued her. I took compassion on her tears, and locked her into this closet; but in the surprise, having left open the door, this very person, whom you see with his sword drawn, ran in, protesting, if I did not give her up to his revenge, he'd force the door.

Fel. What the devil does she mean to do?—hang me?

[*Aside.*]

Vio. I strove with him till I was out of breath, and had you not come as you did, he must have entered. But he's in drink, I suppose; or he could not have been guilty of such an indecorum.

[*Leering at FELIX.*]

Ped. I am amazed!

Fel. The devil never failed a woman at a pinch:—what a tale has she formed in a minute! In drink, quotha! a good hint: I'll lay hold on't to bring myself off.

[*Aside.*]

Ped. Fie, Don Felix! No sooner rid of one broil, but you are commencing another? To assault a lady with a naked sword derogates much from the character of a gentleman, I assure you.

Fel. [*Counterfeits drunkenness.*] Who, I assault a lady—upon honour, the lady assaulted me, sir, and would have seized this body politic on the king's highway. Let her come out, and deny it if she can. Pray, sir, command the door to be opened; and let her prove me a liar, if she knows how.

Ped. Ay, ay! open the door, Violante, and let the lady come out. Come, I warrant thee he sha'n't hurt her.

Fel. No, no, I won't let the dear creature.—Now, now! which way will you come off now?

[*Aside.*]

Vio. [*Unlocks the door.*] Come forth, madam! None shall dare to touch your veil—I'll convey you out with safety, or lose my life. I hope she understands me.

[*Aside.*]

Enter ISABELLA, veiled.

Isab. Excellent girl!

[*Exit.*]

Fel. The devil! a woman! I'll see she be really so.

[*Aside.*]

Vio. [*To FELIX.*] Get clear of my father, and follow me to the Terriero de Passa, where all mistakes shall be rectified.

[*Exit, with ISABELLA; DON FELIX offers to follow her.*]

Ped. [*Drawing his sword.*] Not a step, sir, till the lady is past your recovery! I never suffer the laws of hospitality to be violated in my house, sir. I'll keep Don Felix here till you see her safe out, Violante! Come, sir, you and I will take a pipe and a bottle together.

Fel. Damn your pipe, and damn your bottle!—I hate drinking, and smoking, and how will you help yourself, old blue-bottle?

Ped. As to smoking or drinking, you have your liberty; but you shall stay, sir!

Fel. But I won't stay, sir—for I don't like your company; besides, I have the best reasons in the world for my not staying.

Ped. Ay, what's that?

Fel. Why, I'm going to be married—and so good bye.

Ped. To be married?—it can't be. Why, you are drunk, Felix.

Fel. Drunk! ay, to be sure; you don't think I'd go to be married if I were sober; but, drunk or sober, I am going to be married; and if you won't believe me, to convince you, I'll show you the contract, old gentleman.

Ped. Ay, do; come, let's see this contract, then.

Fel. Yes, yes, I'll show you the contract.—Here, sir—here's the contract. [*Draws a pistol.*]

Ped. [*Starting.*] Well, well, I'm convinced—go, go—pray go and be married, sir.

Fel. Yes, yes—I'll go—I'll go and be married; but sha'n't we take a bottle first?

Ped. No, no; pray, dear sir, go and be married.

Fel. Very well—very well! [*Going.*] But I insist upon your taking one glass, though.

Ped. No, not now—some other time—consider, the lady waits.

Fel. What a cross old fool!—first he will, and then he won't—and then he will, and then he won't! [*Exit.*]

Enter SANCHO.

San. Don Lopez de Pimentello is in the next room, signior.

Ped. What the devil does he want? he is not going to be married, too!—Bring him up—he's in pursuit of his son, I suppose! [*Exit SANCHO.*]

Enter DON LOPEZ.

Lop. I am glad to find you at home, Don Pedro: I was told that you were going into the country this afternoon.

Ped. That might be, my lord; but I had the misfortune to break the wheel of my chariot, which obliged me to return. What is your pleasure with me, my lord?

Lop. I am informed that my daughter is in your house.

Ped. That's more than I know, my lord: but here was your son, just now, as drunk as an emperor.

Lop. My son drunk! I never saw him in drink in my life.—Where is he, pray, sir?

Ped. Gone to be married.

Lop. Married!—to whom?—I don't know that he courted anybody!

Ped. Nay, I know nothing of that—but I'm sure he showed me the contract—Within, there!

Enter SANCHO.

Bid my daughter come hither; she'll tell you another story, my lord.

San. She's gone out in a chair, sir.

Ped. Out in a chair!—What do you mean, sir!

San. As I say, sir; and your daughter, Donna Isabella, went in another, just before her.

Lop. Isabella!

San. And Don Felix followed in another; I overheard them all bid the chairs go to the Terrier de Passa. [*Exit.*]

Ped. Ha! what business has my daughter there? I am confounded, and know not what to think. Within there! [*Exit.*]

Lop. My heart misgives me plaguily. Call me an alguazil—I'll pursue them straight. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—*The Street before Don Pedro's House.*

Enter LISSARDO.

Liss. I wish I could see Flora—methinks I have an hankering kindness after the slut—we must be reconciled.

Enter GIBBY.

Gibby. Aw my sal, sir, but Ise blithe to find yee here now.

Liss. Ha, brother! give me thy hand, boy.

Gibby. No se fast, se ye me—brether me ne brethers: I scorn a leer as muckle as a thiefe, se ye now, and ye must gang intul this house with me, and justifie to Donna Violante's face, that she was the lady that ganged in here this morn, se ye me, or the deel ha my saul, sir, but ye and I shall be twa folks.

Liss. Justify it to Donna Violante's face, quotha! For what?—Sure you don't know what you say!

Gibby. Troth de I, sir, as weel as ye de; therefore, come along, and make no mair words about it.

Liss. Why, what the devil do you mean? Don't you consider you are in Portugal?—Is the fellow mad?

Gibby. Fellow! Ise none of yer fellow, sir, and gin the place were hell, I'd gar ye do me justice.—[*LISSARDO going.*] Nay, the deel a feet ye gang.

[*Lays hold of him, and knocks.*]

Liss. Ha! Don Pedro himself! I wish I were fairly off. [*Aside.*]

Enter DON PEDRO.

Ped. How now? what makes you knock so loud?

Gibby. Gin this be Don Pedro's house, sir, I would speak with Donna Violante, his daughter.

Ped. Ha! What is it you want with my daughter, pray?

Gibby. An she be your daughter, an' lik your honour, command her to come out, and answer for herself now, and either justifie or disprove what this chiel told me this morn.

Ped. Why, what did he tell you? ha!

Gibby. By my saul, sir, Ise tell you aw the truth.—My master got a pratty lady upon the how-de-call't—Passa—here at five this morn, and he gar me watch her heam—and in troth I lodged her here: and meeting this ill-favoured thiefe, se ye me, I speered what she was—and he tald me her name was Donna Violante, Don Pedro de Mendosa's daughter.

Ped. Ha! my daughter with a man, abroad at five in the morning! Death, hell, and furies! By St. Anthony, I'm undone.

Gibby. Wounds, sir! ye put yer saint intul bonny company.

Ped. Who is your master, you dog, you?

Gibby. You dog, you! 'Sbleed, sir, you don't call names!—I won't tell you who my master is, se ye me, now.

Ped. And who are you, rascal, that know my daughter so well? ha! [*Holds up his cane.*]

Liss. What shall I say, to make him give this Scotch dog a good beating? [*Aside.*]—I know your daughter, signior! not I; I never saw your daughter in all my life!

Gibby. [*Knocks him down with his fist.*] Deel ha my saul, sir, gin ye get no your carich for that lie, now.

Ped. What, ho! where are all my servants?

Enter DON FELIX, DONNA VIOLANTE, COL. BRITON, and DONNA ISABELLA.

Raise the house in pursuit of my daughter!

Col. B. Hey-day! what's here to do?

Gibby. This is the loonlike tike, an like your honour, that sent me heam with a lee this morn.

Col. B. Come, come, 'tis all well, *Gibby*; let him rise.

Fel. This is a day of jubilee, *Lissardo*: no quarrelling with him this day.

Liss. A plague take his fists!—*Egad*, these Britons are but a word and a blow.

Enter Don Lopez.

Lop. So, have I found you, daughter! Then you have not hanged yourself yet, I see.

Col. B. But she is married, my lord.

Lop. Married! zounds! to whom?

Col. B. Even to your humble servant, my lord.—If you please to give us your blessing. [*Kneels.*]

Lop. Why, hark ye, mistress, are you really married?

Isab. Really so, my lord.

Lop. And who are you, sir?

Col. B. An honest North Briton by birth, and a colonel by commission, my lord.

Lop. An heretic! the devil!

[*Holding up his hands.*]

Ped. She has played you a slippery trick, indeed, my lord. Well, my girl, thou hast been to see thy friend married—next week thou shalt have a better husband, my dear.

[*To VIOLANTE.*]

Fel. Next week is a little too soon, sir: I hope to live longer than that.

Ped. What do you mean, sir? You have not made a rib of my daughter too, have you?

Vio. Indeed, but he has, sir: I know not how, but he took me in an unguarded minute, when my thoughts were not over-strong for a nunnery, father.

Lop. Your daughter has played you a slippery trick too, signior.

Ped. But your son shall never be the better for't, my lord; her twenty thousand pounds were left on certain conditions, and I'll not part with a shilling.

Lop. But we have a certain thing, called law, shall make you do justice, sir.

Ped. Well, we'll try that—my lord, much good may it do you with your daughter-in-law. [*Erit.*]

Lop. I wish you much joy of your rib. [*Erit.*]

Enter FREDERICK.

Fel. Frederick, welcome! I sent for thee to be partaker of my happiness, and pray give me leave to introduce you to the cause of it.

Fred. Your messenger has told me all, and I sincerely share in all your happiness.

Col. B. To the right about, Frederick—wish thy friend joy.

Fred. I do with all my soul—and, madam, I congratulate your deliverance. Your suspicions are cleared now, I hope, Felix?

Fel. They are, and I heartily ask the colonel pardon, and wish him happy with my sister; for love has taught me to know that every man's happiness consists in choosing for himself.

Liss. After that rule, I fix here. [*To FLORA.*]

Flora. That's your mistake; I prefer my lady's service, and turn you over to her that pleaded right and title to you to-day.

Liss. Choose, proud fool! I sha'n't ask you twice.

Gibby. What say ye now, lass? will ye gee yer hond to poor *Gibby*? Will ye dance the reel of Bogie with me?

Inis. That I may not leave my lady, I take you at your word; and though our wooing has been short, I'll, by her example, love you dearly.

Fel. Now, my *Violante*, I shall proclaim thy virtues to the world:

Let us no more the sex's conduct blame,
Since thou'rt a proof, to their eternal fame,
That man has no advantage, but the name.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

THE END.

A BOLD STROKE FOR A WIFE;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS,

BY MRS. CENTLIVRE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

COLONEL FEIGNWELL
SIR PHILIP MODELOVE
PERIWINKLE
TRADELOVE
OBADIAH PRIM
FREEMAN
SIMON PURE
SACKBUT
Gentlemen
Stockbrokers
Travellers
Coachman

ANNE LOVELY
MRS. PRIM
BETTY

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Tavern.

COLONEL FEIGNWELL and FREEMAN are discovered over a bottle.

Free. Come, Colonel, his majesty's health. You are as melancholy as if you were in love; I wish some of the beauties of Bath ha'n't snapt your heart.

Col. F. Why, 'faith, Freeman, there is something in't: I have seen a lady at Bath, who has kindled such a flame in me, that all the waters there can't quench.

Free. Is she not to be had, Colonel?

Col. F. That's a difficult question to answer; however, I resolve to try; perhaps you may be able to serve me; you merchants know one another. The lady told me herself she was under the charge of four persons.

Free. Odso! 'tis Miss Anne Lovely.

Col. F. The same; do you know her?

Free. Know her! ay. 'Faith, Colonel, your condition is more desperate than you imagine: why, she is the talk and pity of the whole town; and, it is the opinion of the learned, that she must die a maid.

Col. F. That's somewhat odd, in this charitable city. She's a woman, I hope?

Free. For aught I know; but it had been as well

for her, had nature made her any other part of the creation. The man who keeps this house served her father; he is a very honest fellow, and may be of use to you: we'll send for him to take a glass with us; he'll give you her whole history, and 'tis worth your hearing.

Col. F. But may one trust him?

Free. With your life. I have obligations enough upon him, to make him do any thing: I serve him with wine. [*Rings.*]

Col. F. Nay, I know him very well myself. I once used to frequent a club that was kept here.

Enter Waiter.

Wai. Gentlemen, d'ye call?

Free. Ay; send up your master.

Wai. Yes, sir.

Col. F. Do you know any of this lady's guardians, Freeman? [*Exit.*]

Free. I know two of them very well.

Enter SACKBUT.

Free. Here comes one will give you an account of them all. Mr. Sackbut, we sent for you to take a glass with us. 'Tis a maxim among the friends of the bottle, that, as long as the master is in company, one may be sure of good wine.

Sack. Sir, you shall be sure to have as good wine as you send in. Colonel, your most humble servant; you are welcome to town.

Col. F. I thank you, Mr. Sackbut.

Sack. I am as glad to see you as I should a hundred tuns of French claret, custom free: my service to you, sir. [*Drinks.*] You don't look so merry as you used to do; aren't you well, Colonel?

Free. He has got a woman in his head, landlord; can you help him?

Sack. If 'tis in my power, I sha'n't scruple to serve my friend.

Col. F. 'Tis one perquisite of your calling.

Sack. Ay; at t'other end of the town, where you officers use, women are good forciers of trade: a well-customed house, a handsome bar-keeper, with clean, obliging drawers, soon get the master an estate; but our citizens seldom do any thing but cheat, within the walls. But, as to the lady, Colonel; point you at particulars? Or have you a good champagne stomach? Are you in full pay, or reduced, Colonel?

Col. F. Reduced, reduced, landlord!

Free. To the miserable condition of a lover.

Sack. Pish! that's preferable to half-pay: a woman's resolution may break before the peace: push her home, Colonel, there's no parleying with the fair sex.

Col. F. Were the lady her own mistress, I have some reasons to believe I should soon command in chief.

Free. You know Miss Lovely, Mr. Sackbut?

Sack. Know her! ay, poor Nancy! I have carried her to school many a frosty morning. Alas! if she's the woman, I pity you, Colonel; her father, my old master, was the most whimsical, out-of-the-way-tempered man, I ever heard of,—as you will guess by his last will and testament. This was his only child; and I have heard him wish her dead a thousand times. He died worth thirty thousand pounds, which he left to his daughter, provided she married with the consent of her guardians; but that she might be sure never to do so, he left her in the care of four men, as opposite to each other as the four elements; each has his quarterly rule, and three months in the year she is obliged to be subject to each of their humours; and they are pretty different, I assure you. She is just come from Bath.

Col. F. 'Twas there I saw her.

Sack. Ay, sir; the last quarter was her beau guardian's. She appears in all public places during his reign.

Col. F. She visited a lady, who boarded in the same house with me; I liked her person, and found an opportunity to tell her so. She replied, she had no objection to mine; but if I could not reconcile contradictions, I must not think of her; for that she was condemned to the caprice of four persons, who never yet agreed in any one thing, and she was obliged to please them all.

Sack. 'Tis most true, sir; I'll give you a short description of the men, and leave you to judge of the poor lady's condition. One is a kind of virtuosos, a silly, half-witted fellow, but positive and surly, fond of every thing antique and foreign, and wears his clothes of the fashion of the last century, doats upon travellers, and believes more of Sir John Mandeville than he does of the Bible.

Col. F. That must be a rare odd fellow.

Sack. Another is a change-broker; a fellow that will out-lie the devil for the advantage of stock, and cheat his father that got him, in a bargain; he is a great stickler for trade, and hates every man that wears a sword.

Free. He is a great admirer of the Dutch management, and swears they understand trade better than any nation under the sun.

Sack. The third is an old beau, that has May in his fancy and dress, but December in his face and his heels: he admires all new fashions, and those must be French; loves operas, balls, masquerades, and is always the most tawdry of the whole company on a birth-day.

Col. F. These are pretty opposite one to another, truly; and the fourth—what is he, landlord?

Sack. A very rigid quaker, whose quarter began this day. I saw Miss Lovely go in, not above two hours ago: Sir Philip set her down. What think you now, Colonel? Is not the poor lady to be pitied?

Col. F. Ay; and rescued, too, landlord.

Free. In my opinion that's impossible.

Col. F. There is nothing impossible to a lover. What would not a man attempt for a fine woman and thirty thousand pounds? Besides, my honour is at stake: I promised to deliver her, and she bid me win her, and wear her.

Sack. That's fair, 'faith!

Free. If it depended upon knight-errantry, I should not doubt your setting free the damsel; but to have avarice, impertinence, hypocrisy, and pride, at once to deal with, requires more cunning than generally attends a man of honour.

Col. F. My fancy tells me I shall come off with glory: I resolve to try, however. Do you know all the guardians, Mr. Sackbut?

Sack. Very well; they all use my house.

Col. F. And will you assist me, if occasion requires?

Sack. In every thing I can, Colonel.

Free. I'll answer for him.

Col. F. First, I'll attack my beau guardian: where lives he?

Sack. 'Faith, somewhere about St. James's; though, to say in what street, I cannot; but any chairman will tell where Sir Philip Modelove lives.

Free. Oh! you'll find him in the Park at eleven every day; at least, I never pass through at that hour without seeing him there. But what do you intend?

Col. F. To address him in his own way, and find what he designs to do with the lady.

Free. And what then?

Col. F. Nay, that I can't tell; but I shall take my measures accordingly.

Sack. Well, 'tis a mad undertaking, in my mind; but here's to your success, Colonel. [*Drinks.*]

Col. F. 'Tis something out of the way, I confess; but fortune may chance to smile, and I succeed.

Bold was the man who ventured first to sea,

But the first vent'ring lovers bolder were.

The path of love's a dark and dang'rous way,

Without a landmark, or one friendly star.

And he, that runs the risk, deserves the fair.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—An Apartment in Prim's house.

Enter Miss LOVELY and her Maid BETTY.

Betty. Bless me, madam! why do you fret and tease yourself so? This is giving them the advantage, with a witness!

Miss L. Must I be condemned all my life to the preposterous humours of other people, and pointed at by every boy in town? Oh! I could tear my flesh, and curse the hour I was born! Isn't it monstrously ridiculous, that they should desire to impose their quaking dress upon me at these years? When I was a child, no matter what they made me wear; but now—

Betty. I would resolve against it, madam; I'd see 'em hanged before I'd put on the pinched cap again.

Miss L. Then I must never expect one moment's ease: she has rung such a peal in my ears already, that I sha'n't have the right use of them this month. What can I do?

Betty. What can you not do, if you will but give your mind to it? Marry, madam.

Miss L. What! and have my fortune go to build churches and hospitals?

Betty. Why, let it go. If the Colonel loves you, as he pretends, he'll marry you without a fortune, madam; and, I assure you, a colonel's lady is no despicable thing.

Miss L. So, you would advise me to give up my own fortune, and throw myself upon the Colonel's?

Betty. I would advise you to make yourself easy, madam.

Miss L. That's not the way, I'm sure. No, no, girl; there are certain ingredients to be mingled with matrimony, without which I may as well change for the worse as the better. When the woman has fortune enough to make the man happy, if he has either honour or good manners, he'll make her easy. Love makes but a slovenly figure in a house, where poverty keeps the door.

Betty. And so you resolve to die a maid, do you, madam?

Miss L. Or have it in my power to make the man I love master of my fortune.

Betty. Then you don't like the Colonel so well as I thought you did, madam, or you would not take such a resolution.

Miss L. It is because I do like him, Betty, that I do take such a resolution.

Betty. Why, do you expect, madam, the Colonel can work miracles? Is it possible for him to marry you with the consent of all your guardians?

Miss L. Or he must not marry me at all; and so I told him; and he did not seem displeased with the news. He promised to set me free; and I, on that condition, promised to make him master of that freedom.

Betty. Well! I have read of enchanted castles, ladies delivered from the chains of magic, giants killed, and monsters overcome; so that I shall be the less surprised if the Colonel shall conjure you out of the power of your four guardians: if he does, I am sure he deserves your fortune.

Miss L. And shall have it, girl, if it were ten times as much; for I'll ingenuously confess to thee, that I do love the Colonel above all the men I ever saw: there's something so jaunty in a soldier, a kind of *je ne sais quoi* air, that makes them more agreeable than all the rest of mankind. They command regard, as who shall say, "We are your defenders; we preserve your beauties from the insults of rude and unpollished foes, and ought to be preferred before those lazy, indolent mortals, who, by dropping into their fathers' estates, set up their coaches, and think to rattle themselves into your affections."

Betty. Nay, madam, I confess that the army has engrossed all the prettiest fellows. A laced coat and feather have irresistible charms.

Miss L. But the Colonel has all the beauties of the mind, as well as the body. O, all ye powers that favour happy lovers, grant that he may be mine! Thou god of love, if thou be'st aught but name, assist my Feignwell!

*Point all thy darts to aid his just design,
And make his plots as prevalent as thine.*

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Park.*

Sir Philip MODELOVE discovered upon a bench, with a Woman, masked.

Sir P. Well but, my dear, are you really content to your keeper?

Wom. Yes, really, sir. Heyday! who comes yonder? He cuts a mighty figure.

Sir P. Ha! a stranger, by his equipage keeping so close at his heels. He has the appearance of a man of quality: positively French, by his dancing air.

Wom. He crosses, as if he meant to sit down here.

Sir P. He has a mind to make love to thee, child.

Enter Colonel FEIGNWELL.

Wom. It will be to no purpose, if he does.

Sir P. Are you resolved to be cruel, then?

Col. F. Your must be very cruel, indeed, if you can deny anything to so fine a gentleman, madam.

[*Takes out his watch.*]

Wom. I never mind the outside of a man.

Col. F. And I'm afraid thou art no judge of the inside.

Sir P. I am positively of your mind, sir; for creatures of her function seldom penetrate beyond the pocket.

Wom. Coxcombs!

[*Aside and exit.*]

Sir P. Pray what says your watch? mine is down.

[*Pulling out his watch.*]

Col. F. I want thirty-six minutes of twelve, sir.

[*Puts up his watch, and takes out his snuff-box.*]

Sir P. May I presume, sir—

Col. F. Sir, you honour me. [*Presenting the box.*]

Sir P. He speaks good English; though he must be a foreigner. [*Aside.*] This snuff is extremely good, and the box prodigious fine: the work is French, I presume, sir.

Col. F. I bought it in Paris, sir. I do think the workmanship pretty neat.

Sir P. Neat! 'tis exquisitely fine, sir! Pray, sir, if I may take the liberty of inquiring,—what country is so happy to claim the birth of the finest gentlemen in the universe? France, I presume.

Col. F. Then you don't think me an Englishman?

Sir P. No, upon my soul, don't I.

Col. F. I am sorry for it.

Sir P. Impossible you should wish to be an Englishman! Pardon me, sir, this island could not produce a person of such alertness.

Col. F. As this mirror shews you, sir. [*Puts up a pocket-glass to Sir Philip's face.*] I know not how to distinguish you, sir; but your mien and address speak you right honourable.

Sir P. Thus great souls judge of others by themselves. I am only adorned with knighthood: that's all, I assure you, sir; my name is Sir Philip Modelove.

Col. F. Of French extraction?

Sir P. My father was French.

Col. F. One may plainly perceive it. There is a certain gaiety peculiar to our nation, (for I will own myself a Frenchman,) which distinguishes us every where. A person of your figure would be a vast addition to a coronet.

Sir P. I must own I had the offer of a barony about five years ago; but I abhorred the fatigue which must have attended it. I could never yet bring myself to join with either party.

Col. F. You are perfectly in the right, Sir Philip:—a fine person should not embark himself in the slovenly concern of politics: dress and pleasure are objects proper for the soul of a fine gentleman.

Sir P. And love!

Col. F. Oh! that's included under the article of pleasure.

Sir P. Parbleu! il est un homme d'esprit. May I crave your name, sir?

Sir P. My name is La Feignwell, sir, at your service.

Sir P. The La Feignwells are French, I know; though the name is become very numerous in Great Britain, of late years. I was sure you was French the moment I laid my eyes upon you: I could not

come into the supposition of your being an Englishman: this island produces few such ornaments.

Col. F. Are you married, Sir Philip?

Sir P. No; nor do I believe I shall ever enter into that honourable state; I have an absolute *tendresse* for the whole sex.

Col. F. That's more than they have for you, I dare swear. [*Aside.*] I find I was very much mistaken. I imagined you had been married to that young lady whom I saw in the chariot with you this morning in Gracechurch-street.

Sir P. Who, Nancy Lovely? I am a piece of a guardian to that lady. You must know, her father, I thank him, joined me with three of the most preposterous old fellows—that, upon my soul, I am in pain for the poor girl: she must certainly lead apes; ha, ha!

Col. F. That's a pity, Sir Philip. If the lady would give me leave, I would endeavour to avert that curse.

Sir P. As to the lady, she'd gladly be rid of us at any rate, I believe; but here's the mischief—he who marries Miss Lovely, must have the consent of us all four, or not a penny of her portion. For my part, I shall never approve of any but a man of figure; and the rest are not only averse to cleanliness, but have each a peculiar taste to gratify. For my part, I declare I would prefer you to all men I ever saw.

Col. F. And I her, to all women.

Sir P. I assure you, Mr. Feignwell, I am for marrying her; for I hate the trouble of a guardian, especially among such wretches. But I resolve never to agree to the choice of any one of them; and I fancy they'll be even with me, for they never came into any proposal of mine yet.

Col. F. I wish I had leave to try them, Sir Philip.

Sir P. With all my soul, sir; I can refuse a person of your appearance nothing.

Col. F. Sir, I am infinitely obliged to you.

Sir P. But do you really like matrimony?

Col. F. I believe I could with that lady.

Sir P. The only point in which we differ. But you are master of so many qualifications, that I can excuse one fault; for I must think it a fault in a fine gentleman; and that you are such, I'll give it under my hand.

Col. F. I wish you'd give me your consent to marry Miss Lovely, under your hand, Sir Philip.

Sir P. I'll do't, if you'll step into St. James's coffee-house, where we may have pen and ink; though I can't force what advantage my consent will be to you, without you can find a way to get the rest of the guardians; but I'll introduce you, however. She is now at a quaker's, where I carried her this morning, when you saw us in Gracechurch-street. I assure you she has an odd *ragout* of guardians, as you will find when you hear the characters, which I'll endeavour to give you as we go along. Hey! Pierre, Jacques, Reuno! Where are ye all, scoundrels? Order the chariot to St. James's coffee-house.

Col. F. Le Noire, La Brun, La Blanc! *Morbleu, ou sont ces coquins la? Allons, Monsieur le Chevalier.*

Enter three Servants.

Sir P. Ah! *Pardonnez moi, monsieur.*

Col. F. Not one step upon my soul, Sir Philip.

Sir P. The best bred man in Europe, positively. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—Obadiah Prim's House.

Enter Miss LOVELY and Mrs. PRIM.

Mrs. P. Then thou wilt not obey me; and thou dost really think those fallals become thee?

Miss L. I do, indeed.

Mrs. P. Now will I be judged by all sober people, if I don't look more like a sober woman than thou dost, Anne.

Miss L. More like a hypocrite you mean, Mrs. Prim.

Mrs. P. Ah! Anne, Anne, that wicked Philip Modelove will undo thee. Satan so fills thy heart with pride, during the three months of his guardianship, that thou becomest a stumbling-block to the upright.

Miss L. Pray, who are they? Are the pinched cap and formal hood the emblems of sanctity? Does your virtue consist in your dress, Mrs. Prim?

Mrs. P. It does not consist in cut hair, spotted face, and a bare neck. Oh, the wickedness of the generation! The primitive women knew not the abomination of short petticoats.

Miss L. No; nor the abomination of cant neither. Don't tell me, Mrs. Prim, don't; I know you have as much pride, vanity, self-conceit, and ambition among you, couched under that formal habit and sanctified countenance, as the proudest of us all; but the world begins to see your prudery.

Mrs. P. Prudery! What! do they invent new words as well as new fashions? Ah! poor, fantastic age, I pity thee. Poor deluded Anne, which dost thou think most resembleth the saint, and which the sinner, thy dress or mine? Thy naked bosom allureth the eye of the by-stander, encourageth the frailty of human nature, and corrupteth the soul with evil longings.

Miss L. And pray who corrupted your son Tobias with longings? Your maid Tabitha were a handkerchief, and yet he made the saint a sinner.

Mrs. P. Well, well, spit thy malice. I confess Satan did buffet my son Tobias, and my servant Tabitha: the evil spirit was at that time too strong, and they both became subject to its workings; not from any outward provocation, but from an inward call: he was not tainted with the rottenness of the fashions, nor did his eyes take in the drunkenness of beauty.

Miss L. No! that's plainly to be seen.

Mrs. P. Tabitha is one of the faithful; he fell not with a stranger.

Miss L. So! then you hold wenching no crime, provided it be within the pale of your own tribe. You are an excellent casuist, truly!

Enter Obadiah PRIM.

Obad. Not stripped of thy vanity yet, Anne! Why dost thou not make her put it off, Sarah?

Mrs. P. She will not do it.

Obad. Verily thy naked bosom troubleth my outward man: put on a handkerchief, Anne Lovely.

Miss L. I hate handkerchiefs when 'tis not cold weather, Mr. Prim.

Mrs. P. I have seen thee wear a handkerchief, in the middle of July.

Miss L. Ay, to keep the sun from scorching me.

Obad. If thou couldst not bear the sunbeams, how dost thou think man can bear thy beams?

Miss L. Let me be quiet, I say. Must I be tormented thus for ever? Sure no woman's condition ever equalled mine! Foppery, folly, avarice, and hypocrisy, are, by turns, my constant companions. I cannot think my father meant this tyranny. No, you usurp an authority which he never intended you should take.

Obad. Hark thee, dost thou call good counsel tyranny? Do I or my wife tyrannise, when we desire thee in all love to put off thy tempting attire?

Miss L. I wish I were in my grave! Kill me rather than treat me thus.

Obad. Kill thee! Ha, ha! thou thinkest thou art acting some lewd play sure. Kill thee! Art thou prepared for death, Anne Lovely? No, no; thou would'st rather have a husband, Anne. Thou wantest a gilt coach, with six lazy fellows behind, to flaunt it in the ring of vanity, among the princes and rulers of the land, who pamper themselves with the fatness thereof; but I will take care that none shall squander away thy father's estate; thou shalt marry none such, Anne.

Miss L. Would you marry me to one of your own canting sect?

Obad. Yea, verily, no one else shall ever get my consent, I do assure thee, Anne.

Miss L. And I do assure thee, Obadiah, that I will as soon turn papist, and die in a convent.

Mrs. P. O wickedness!

Miss L. O stupidity!

Obad. O blindness of heart!

Miss L. Thou blinder of the world, don't provoke me, lest I betray your sanctity, and leave your wife to judge of your purity! What were the emotions of your spirit, when you squeezed Mary by the hand last night in the pantry? Don't you remember, Mr. Prim?

Mrs. P. What does she say, Obadiah?

Obad. She talketh unintelligibly, Sarah. Which way did she hear this? This should not have reach'd the ears of the wicked ones. Verily it troubleth me.

[Aside.]

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Philip Modelove, whom they call Sir Philip, is below, and such another with him; shall I send them up?

Obad. Yea. [Exit Servant.]

Enter Sir PHILIP MODELLOVE and Colonel FEIGNWELL.

Sir P. How dost thou do, friend Prim? Odo! my she friend here too! What, are you documenting Miss Nancy? Reading her a lecture upon the pinch'd coif, I warrant ye!

Mrs. P. I am sure thou didst never read her any lecture that was good. My flesh so riseth at these wicked ones, that prudence adviseth me to withdraw from their sight.

Col. F. Oh, that I could find means to speak with her! How charming she appears! I wish I could get this letter into her hand.

Sir P. Well, miss, I hope thou hast got the better of them.

Miss L. The difficulties of my life are not to be surmounted, Sir Philip. I hate the impertinence of him as much as the stupidity of the other. [Aside.]

Obad. Verily, Philip, thou wilt spoil this maiden.

Sir P. I find we still differ in opinion; but that we may none of us spoil her, pr'ythee, Prim, let us consent to marry her. I have sent for our brother Quarrant to meet me here about this very thing. Madam, will you give me leave to recommend a husband to you? Here's a gentleman, whom, in my mind, you can have no objection to.

[Presents the Colonel to her; she looks another way.]

Miss L. Heaven deliver me from the formal and the fantastic fool!

Col. F. A fine woman,—a fine horse, and fine equipage, are the finest things in the universe; and if I am so happy to possess you, madam, I shall be-

come the envy of mankind, as much as you outshine your whole sex.

[As he takes her hand to kiss it, he endeavours to put a letter into it; she lets it drop; PRIM takes it up.]

Miss L. I have no ambition to appear conspicuously ridiculous, sir. [Turning from him.]

Col. F. So fail the hopes of Feignwell.

Miss L. Ha! Feignwell! 'tis he! What have I done! Prim has the letter, and it will be discovered.

[Aside.]

Obad. Friend, I know not thy name, so cannot call thee by it; but thou seest thy letter is unwellcome to the maiden: she will not read it.

Miss L. Nor shall you: [snatches the letter.] I'll tear it in a thousand pieces, and scatter it, as I will the hopes of all those that any of you shall recommend to me.

[Tears the letter.]

Sir P. Ha! right woman, 'faith!

Col. F. Excellent woman!

[Aside.]

Obad. Friend, thy garb savoureth too much of the vanity of the age for my approbation; nothing that resembleth Philip Modelove, shall I love. Mark that, therefore, friend Philip; bring no more of thy own apes under my roof.

Sir P. I am so entirely a stranger to the monsters of thy breed, that I shall bring none of them, I am sure.

Col. F. I am likely to have a pretty task by the time I have gone through them all; but she's a city worth taking, and egad I'll carry on the siege: if I can but blow up the out-works, I fancy I am pretty secure of the town.

[Aside.]

Enter Servant.

Serv. Toby Periwinkle and Thomas Tradelove demand to see thee.

[To Sir PHILIP.]

Sir P. Bid them come up.

[Exit Servant.]

Miss L. Deliver me from such an inundation of noise and nonsense. Oh, Feignwell! whatever thy contrivance be, prosper it, heaven!

[Exit.]

Sir P. Sic transit gloria mundi!

Enter PERIWINKLE and TRADELOVE.

These are my brother guardians, Mr. Feignwell. Pr'ythee observe the creatures.

[Aside to Col. FEIGNWELL.]

Trade. Well, Sir Philip, I obey your summons.

Per. Pray what have you to offer for the good of Miss Lovely, Sir Philip?

Sir P. First, I desire to know what you intend to do with that lady? Must she be sent to the Indies for a venture, or live an old maid; and then be entered amongst your curiosities, and shewn for a monster, Mr. Periwinkle?

Col. F. Humph! curiosities; that must be the virtuoso.

[Aside.]

Per. Why what would you do with her?

Sir P. I would recommend this gentleman to her for a husband, sir; a person whom I have picked out from the whole race of mankind.

Obad. I would advise thee to shuffle him again with the rest of mankind; for I like him not.

Col. F. Pray, sir, without offence to your formality, what may be your objections?

Obad. Thy person, thy manners, thy dress, thy acquaintance, thy everything, friend.

Sir P. You are most particularly obliging, friend. Ha, ha!

Trade. What business do you follow, pray, sir?

Col. F. Humph! by that question he must be the broker. [Aside.] Business, sir? the business of a gentleman.

Trade. That is as much as to say, you dress fine, feed high, and pay your debts of honour better than your tailor's or your butcher's.

Col. F. The court is much obliged to you, sir, for your character of a gentleman.

Trade. The court, sir! What would the court do without us citizens?

Sir P. Without your wives and daughters, you mean, Mr. Tradelove.

Per. Have you ever travelled, sir?

Col. F. That question must not be answered now. [*Aside.*] In books I have, sir.

Per. In books! That's fine travelling indeed! Sir Philip, when you present a person I like, he shall have my consent to marry Miss Lovely; till then, your servant. [*Exit.*]

Col. F. I'll make you like me before I have done with you, or I am mistaken. [*Aside.*]

Trade. And when you can convince me that a beau is more useful to my country than a merchant, you shall have mine; till then you must excuse me. [*Exit.*]

Col. F. So much for trade. I'll fit you too. [*Aside.*]

Sir P. In my opinion, this is very inhuman treatment, as to the lady, Mr. Prim.

Obad. Thy opinion and mine happen to differ as much as our occupations, friend: business requireth my presence, and folly thine; and so I must bid thee farewell. [*Exit.*]

Sir P. Here's breeding for you, Mr. Feignwell! 'Gad take me.

Half my estate I'd give to see 'em bit. [*Aside.*]

Col. F. I hope to bite you all, if my plot hit.

[*Eseunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Tavern.

Col. FEIGNWELL is discovered in an Egyptian dress, with SACKBUT.

Sack. A lucky beginning, Colonel; you have got the old beau's consent.

Col. F. Ay, he's a reasonable creature; but the other three will require some pains. Shall I pass upon him, think you? Egad, in my mind, I look as antique as if I had been preserved in the ark.

Sack. Pass upon him! ay, ay, if you have assurance enough.

Col. F. I have no apprehension from that quarter; assurance is the cockade of a soldier.

Sack. Ay, but the assurance of a soldier differs much from that of a traveller. Can you lie with a good grace?

Col. F. As heartily, when my mistress is the prize, as I would meet the foe when my country called and king commanded; so don't you fear that part: if he don't know me again, I am safe. I hope he'll come.

Sack. I wish all my debts would come as sure: I told him you had been a great traveller, had many valuable curiosities, and was a person of most singular taste: he seemed transported, and begged me to keep you till he came.

Col. F. Ay, ay, he need not fear my running away. Let's have a bottle of sack, landlord; our ancestors drank sack.

Sack. You shall have it.

Col. F. And whereabouts is the trap-door you mentioned?

Sack. There's the conveyance, sir. [*Exit.*]

Col. F. Now, if I should cheat all these roguish guardians, and carry off my mistress in triumph, it would be what the French call a grand coup d'éclat. Odso! here comes Periwinkle. Ah! deuce take this beard; pray Jupiter it does not give me the slip and spoil all.

Enter SACKBUT, with wine, and PERIWINKLE following

Sack. Sir, this gentleman hearing you have been a great traveller, and a person of fine speculation, begs leave to take a glass with you; he is a man of a curious taste himself.

Col. F. The gentleman has it in his face and garb. Sir, you are welcome.

Per. Sir, I honour a traveller and men of your inquiring disposition; the oddness of your habit pleases me extremely; 'tis very antique, and for that I like it.

Col. F. 'Tis very antique, sir. This habit once belonged to the famous Claudius Ptolomeus, who lived in the year one hundred and thirty-five.

Sack. If he keeps up to the sample, he shall lie with the devil for a bean-stack, and win it every straw. [*Aside.*]

Per. A hundred and thirty-five! why, that's prodigious now! Well, certainly 'tis the finest thing in the world to be a traveller.

Col. F. For my part, I value none of the modern fashions a fig-leaf.

Per. No more don't I, sir; I had rather be the jest of a fool than his favourite. I am laughed at here for my singularity. This coat, you must know, sir, was formerly worn by that ingenious and very learned person, Mr. John Tradescant, of Lambeth.

Col. F. John Tradescant! Let me embrace you, sir. John Tradescant was my uncle, by my mother's side; and I thank you for the honour you do his memory: he was a very curious man indeed.

Per. Your uncle, sir! Nay, then 'tis no wonder that your taste is so refined; why you have it in your blood. My humble service to you, sir: to the immortal memory of John Tradescant, your never-to-be-forgotten uncle. [*Drinks.*]

Col. F. Give me a glass, landlord.

Per. I find you are primitive, even in your wine. Canary was the drink of our wise forefathers; 'tis balsamic, and saves the charge of apothecaries' cordials. Oh! that I had lived in your uncle's days! or rather, that he were now alive! Oh! how proud he'd be of such a nephew. A person of your curiosity must have collected many rarities.

Col. F. I have some, sir, which are not yet come ashore; as an Egyptian idol:—

Per. Pray what may that be?

Col. F. It is, sir, a kind of an ape, which they formerly worshipped in that country; I took it from the breast of a female mummy.

Per. Ha, ha! our women retain part of their idolatry to this day; for many an ape lies on a lady's breast. Ha, ha!—

Sack. A smart old thief.

Col. F. Two tusks of an hippopotamus, two pair of Chinese nut-crackers, and one Egyptian mummy.

Per. Pray, sir, have you never a crocodile?

Col. F. Humph! the boatswain brought one with a design to shew it; but touching at Rotterdam, and hearing it was no rarity in England, he sold it to a Dutch poet. Lookye, sir, do you see this little phial?

Per. Pray you what is it?

Col. F. This is called polufosboio.

Per. Polufosboio! It has a rumbling sound.

Col. F. Right, sir; it proceeds from a rumbling nature. This water was part of those waves which bore Cleopatra's vessel when she sailed to meet Antony.

Per. Well, of all that travelled, none had a taste like you.

Col. F. But here's the wonder of the world. This, sir, is called zona, or moros musphonon; the virtues of this are inestimable.

Per. Moros musphonon? What in the name of wisdom can that be? To me it seems a plain belt.

Col. F. This girdle has carried me all the world over.

Per. You have carried it, you mean.

Col. F. I mean as I say, sir. Whenever I am girded with this, I am invisible! and by turning this little screw, can be in the court of the great Mogul, the grand Signior, and king George, in as little time as your cook can poach an egg.

Per. You must pardon me, sir; I can't believe it.

Col. F. If my landlord pleases, he shall try the experiment immediately.

Sack. I thank you kindly, sir; but I have no inclination to ride post to the devil.

Col. F. No, no, you shan't stir a foot; I'll only make you invisible.

Sack. But if you could not make me visible again.

Per. Come, try it upon me, sir; I am not afraid of the devil nor all his tricks. 'Sbud, I'll stand 'em all.

Col. F. There, sir, put it on. Come landlord, you and I must face the east. [*They turn about.*] Is it on, sir?

Per. 'Tis on. [*They turn about again.*]

Sack. Heaven protect me! where is he?

Per. Why here, just where I was.

Sack. Where, where in the name of virtue? Ah, poor Mr. Periwinkle! Egad, look to't, you had best, sir; and let him be seen again, or I shall have you burnt for a wizard.

Col. F. Have patience, good landlord.

Per. But really don't you see me now?

Sack. No more than I see my grandmother, that died forty years ago.

Per. Are you sure you don't lie? Methinks I stand just where I did, and see you as plain as I did before.

Sack. Ah! I wish I could see you once again.

Col. F. Take off the girdle, sir. [*He takes it off.*]

Sack. Ah! sir, I am glad to see you with all my heart. [*Embraces him.*]

Per. This is very odd; certainly there must be some trick in't. Pray, sir, will you do me the favour to put it on yourself?

Col. F. With all my heart.

Per. But first I'll secure the door.

Col. F. You know how to turn the screw, Mr. Sackbut.

Sack. Yes, yes. Come, Mr. Periwinkle, we must turn full east.

[*They turn; the Colonel sinks through the trap-door.*]

Col. F. 'Tis done; now turn. [*They turn.*]

Per. Ha! mercy upon me; my flesh creeps upon my bones. This must be a conjuror, Mr. Sackbut.

Sack. He's the devil, I think.

Per. Oh! Mr. Sackbut, why do you name the devil, when perhaps he may be at your elbow?

Sack. At my elbow! Marry, heaven forbid!

Col. F. Are you satisfied? [*From under the stage.*]

Per. Yes, sir, yes. How hollow his voice sounds!

Sack. Yours seemed just the same. 'Faith, I

wish this girdle were mine, I'd sell wine no more. Harkye! Mr. Periwinkle, [*Takes him aside till the Colonel rises again.*] if he would sell this girdle, you might travel with great expedition.

Col. F. But it is not to be parted with for money.

Per. I am sorry for't, sir; because I think it the greatest curiosity I ever heard of.

Col. F. By the advice of a learned physiognomist in Grand Cairo, who consulted the lines in my face, I returned to England, where he told me I should find a rarity in the keeping of four men, which I was born to possess for the benefit of mankind; and the first of the four that gave me his consent, I should present him with this girdle. Till I have found this jewel, I shall not part with the girdle.

Per. What can this rarity be? Didn't he name it to you?

Col. F. Yes, sir; he call'd it a chaste, beautiful, unaffected woman.

Per. Pish! women are no rarities. Women are the very gewgaws of the creation; playthings for boys, which when they write man they ought to throw aside.

Sack. A fine lecture to be read to a circle of ladies!

[*Aside.*]

Per. What woman is there, dressed in all the pride and foppery of the times, can boast of such a foretop as the cockatoo?

Col. F. I must humour him. [*Aside.*] Such a skin as the lizard?

Per. Such a shining breast as the humming-bird?

Col. F. Such a shape as the antelope?

Per. Or, in all the artful mixture of their various dresses, have they half the beauty of one box of butterflies?

Col. F. No; that must be allowed. For my part, if it were not for the benefit of mankind, I'd have nothing to do with them; for they are as indifferent to me as a sparrow, or a flesh-fly.

Per. Pray, sir, what benefit is the world to reap from this lady?

Col. F. Why, sir, she is to bear me a son, who shall revive the art of embalming, and the old Roman manner of burying the dead; and, for the benefit of posterity, he is to discover the longitude, so long sought for in vain.

Per. Od! these are valuable things, Mr. Sackbut!

Sack. He hits it off admirably; and 't'other swallows it like sack and sugar. [*Aside.*] Certainly, this lady must be your ward, Mr. Periwinkle, by her being under the care of four persons.

Per. By the description, it should. Egad, if I could get that girdle, I'd ride with the sun, and make the tour of the world in four-and-twenty hours. [*Aside.*] And you are to give that girdle to the first of the four guardians that shall give you his consent to marry that lady, say you, sir?

Col. F. I am so ordered, when I can find him.

Per. I fancy I know the very woman; her name is Anne Lovely.

Col. F. Excellent! He said, indeed, that the first letter of her name was L.

Per. Did he really? Well, that's prodigiously amazing, that a person in Grand Cairo should know anything of my ward?

Col. F. Your ward?

Per. To be plain with you, sir, I am one of those four guardians.

Col. F. Are you indeed, sir! I am transported to find that the very man who is to possess this moros musphonon is a person of so curious a taste. Here is a writing drawn up by that famous Egyptian,

which, if you will please to sign, you must turn your face full north, and the girdle is your's.

Per. If I live till the boy is born, I'll be embalmed, and sent to the Royal Society when I die.

Col. F. That you shall, most certainly.

Enter Waiter.

Waiter. Here's Mr. Staytape, the tailor, inquires for you, Colonel.

Col. F. Who do you speak to, you son of a whore?

Per. Ha! Colonel!

Col. F. Confound the blundering dog!

Waiter. Why to Colonel—

Sack. Get you out, you rascal.

[Kicks him out, and goes after him.]

Per. What the devil is the matter?

Col. F. This dog has ruined all my schemes, I see by Periwinkle's looks.

Per. How finely I should have been choused. Colonel, you'll pardon me that I did not give you your title before. It was pure ignorance, 'faith it was. Pray,—hem—hem! Pray, Colonel, what post had this learned Egyptian in your regiment?

Col. F. A plague of your sneer! [Aside.] I don't understand you, sir.

Per. No! that's strange! I understand you, Colonel. An Egyptian of Grand Cairo! ha, ha, ha! I'm sorry such a well-invented tale should do you no more service. We old fellows can see as far into a millstone as them that pick it. I am not to be tricked out of my trust; mark that.

Col. F. The devil! I must carry it off; I wish I were fairly out. [Aside.] Lookye, sir, you may make what jest you please, but the stars will be obeyed, sir; and depend upon't I shall have the lady, and you none of the girdle. Now for Mr. Freeman's part of the plot.

Per. The stars! Ha, ha! No star has favoured you, it seems. The girdle! Ha, ha, ha! None of your legerdmain tricks can pass upon me. Why, what a pack of trumpery has this rogue picked up. His pagod, poluflosboia, his zonos moros musphonons, and the devil knows what. But I'll take care. Ha! gone? Ay, 'twas time to sneak off. Soho! the house!

Enter SACKBUT.

Where is this trickster? Send for a constable; I'll have this rascal before the lord mayor; I'll Grand Cairo him, with the plague to him. I believe you had a hand in putting this imposture upon me, Sackbut.

Sack. Who, I, Mr. Periwinkle? I scorn it. I perceived he was a cheat, and left the room on purpose to send for a constable to apprehend him, and endeavoured to stop him when he went out. But the rogue made but one step from the stairs to the door; called a coach, leaped into it, and drove away like the devil, as Mr. Freeman can witness, who is at the bar, and desires to speak with you; he is this minute come to town.

Per. Send him in. [Exit SACKBUT] What a scheme this rogue has laid! How I should have been laughed at, had it succeeded!

Enter FREEMAN, booted and spurred.

Mr. Freeman, I had like to have been imposed on by the veriest rascal—

Free. I am sorry to hear it. The dog flew for't; he had not escaped me, had I been aware of him: Sackbut struck at him, but missed his blow, or he had done his business for him.

Per. I believe you never heard of such a contrivance, Mr. Freeman, as this fellow had found out.

Free. Mr. Sackbut has told me the whole story, Mr. Periwinkle; but now I have something to tell you of much more importance to yourself. I happened to lie one night at Coventry, and knowing your uncle, Sir Toby Periwinkle, I paid him a visit, and, to my great surprise, found him dying.

Per. Dying!

Free. Dying, in all appearance; the servants weeping, the room in darkness; the apothecary, shaking his head, told me the doctors had given him over; and then there are small hopes, you know.

Per. I hope he has made his will; he always told me he would make me his heir.

Free. I have heard you say as much, and therefore resolved to give you notice. I should think it would not be amiss if you went down to-morrow morning.

Per. It is a long journey, and the roads very bad.

Free. But he has a great estate, and the land very good. Think upon that.

Per. Why, that's true, as you say; I'll think upon it. In the meantime, I give you many thanks for your civility, Mr. Freeman, and should be glad of your company to dine with me.

Free. I am obliged to be at Jonathan's coffee-house at two, and now it is half an hour after one; if I despatch my business, I'll wait on you: I know your hour.

Per. You shall be very welcome, Mr. Freeman; and so your humble servant. [Exit.]

Re-enter Colonel FEIGNWELL and SACKBUT.

Free. Ha, ha, ha! I have done your business, Colonel; he has swallowed the bait.

Col. F. I overheard all, though I am a little in the dark. I am to personate a highwayman, I suppose; that's a project I am not fond of; for though I may fright him out of his consent, he may fright me out of my life when he discovers me, as he certainly must in the end.

Free. No, no: I have a plot for you without danger; but first we must manage Tradelove. Has the tailor brought your clothes?

Sack. Yes, plague take the thief.

Free. Well, well, no matter; I warrant we have him yet. But now you must put on the Dutch merchant.

Col. F. The deuce of this trading plot! I wish he had been an old soldier, that I might have attacked him in my own way, and heard him fight over all the battles of the late war. But for trade, by Jupiter! I shall never do it.

Sack. Never fear, Colonel: Mr. Freeman will instruct you.

Free. You'll see what others do; the coffee-house will instruct you.

Col. F. I must venture, however. But I have a further plot in my head upon Tradelove, which you must assist me in, Freeman. You are in credit with him, I heard you say.

Free. I am, and will scruple nothing to serve you, Colonel.

Col. F. Come along, then, Now for the Dutchman. Honest P'tolemy, by your leave.

*Now must bob-wig and business come in play,
A thirty thousand pound girl leads the way.*

[Exeunt.]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Jonathan's Coffee-house in 'Change-alley.—A crowd of people, with rolls of paper and parchment in their hands.—A bar; Waiters, &c.*

Enter TRADELOVE and Stock-jobbers, with rolls of paper and parchment.

1st. Stock. South sea at seven-eighths; who buys?

Trade. Harkye! Gabriel, you'll pay the difference of that stock we transacted for t'other day?

Gab. Ay, Mr. Tradelove; here's a note for the money.

Trade. I would fain bite the spark in the brown coat; he comes very often into the alley, but never employs a broker.

Enter Colonel FEIGNWELL and FREEMAN.

Trade. Mr. Freeman, your servant! Who is that gentleman?

Free. A Dutch merchant just come to England; but, harkye! Mr. Tradelove, I have a piece of news will get you as much as the French king's death did, if you are expeditious. [*Shewing him a letter.*] Read there: I received it just now from one that belongs to the emperor's minister.

Trade. [*Reads.*] "Sir,—As I have many obligations to you, I cannot miss any opportunity to shew my gratitude: this moment my lord has received a private express, that the Spaniards have raised their siege from before Cagliari. If this proves of any advantage to you, it will answer both the ends and wishes of, sir, your most obliged humble servant,—Henricus Dusseldorp.—P.S. In two or three hours the news will be public."—May one depend upon this, Mr. Freeman?

[*Aside to FREEMAN.*]

Free. You may. I never knew this person send me a false piece of news in my life.

Trade. Sir, I am much obliged to you; egad, 'tis rare news. Who sells South-sea for next week?

Stock. [*All together.*] I sell; I, I, I, I, I sell.

1st Stock. I'll sell five thousand, at five-eighths, for the same time.

Trade. Nay, nay; hold, hold! not all together, gentlemen; I'll be no bull; I'll buy no more than I can take. Will you sell ten thousand pounds at a half, for any day next week, except Saturday?

1st Stock. I'll sell it you, Mr. Tradelove.

[*Freeman whispers to one of the gentlemen.*]

1st Gent. The Spaniards raised the siege of Cagliari! I don't believe one word of it.

[*Aside.*]

2d Gent. Raised the siege! as much as you have raised the Monument.

Free. 'Tis raised, I assure you, sir.

2d Gent. What will you lay on't?

Free. What you please.

1st Gent. Why, I have a brother upon the spot, in the emperor's service; I am certain, if there were any such thing, I should have had a letter.

2d Gent. I'll hold you fifty pounds 'tis false.

Free. 'Tis done.

1st Gent. I'll lay you a brace of hundreds upon the same.

Free. I'll take you.

Trade. I'll lay any man a brace of thousands the siege is raged.

Free. The Dutch merchant is your man to take in.

[*Aside to Tradelove.*]

Trade. Does he not know the news?

Free. Not a syllable; if he did, he would bet a

hundred thousand pounds as soon as one penny. He's plaguy rich, and a mighty man at wagers.

[*To Tradelove.*]

Trade. Say you so? Egad, I'll bite him, if possible. Are you from Holland, sir?

Col. F. Ya, mynheer.

Trade. Had you the news before you came away?

Col. F. What believe you, mynheer?

Trade. What do I believe? Why, I believe that the Spaniards have actually raised the siege of Cagliari.

Col. F. What duyvel's news is dat? 'Tis niet waer, mynheer; 'tis no true, sir.

Trade. 'Tis so true, mynheer, that I'll lay you two thousand pounds on it.

Col. F. Two duysend pound mynheer, 'tis gadaen. Dis gentleman sal hold de gelt.

[*Gives Freeman money.*]

Trade. With all my heart; this binds the wager.

Free. You have certainly lost, mynheer; the siege is raised, indeed.

Col. F. Ik gelyt niet, mynheer Freeman ik sal ye doubled honden, if you please.

Free. I am let into the secret, therefore won't win your money.

Trade. Ha, ha, ha! I have snapped the Dutchman, 'faith; ha, ha! This is no ill day's work. Pray may I crave your name, mynheer?

Col. F. Myn naem, mynheer? Myn naem is Jan Van Timtamtiroleleletta Her Van Feignwell.

Trade. Zounds! 'tis a damned long name; I shall never remember it. Myn Heer Van, Tim, Tim, Tim—What the devil is it?

Free. Oh! never heed: I know the gentleman, and will pass my word for twice the sum.

Trade. That's enough.

Col. F. You'll hear of me sooner than you wish, old gentleman, I fancy. [*Aside.*] You'll come to Sackbut's, Freeman?

[*Aside to Freeman.*]

Free. Immediately. [*Aside to Colonel.*]

Trade. Mr. Freeman, I give you many thanks for your kindness.—

Free. I fear you'll repent when you know all. [*Aside.*]

Trade. Will you dine with me?

Free. I am engaged at Sackbut's: adieu. [*Exit.*]

Trade. Sir, your humble servant. Now I'll see what I can do upon 'Change with my news. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*The Tavern.*

Enter FREEMAN and Colonel FEIGNWELL.

Free. Ha, ha, ha! The old fellow swallowed the bait as greedily as a gudgeon.

Col. F. I have him, 'faith; ha, ha, ha! His two thousand pounds secure. If he would keep his money, he must part with the lady; ha, ha!

Enter SACKBUT.

Sack. Joy, joy, Colonel! the luckiest accident in the world.

Col. F. What say'st thou?

Sack. This letter does your business.

Col. F. [*Reads.*] "To Obadiah Prim, hosier, near the building called the Monument, in London."

Free. A letter to Prim! How came you by it?

Sack. Looking over the letters our post-man brought, as I always do, to see what letters are directed to my house, I spied this directed to Prim; so paid for it among the rest. I have given the old fellow a pint of wine, on purpose to delay time, till you see if the letter be of any service; then I'll seal it up again, and say I took it by mistake. I have

read it, and fancy you'll like the project. Read, read, Colonel.

Col. F. [*Reads.*] "*Friend Prim, there is arrived from Pennsylvania, one Simon Pure, a leader of the faithful, who hath sojourned with us eleven days, and hath been of great comfort to the brethren. He intendeth for the quarterly meeting in London; I have recommended him to thy house. I pray thee, treat him kindly, and let thy wife cherish him, for he's of a weakly constitution; he will depart from us the third day; which is all from thy friend in the faith, Aminadab Holdfast.*" Ha, ha! excellent! I understand you, laudlord: I am to personate this Simon Pure, am I not?

Sack. Don't you like the hint?

Col. F. Admirably well!

Free. 'Tis the best contrivance in the world, if the right Simon gets not there before you.

Col. F. No, no; the quakers never ride post. And suppose, Freeman, you should wait at the Bristol coach, that if you see any such person, you might contrive to give me notice.

Free. I will.

[*Bell rings.*

Sack. Coming, Coming!

[*Exit.*

Free. Thou must despatch Periwinkle first. Remember his uncle, Sir Toby Periwinkle, is an old bachelor of seventy-five; that he has seven hundred a year, most in abbey-land,—that he was once in love with your mother—shrewdly suspected by some to be your father; that you have been thirty years his steward, and ten years his gentleman: remember to improve these hints.

Col. F. Never fear; let me alone for that. But what's the steward's name?

Free. His name is Pillage.

Col. F. Enough. Now for the country put.

Enter SACKBUT.

Sack. Zounds! Mr. Freeman, yonder is Trade-love in the d——st passion in the world. He swears you are in the house: he says you told him you were to dine here.

Free. I did so: ha, ha, ha! he has found himself bit already.

Col. F. The devil! he must not see me.

Sack. I told him I expected you here, but you were not come yet.

Free. Very well; make you haste out, colonel, and let me alone to deal with him. Where is he?

Sack. In the King's-head.

Free. Ay, ay; very well, landlord; let him know I am come in; and now, Mr. Pillage, success attend you.

[*Exit Sackbut.*

Col. F. Mr. Proteus rather,—

From changing shape, and imitating Jove,

I draw the happy omens of my love.

I'm not the first young brother of the blade,

Who made his fortune in a masquerade. [*Exit.*

Enter TRADELOVE.

Free. Zounds! Mr. Trade-love, we're bit it seems.

Trade. Bit, do you call it, Mr. Freeman! I'm ruined. Plague on your news.

Free. Plague on the rascal that sent it me.

Trade. Sent it you! Why, Gabriel Skinflint has been at the minister's, and spoke with him; and he has assured him 'tis every syllable false: he received no such express.

Free. I know it; I this minute parted with my friend, who protested he never sent me any such letter. Some roguish stock-jobber has done it on purpose to make me lose my money, that's certain. I

wish I knew who he was; I'd make him repent it: I have lost three hundred pounds by it.

Trade. What signifies your three hundred pounds to what I have lost? There's two thousand pounds to that Dutchman with a cursed long name, besides the stock I bought; the devil! I must never shew my face upon 'Change more; for, by my soul! I can't pay it.

Free. I am heartily sorry for it! What can I serve you in? Shall I speak to the Dutch merchant, and try to get you time for the payment?

Trade. Time! Ad's'heart! I shall never be able to look up again.

Free. I am very much concerned that I was the occasion, and wish I could be an instrument of retrieving your misfortune; for my own, I value it not. Adso! a thought comes into my head, that, well improved, may be of service.

Trade. Ah! there's no thought can be of any service to me, without paying the money or running away.

Free. How do you know? What do you think of my proposing Miss Lovely to him? He is a single man; and I heard him say he had a mind to marry an English woman; nay, more than that, he said somebody told him you had a pretty ward; he wished you had betted her instead of your money.

Trade. Ay, but he'd be hanged before he'd take her instead of the money: the Dutch are too covetous for that; besides, he did not know that there were three more of us, I suppose.

Free. So much the better; you may venture to give him your consent, if he'll forgive you the wager. It is not your business to tell him that your consent will signify nothing.

Trade. That's right, as you say; but will he do it, think you?

Free. I can't tell that; but I'll try what I can do with him. He has promised to meet me here an hour hence; I'll feel his pulse, and let you know: if I find it feasible, I'll send for you; if not, you are at liberty to take what measures you please.

Trade. You must extol her beauty, double her portion, and tell him I have the entire disposal of her, and that she can't marry without my consent; and that I am a covetous rogue, and will never part with her without a valuable consideration.

Free. Ay, ay, let me alone for a lie at a pinch.

Trade. Égad, if you can bring this to bear, Mr. Freeman, I'll make you whole again; I'll pay the three hundred pounds you lost with all my soul.

Free. Well, I'll use my best endeavours. Where will you be?

Trade. At home. Pray heaven you prosper!—If I were but the sole trustee now, I should not fear it.

[*Exit.*

Free. Ha, ha, ha!—he has it.

[*Exit.*

SCENE III.—Periwinkle's House.

Enter PERIWINKLE, meeting a Footman.

Foot. A gentleman from Coventry inquires for you, sir.

Per. From my uncle, I warrant you; bring him up. This will save me the trouble, as well as the expense, of a journey.

Enter COLONEL FEIGNWELL.

Col. F. Is your name Periwinkle, sir?

Per. It is, sir.

Col. F. I am sorry for the message I bring. My old master, whom I served these forty years, claims

the sorrow due from a faithful servant to an indulgent master. [Weeps.]

Per. By this, I understand, sir, my uncle, Sir Toby Periwinkle, is dead.

Col. F. He is, sir; and has left you heir to seven hundred a year, in as good abbey-land as ever paid Peter-pence to Rome. I wish you long to enjoy it; but my tears will flow when I think of my benefactor. [Weeps.] Ah! he was a good man, he has not left many of his fellows; the poor lament him sorely.

Per. I pray, sir, what office bore you?

Col. F. He was his steward, sir.

Per. I have heard him mention you with much respect; your name is,—

Col. F. Pillage, Sir.

Per. Ay, Pillage; I do remember he called you Pillage. [The Colonel sits down.] Pray Mr. Pillage, when did my uncle die?

Col. F. Monday last, at four in the morning. About two he signed his will, and gave it into my hands, and strictly charged me to leave Coventry the moment he expired, and deliver it to you with what speed I could; I have obeyed him, sir, and there is the will. [Gives it to Periwinkle.]

Per. 'Tis very well; I'll lodge it in the Commons.

Col. F. There are two things which he forgot to insert; but charged me to tell you, that he desired you'd perform them as readily as if you had found them written in the will—which is to remove his corpse, and bury him by his father, at St. Paul's, Covent-garden, and to give all his servants mourning.

Per. That will be a considerable charge. A plague of all modern fashions! [Aside.] Well! it shall be done, Mr. Pillage; I will agree with one of death's fashion-monger's, called an undertaker, to go down, and bring up the body.

Col. F. I hope, sir, I shall have the honour to serve you in the same station I did your worthy uncle; I have not many years to stay behind him, and would gladly spend them in the family, where I was brought up. [Weeps.] He was a kind and a tender master to me.

Per. Pray don't grieve, Mr. Pillage, you shall hold your place, and every thing else which you held under my uncle. You make me weep to see you so concerned. [Weeps.] He lived to a good old age, and we are all mortal.

Col. F. We are so, sir, and therefore I must beg you to sign this lease. You'll find sir Toby has taken particular notice of it in his will; I could not get it time enough from the lawyer, or he had signed it before he died. [Gives him a paper.]

Per. A lease! for what?

Col. F. I rented a hundred a-year farm of Sir Toby upon lease, which lease expires at Lady-day next. I desire to renew for twenty years; that's all, sir.

Per. Let me see. [Looks over the lease.] Very well. Let me see what he says in his will about it. [Lays the lease upon the table, and looks on the will.] Oh! here it is. The farm lying,—now in possession of Samuel Pillage,—suffer him to renew his lease,—at the same rent. Very well, Mr. Pillage, I see my uncle does mention it, and I'll perform his will. Give me the lease. [Colonel gives it him, he looks at it, and lays it upon the table.] Pray you step to the door, and call for pen and ink, Mr. Pillage.

Col. F. I have a pen and ink in my pocket, sir. [Picks out an ink-horn.] I never go without that.

Per. I think it belongs to your profession. [Looks upon the pen, while the Colonel changes the lease and lays down the contract.] I doubt this is but a sorry pen, though it may serve to write my name. [Writes.]

Col. F. Little does he think what he signs. [Aside.]

Per. There is your lease, Mr. Pillage. [Gives him the paper.] Now, I must desire you to make what haste you can down to Coventry, and take care of every thing, and I'll send down the undertaker for the body; do you attend it up, and whatever charge you are at, I'll repay you.

Col. F. You have paid me already, I thank you, sir. [Aside.]

Per. Will you dine with me?

Col. F. I would rather not; there are some of my neighbours which I met as I came along, who leave town this afternoon, they told me, and I should be glad of their company down.

Per. Well, well, I won't detain you. I will give orders about mourning. [Exit Colonel.] Seven hundred a-year! I wish he had died seventeen years ago. What a valuable collection of rarities might I have had by this time! I might have travelled over all the known parts of the globe, and made my own closet rival the Vatican at Rome.—Odso! I have a good mind to begin my travels now—let me see—I am but sixty. My father, grandfather, and great grandfather, reached ninety odd; I have almost forty years good. Let me consider! what will seven hundred a-year amount to in—ay, in thirty years, I say, but thirty: thirty times seven, is seven times thirty; that is, just twenty-one thousand pounds. 'Tis a great deal of money; I may very well reserve sixteen hundred of it for a collection of such rarities as will make my name famous to posterity. I would not die like other mortals, forgotten in a year or two, as my uncle will be; no,—

With nature's curious works I'll raise my fame,
That men till doomsday may repeat my name.

[Exit.]

SCENE IV.—A Tavern.

FREEMAN and TRADELOVE discovered over a bottle.

Trade. Come, Mr. Freeman, here's Mynheer Jan Van, Tim, Tam, Tam—I shall never think of that Dutchman's name.

Free. Mynheer Jan Van Timamtirelereletta Heer Van Feignwell.

Trade. Ay, Heer Van Feignwell; I never heard such a confounded name in my life; here's his health, I say.

Free. With all my heart.

Trade. 'Faith, I never expected to have found so generous a thing in a Dutchman.

Free. As soon as I told him your circumstances, he replied, he would not be the ruin of any man for the world; and immediately made this proposal himself. Let him take what time he will for the payment, said he; or if he'll give me his ward, I'll forgive him the debt.

Trade. Well, Mr. Freeman, I can but thank you. Egad, you have made a man of me again! and if ever I lay a wager more, may I rot in gaol.

Free. I assure you, Mr. Tradelove, I was very much concerned, because I was the occasion, though very innocently, I protest.

Trade. I dare swear you was, Mr. Freeman.

Enter COLONEL FEIGNWELL, dressed as the Dutch merchant.

Col. F. Ha, mynheer Tradelove, Ik bin sorry voor your trouble, maer Ik sal you easie maken Ik wil de gelt mie hebben,—

Trade. I shall for ever acknowledge the obligation, sir.

Free. But you understand upon what condition, Mr. Tradelove—Miss Lovely.

Col. F. Ya, de vrow sal al te regt setten, mynheer.

Trade. With all my heart, mynheer; you shall have my consent to marry her freely.

Free. Well, then, as I am a party concerned between you, mynheer Jan Van Tintamtirelereletta Heer Van Feignwell shall give you a discharge of your wager under his own hand, and you shall give him your consent to marry Miss Lovely under your's; that is the way to avoid all manner of disputes hereafter.

Col. F. Ya, weeragtig.

Trade. Ay, ay, so it is, Mr. Freeman; I'll give it under mine this minute. [*Sits down to write.*]

Col. F. And so Ik sal. [*Does the same.*]

Free. So ho, the house!

Enter Waiter.

Bid your master come up. [*Exit Waiter.*] I'll see there be witnesses enough to the bargain. [*Aside.*]

Enter SACKBUT.

Sack. Do you call, gentlemen?

Free. Ay, Mr. Sackbut, we shall want your hand here.

Trade. There, mynheer, there's my consent as amply as you can desire; but you must insert your own name, for I know not how to spell it; I have left a blank for it. [*Gives the Colonel a paper.*]

Col. F. Ya Ik sal dat well doen.

Free. Now, Mr. Sackbut, you and I will witness it. [*They write.*]

Col. F. Daer, Mynheer Tradelove, is your discharge. [*Gives him a paper.*]

Trade. Be pleased to witness this receipt too, gentlemen. [*Freeman and Sackbut put their hands.*]

Free. Ay, ay, that we will.

Col. F. Well, mynheer, ye most meer doen, ye most myn voorsprach to de vrow syn.

Free. He means you must recommend him to the lady.

Trade. That I will, and to the rest of my brother guardians.

Col. F. Wat voo? de duyvel! heb you meer guardians?

Trade. Only three, mynheer.

Col. F. What donder heb ye myn betrocken, mynheer? Had Ik dat gewoeten, Ik soude eaven met you geweest syn.

Sack. But, Mr. Tradelove is the principal; and he can do a great deal with the rest, sir.

Free. And he shall use his interest, I promise you, mynheer.

Trade. I will say all that ever I can think on to recommend you, mynheer; and if you please, I'll introduce you to the lady.

Col. F. Well, dat is waer. Maer ye must first sprekten of myn to de vrow, and to ondere gentlemen.

Free. Ay, that's the best way, and then I and the Heer Van Feignwell will meet you there.

Trade. I will go this moment, upon my honour. Your most obedient humble servant. My speaking will do you little good, mynheer; ha, ha! we have bit you, 'faith: ha, ha! [*Aside*]

Well, my debt's discharged—and as for Nan,

He has my consent—to get her if he can. [*Aside.*]

[*Exit.*]

Col. F. Ha, ha, ha! this was a masterpiece of contrivance, Freeman.

Free. He hugs himself with his supposed good

fortune, and little thinks the luck's on our side! But, come, pursue the fickle goddess, while she's in the mood. Now for the Quaker,

Col. F. That's the hardest task

Of all the counterfeits perform'd by man,

A soldier makes the simplest puritan. 'Ereunt.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—An Apartment in Prim's house.

Enter MRS. PRIM, and MISS LOVELY, in a Quaker's dress.

Mrs. P. So, now I like thee, Anne; art thou not better without thy monstrous vanities and patches? If heaven should make thee so many black spots upon thy face, would it not fright thee, Anne?

Miss L. If it should turn you inside outward, and shew all the spots of your hypocrisy, 'twould fright me worse!

Mrs. P. My hypocrisy! I seem thy words, Anne; I lay no baits.

Miss L. If you did, you'd catch no fish.

Mrs. P. Well, well, make thy jests; but I'd have thee to know, Anne, that I could have catched as many fish (as thou callest them,) in my time, as ever thou didst with all thy fool-traps about thee.

Miss L. Is that the reason of your formality, Mrs. Prim? Truth will out; I ever thought, indeed, there was more design than godliness in the pinched cap.

Mrs. P. Go, thou art corrupted with reading lewd plays, and filthy romances. Ah! I wish thou art not already too familiar with the wicked ones!

Miss L. Too familiar with the wicked ones! Pray, no more of these freedoms, madam. I am familiar with none so wicked as yourself; how dare you thus talk to me! you—you—you, unworthy woman, you. [*Bursts into tears.*]

Enter TRADELOVE.

Trade. What, in tears, Nancy? What have you done to her, Mrs. Prim, to make her weep?

Miss L. Done to me? I admire I keep my senses among you; but I will rid myself of your tyranny, if there be either law or justice to be had. I'll force you to give me up my liberty.

Mrs. P. Thou hast more need to weep for thy sins, Anne; yea, for thy manifold sins.

Miss L. Don't think that I'll be still the fool which you have made me; no, I'll wear what I please—go when and where I please,—and keep what company I think fit, and not what you shall direct; I will.

Trade. For my part, I do think all this very reasonable, Miss Lovely; 'tis fit you should have your liberty, and for that very purpose I am come.

Enter PERIWINKLE and OBADIAH PRIM, with a letter in his hand.

Per. I have bought some black stockings of your husband, Mrs. Prim; but he tells me the Glover's trade belongs to you: therefore, I pray you look me out five or six dozen of mourning gloves, such as are given at funerals, and send them to my house.

Obad. My friend Periwinkle has got a good wind-fall to-day; seven hundred a-year.

Mrs. P. I wish thee joy of it, neighbour.

Trade. What, is Sir Toby dead then?

Per. He is. You'll take care, Mrs. Prim.

Mrs. P. Yea, I will, neighbour.

Obad. This letter recommendeth a speaker: 'tis from Aminadab Holdfast, of Bristol; peradventure he will be here this night; therefore, Sarah, do thou take care for his reception. [*Gives her the letter.*]

Mrs. P. I will obey thee. [*Exit.*]

Obad. What art thou in the dumps for, Anne?

Trade. We must marry her, Mr. Prim.

Obad. Why, truly, if we could find a husband worth having, I should be as glad to see her married as thou wouldst, neighbour.

Per. Well said, there are but few worth having.

Trade. I can recommend you a man now, that I think you can none of you have an objection to.

Enter Sir PHILIP MODELOVE.

Per. You recommend? Nay, whenever she marries, I'll recommend the husband.

Sir P. What, must it be a whale, or a rhinoceros, Mr. Periwinkle? Ha, ha, ha!

Per. He shall be none of the fops at your end of the town, with mop-heads and empty skulls; nor yet any of our trading gentry, who puzzle the heralds to find arms for their coaches. No; he shall be a man famous for travels, solidity, and curiosity; one who has searched into the profundity of nature: when heaven shall direct such a one, he shall have my consent, because it may turn to the benefit of mankind.

Miss L. The benefit of mankind! What, would you anatomize me?

Sir P. Ay, ay, madam, he would dissect you.

Trade. Or, pure over you through a microscope, to see how your blood circulates from the crown of your head to the sole of your foot;—ha, ha! But I have a husband for you, a man that knows how to improve your fortune; one that trades to the four corners of the globe.

Miss L. And would send me for a venture, perhaps.

Trade. One that will dress you in all the pride of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America: a Dutch merchant, my girl.

Sir P. A Dutchman! ha, ha! There's a husband for a fine lady. Ya frow, will you meet myn slapen, ha, ha! he'll learn you to talk the language of the hogs, madam, ha, ha!

Trade. He'll teach you that one merchant is of more service to a nation than fifty coxcombs. 'Tis the merchant makes the belle. How would the ladies sparkle in the box, without the merchant? The Indian diamond! the French brocade! the Italian fan! the Flanders lace! the fine Dutch holland! How would they vent their scandal over their teatables? And where would your beaux have champagne to toast their mistresses, were it not for the merchant?

Obad. Verily, neighbour Tradelove, thou dost waste thy breath about nothing. All that thou hast said tendeth only to debauch youth, and fill their heads with the pride and luxury of this world. The merchant is a very great friend to Satan, and sendeth as many to his dominions as the Pope.

Per. Right; I say, knowledge makes the man.

Obad. Yea, but not thy kind of knowledge; it is the knowledge of truth. Search thou for the light within, and not for baubles, friend.

Miss L. Ah! study your country's good, Mr. Periwinkle, and not her insects. Rid you of your home-bred monsters, before you fetch any from abroad. I dare swear, you have maggots enough in your own brain to stock all the virtuosos in Europe with butterflies.

Sir P. By my soul! Miss Nancy's a wit.

Obad. That is more than she can say of thee, friend. Lookye, 'tis in vain to talk; when I meet a man worthy of her, she shall have my leave to marry him.

Miss L. Provided he be of the faithful. Was there ever such a swarm of caterpillars to blast the hopes of a woman! [*Aside.*] Know this, that you contend in vain; I'll have no husband of your choosing, nor shall you lord it over me long. I'll try the power of an English senate. Orphans have been redressed, and will set aside, and none did ever deserve their pity more. O, Feignwell! where are thy promises to free me from these vermin? Alas! the task was more difficult than he imagined. [*Aside.*]

A harder task than what the poets tell

Of yore the fair Andromeda befell;

She but one monster fear'd, I've four to fear,

And see no Perseus, no deliverer near. [*Exit.*]

Enter Servant, who whispers to OBADIAH PRIM.

Per. The woman is mad.

Sir P. So are you all, in my opinion. [*Exit.*]

Serv. One Simon Pure inquireth for thee. [*Exit.*]

Obad. Friend Tradelove, business requireth my presence.

Trade. Oh! I sha'n't trouble you. Plague take him for an unmannerly dog; however, I have kept my word with my Dutchman, and I'll introduce him too, for all you. [*Exit.*]

Enter Colonel FEIGNWELL, in a Quaker's habit.

Obad. Friend Pure, thou art welcome. How is it with friend Holdfast, and all friends in Bristol; Timothy Littleworth, John Slenderbrain, and Christopher Keepfaith?

Col. F. A goodly company! [*Aside.*] They are all in health, I thank thee for them.

Obad. Friend Holdfast writes me word, that thou camest lately from Pennsylvania: how do all friends there?

Col. F. What the devil shall I say? I know just as much of Pennsylvania as I do of Bristol. [*Aside.*]

Obad. Do they thrive?

Col. F. Yea, friend, the blessing of their good works falls upon them.

Enter Mrs. PRIM and Miss LOVELY.

Obad. Sarah, know our friend Pure.

Mrs. P. Thou art welcome. [*He salutes her.*]

Col. F. Here comes the sum of all my wishes. How charming she appears even in that disguise!

[*Aside.*]

Obad. Why dost thou consider the maiden so attentively, friend?

Col. F. I will tell thee. About four days ago I saw a vision. This very maiden, but in vain attire, standing on a precipice, I heard a voice which called me by my name, and bid me put forth my hand, and save her from the pit. I did so, and methought the damsel grew unto my side.

Mrs. P. What can that portend?

Obad. The damsel's conversion, I am persuaded.

Miss L. That's false, I'm sure. [*Aside.*]

Obad. Wilt thou use the means, friend Pure?

Col. F. Means! What means? Is she not thy daughter, already one of the faithful?

Mrs. P. No, alas! she's one of the ungodly.

Obad. Pray thee mind what this good man will say unto thee: he will teach thee the way thou should'st walk, Anne.

Miss L. I know my way without his instruction: I hoped to have been quiet when once I had put on your odious formality here.

Col. F. Then thou wearest it out of compulsion, not choice, friend?

Miss L. Thou art in the right of it, friend.

Mrs. P. Art thou not ashamed to mimic the good man? Ah! thou stubborn girl.

Col. F. Mind her not; she hurteth not me. If thou wilt leave her alone with me, I will discuss some few points with her, that may perchance soften her stubbornness, and melt her into compliance.

Obad. Content; I pray thee put it home to her. Come, Sarah, let us leave the good man with her.

Miss L. [Catches hold of PRIM; he breaks loose. Enter OBAD. and Mrs. P.] What, do you mean to leave me with this old, enthusiastical canter! Don't think because I complied with your formality, to impose your ridiculous doctrine upon me.

Col. F. I pray thee, young woman, moderate thy passion.

Miss L. I pray thee, walk after thy leader; you will but lose your labour upon me. These wretches will certainly make me mad!

Col. F. I am of another opinion; the spirit telleth me I shall convert thee, Anne.

Miss L. 'Tis a lying spirit; don't believe it.

Col. F. Say'st thou so? Why then thou shalt convert me, my angel. [Catching her in his arms.

Miss L. [Shrieks.] Ah! monster, hold off, or I'll tear thy eyes out.

Col. F. Hush! for heaven's sake; dost thou not know me? I am Feignwell!

Miss L. Feignwell!

Re-enter OBADIAH PRIM.

Oh, I'm undone! Prim here! I wish with all my soul I had been dumb.

Obad. What is the matter? Why didst thou shriek out, Anne?

Miss L. Shriek out! I'll shriek and shriek again, cry murder, thieves, or anything, to drown the noise of that eternal babbler, if you leave me with him any longer.

Obad. Was that all? Fie, fie, Anne!

Col. F. No matter, I'll bring down her stomach, I'll warrant thee. Leave us, I pray thee.

Obad. Fare thee well. Verily, I was afraid the flesh had got the better of the spirit. [Exit.

Col. F. My charming, lovely woman!

[Embraces her.

Miss L. What meanest thou by this disguise, Feignwell?

Col. F. To set thee free, if thou wilt perform thy promise.

Miss L. Make me mistress of my fortune, and make thy own conditions.

Col. F. This night shall answer all my wishes. See here I have the consent of three of thy guardians already, and doubt not but Prim will make the fourth.

Enter OBADIAH PRIM, who listens.

Obad. I would gladly hear what arguments the good man useth to bend her. [Aside.

Miss L. Thy words give me new life, methinks.

Obad. What do I hear? [Aside.

Miss L. Thou best of men, heaven meant to bless me sure, when I first saw thee.

Obad. He hath mollified her. O wonderful conversion! [Aside.

Col. F. [Softly.] Ha! Prim listening.—No more my love, we are observed: seem to be edified, and give them hopes that thou wilt turn Quaker, and leave the rest to me. [Aloud.] I am glad to find that thou art touched with what I said unto thee, Anne;

another time I will explain the other article unto thee: in the meanwhile be thou dutiful to our friend Prim.

Miss L. I shall obey thee in everything.

[OBADIAH comes forward.

Obad. Oh, what a prodigious change is here! Thou hast wrought a miracle, friend! Anne, how dost thou like the doctrine he hath preached?

Miss L. So well that I could talk to him for ever, methinks. I am ashamed of my former folly, and ask your pardon.

Col. F. Enough, enough, that thou art sorry; he is no pope, Anne.

Obad. True; I am no pope, Anne. Verily, thou dost rejoice me exceedingly, friend: will it please thee to walk into the next room, and refresh thyself? Come, take the maiden by the hand.

Col. F. We will follow thee. [Going.

Enter Servant.

Serv. There is another Simon Pure inquireth for thee, master.

Col. F. The devil there is! [Aside.

Obad. Another Simon Pure! I do not know him; is he any relation of thine?

Col. F. No, friend; I know him not. Plague take him! I wish he were in Pennsylvania again, with all my soul. [Aside.

Miss L. What shall I do?

Obad. Bring him up. [Exit Servant.

Col. F. Humph! then one of us must go down, that's certain. Now, impudence assist me.

Enter SIMON PURE.

Obad. What is thy will with me, friend?

Simon. Didst thou not receive a letter from Aminadab Holdfast of Bristol, concerning one Simon Pure?

Obad. Yea, Simon Pure is already here, friend. Col. F. And Simon Pure will stay here, friend, if it be possible. [Aside.

Simon. That's an untruth, for I am he.

Col. F. Take thou heed, friend, what thou dost say: I do affirm that I am Simon Pure.

Simon. Thy name may be Pure, friend, but not that Pure.

Col. F. Yea, that Pure which my good friend, Aminadab Holdfast, wrote to my friend Prim about; the same Simon Pure that came from Pennsylvania, and sojourned in Bristol eleven days; thou would'st not take my name from me, would'st thou?—till I have done with it. [Aside.

Simon. Thy name! I am astonished!

Col. F. At what? At thy own assurance?

[Going up to him, SIMON PURE starts back.

Simon. Avaunt! Satan, approach me not: I defy thee, and all thy works.

Miss L. Oh! he'll out-cant him. Undone, undone for ever. [Aside.

Col. F. Hark thee, friend! thy sham will not take. Don't exert thy voice; thou art too well acquainted with Satan to start at him, thou wicked reprobate. What can thy design be here?

Enter a Servant, who gives PRIM a letter.

Obad. One of these must be a counterfeit, but which I cannot say.

Col. F. What can that letter be? [Aside.

Simon. Thou must be the devil, friend, that's certain; for no human power can speak so great a falsehood.

Obad. This letter sayeth that thou art better ac-

quainted with that prince of darkness, than any here.
[To SIMON.] Read that, I pray thee, Simon.

[Gives it to the Colonel.
Col. F. [Aside.] 'Tis Freeman's hand. [Reads.]
"There is a design formed to rob your house this night,
and cut your throat; and for that purpose there is a
man disguised like a Quaker, who is to pass for one
Simon Pure: the gang, whereof I am one, though now
resolved to rob no more, has been at Bristol: one of
them came in the coach with the Quaker, whose name
he hath taken; and from what he hath gathered from
him, formed that design, and did not doubt but he
should impose so far upon you as to make you turn out
the real Simon Pure, and keep him with you. Make
the right use of this. Adieu."—Excellent well! [Aside.]

Obad. Dost thou hear this? [To SIMON.]

Simon. Yea, but it moveth me not; that doubtless
is the impostor. [Pointing to the Colonel.]

Col. F. Ah! thou wicked one. Now I consider
thy face, I remember thou didst come up in the
leathern conveniency with me. Thou hadst a black
bob-wig on, and a brown camblet coat with brass
buttons. Canst thou deny it, eh?

Simon. Yea, I can, and with a safe conscience
too, friend.

Obad. Verily, friend, thou art the most impudent
villain I ever saw.

Miss L. Nay, then, I'll have a fling at him.
[Aside.] I remember the face of this fellow at Bath.
Ay, this is he that picked my Lady Raffle's pocket
in the Grove. Don't you remember that the mob
pumped upon you, friend? This is the most notori-
ous rogue—

Simon. What does provoke thee to seek my life?
Thou wilt not hang me, wilt thou, wrongfully?

Obad. She will do thee no hurt; nor thou shalt
do me none; therefore get thee about thy business,
friend, and leave thy wicked course of life, or thou
may'st not come off so favourably everywhere. Simon,
I pray thee, put him forth.

Col. F. Go, friend, I would advise thee, and tempt
thy fate no more.

Simon. Yea, I will go: but it shall be to thy con-
fusion; for I shall clear myself. I will return with
some proofs that shall convince thee, Obadiah, that
thou art highly imposed upon. [Exit.]

Col. F. Then there will be no staying for me,
that's certain. What the devil shall I do? [Aside.]

Obad. What monstrous works of iniquity are
there in this world, Simon?

Col. F. Yea, the age is full of vice. 'Sdeath, I am
so confounded I know not what to say. [Aside.]

Obad. Thou art disordered, friend; art thou not
well?

Col. F. My spirit is greatly troubled, and some-
thing telleth me, that though I have wrought a good
work in converting this maiden, this tender maiden,
yet my labour will be in vain, for the evil spirit
fighteth against her; and I see, yea, I see with the
eye of my inward man, that Satan will rebuff her
again, whenever I withdraw myself from her; and
she will, yea, this very damsel will return again to
that abomination from whence I have retrieved her,
as it were—yea, as if it were out of the jaws of the
fiend.

Miss L. I must second him. [Aside.] What mean-
eth this struggling within me? I feel the spirit resis-
teth the vanities of this world; but the flesh is
rebellious, yea, the flesh—I greatly fear the flesh and
the weakness thereof. Hum.

Obad. The maid is inspired. [Aside.] Prodigious!
The damsel is filled with the spirit. Sarah!

Enter Mrs. PRIM.

Mrs P. I am greatly rejoiced to see such a change
in our beloved Anne. I came to tell thee that sup-
per stayeth for thee.

Col. F. I am not disposed for thy food; my spirit
longeth for more delicious meat! Fain would I re-
deem this maiden from the tribe of sinners, and break
those cords asunder wherewith she is bound. Hum.

Miss L. Something whispers in my ears, methinks,
that I must be subject to the will of this good man,
and from him only must hope for consolation. Hum.
It also telleth me that I am a chosen vessel to raise
up seed to the faithful, and that thou must consent
that we two be one flesh, according to the word.
Hum!

Obad. What a revelation is here! This is cer-
tainly part of thy vision, friend; this is the maiden's
growing unto thy side. Ah! with what willingness
should I give thee my consent, could I give thee her
fortune too; but thou wilt never get the consent of
the wicked ones.

Col. F. I wish I was as sure of your's. [Aside.]

Obad. [To Miss L.] My soul rejoiceth, yea re-
joiceth, I say, to find the spirit within thee; for lo,
it moveth thee with natural agitation; yea, with
natural agitation; yea, with natural agitation to-
wards this good man; yea, it stirreth, as one may
say,—yea, verily I say, it stirreth up thy inclina-
tion,—yea, as one would stir a pudding.

All. Hum!

Miss L. I see, I see the spirit guiding of thy
hand, good Obadiah Prim, and now behold thou art
signing thy consent; and now I see myself within
thy arms, my friend and brother; yea, I am become
bone of thy bone, and flesh of thy flesh. [Embracing
Col. F.] Hum!

Mrs. P. The spirit hath greatly moved them both.
Friend Prim, thou must consent; there's no resist-
ing of the spirit.

Obad. Fetch me the pen and ink, Sarah; and my
hand shall confess its obedience to the spirit.

[Exit Mrs. P.]

Col. F. I wish it were over.

Re-enter Mrs. PRIM, with pen and ink

Miss L. I tremble lest this quaking rogue should
return, and spoil all. [Aside.]

Obad. Here, friend, do thou write what the spirit
prompteth, and I will sign it. [Col. F. sits down.]

Col. F. [Reads.] "This is to certify to all whom it
may concern, that I do freely give all my right and
title in Anne Lovely to Simon Pure, and my full con-
sent that she shall become his wife, according to the
form of marriage. Witness my hand."

Obad. That enough; give me the pen. [Signs it.]

Enter BETTY.

Betty. Oh! madam, madam, here's the quaking
man again: he has brought a coachman, and two or
three more. [Aside to Miss L. and exit.]

Miss L. Ruined, past redemption!

[Aside to the Colonel.]

Col. F. No, no; one minute sooner had spoiled
all; but now—Here's company coming, friend; give
me the paper. [Going to Prim hastily.]

Obad. Here it is, Simon; and I wish thee happy
with the maiden.

Miss L. 'Tis done; and now, devil, do thy worst.

Enter SIMON PURE, Coachman, and others.

Simon. Look thee, friend, I have brought these
people to satisfy thee that I am not that impostor
which thou didst take me for. This is the man that

did drive the leathern conveniency, and brought me from Bristol; and this is,—

Col. F. Lookye, friend, to save the court the trouble of examining witnesses, I plead guilty. Ha, ha!

Obad. How's this? Is not thy name Pure, then?

Col. F. No, really, sir; I only made bold with this gentleman's name; but here I give it up safe and sound: it has done the business I had occasion for, and now I intend to wear my own, which shall be at his service upon the same occasion at any time. Ha, ha, ha!

Simon. Oh! the wickedness of the age!

[*Exit Coachman, &c.*]

Obad. I am struck dumb with thy impudence, Anne; thou hadst deceived me, and perchance undone thyself.

Mrs. P. Thou art a dissembling baggage, and shame will overtake thee. [*Exit.*]

Simon. I am grieved to see thy wife so much troubled; I will follow and console her. [*Exit.*]

Enter Servant.

Serv. Thy brother guardians inquire for thee; here is another man with them. [*Exit.*]

Miss L. Who can that man be? [*To Col. F.*]

Col. F. 'Tis Freeman; a friend of mine, whom I ordered to bring the rest of the guardians here.

Enter Sir PHILIP MODELOVE, TRADELOVE, PERIWINKLE, and FREEMAN.

Free. Is all safe? Did my letter do you service?

[*Aside to the Colonel.*]

Col. F. All, all's safe;—ample service. [*Aside.*]

Sir P. Miss Nancy, how dost do, child?

Miss L. Don't call me miss, friend Philip; my name is Anne, thou knowest.

Sir P. What, is the girl metamorphosed?

Miss L. I wish thou wert so metamorphosed. Ah! Philip, throw off that gaudy attire, and wear the clothes becoming thy age.

Obad. I am ashamed to see these men. [*Aside.*]

Sir P. My age! the woman is possessed.

Col. F. No; thou art possessed rather, friend.

Trade. Harkye! Miss Lovely, one word with you.

[*Takes hold of her hand.*]

Col. F. This maiden is my wife, thanks to my friend Prim, and thou hast no business with her.

[*Takes her from him.*]

Trade. His wife! harkye, Mr. Freeman.

Per. Why, you have made a very fine piece of work of it, Mr. Prim.

Sir P. Married to a quaker! thou art a fine fellow to be left guardian to an orphan, truly. There's a husband for a young lady!

Col. F. When I have put on my beau clothes, Sir Philip, you'll like me better.

Sir P. Thou wilt make a very scurvy beau, friend.

Col. F. I believe I can prove it under your hand that you thought me a very fine gentleman in the park 't'other day, about thirty-six minutes after eleven. Will you take a pinch, Sir Philip? One of the finest snuff-boxes you ever saw. [*Offers him snuff.*]

Sir P. Ha, ha, ha! I am overjoyed, 'faith I am, if thou be'st the gentleman. I own I did give my consent to the gentleman I brought here to-day; but whether this is he, I can't be positive.

Obad. Canst thou not? Now I think thou art a fine fellow to be left guardian to an orphan. Thou shallow-brained shuttlecock! he may be a pick-pocket for aught thou dost know.

Per. You would have been two rare fellows to have been entrusted with the sole management of her fortune, would ye not, think ye? But Mr. Trade-love and myself shall take care of her portion.

Trade. Ay, ay, so we will. Didn't you tell me the Dutch merchant desired me to meet him here, Mr. Freeman?

Free. I did so, and I am sure he will be here, if you'll have a little patience.

Col. F. What, is Mr. Trade-love impatient? Nay, then, ib ben gereet voor you, he be, Jan Van Tintamtielreleletta Heer Van Feignwelt, vergeeten!

Trade. Oh! plague of the name! what have you tricked me too, Mr. Freeman?

Col. F. Tricked, Mr. Trade-love! Did not I give you two thousand pounds for your consent fairly? And now do you tell a gentleman he has tricked you?

Per. So, so! you are a pretty guardian, 'faith, to sell your charge! What, do you look upon her as part of your stock?

Obad. Ha, ha, ha! I am glad thy knavery is found out, however; I confess the maiden overreached me, and I had no sinister end at all.

Per. Ay, ay, one thing or other overreached you all; but I'll take care he shall never finger a penny of her money, I warrant you. Overreached quotha! Why I might have been overreached too, if I had no more wit: I don't know but this very fellow may be him that was directed to me from Grand Cairo, 't'other day. Ha, ha, ha!

Col. F. The very same.

Per. Are you so, sir? But your trick would not pass upon me.

Col. P. No, as you say, at that time it did not; that was not my lucky hour. But, harkye! sir, I must let you into one secret. You may keep honest John Tradesant's coat on, for your uncle, Sir Toby Periwinkle, is not dead, so the charge of mourning will be saved. Ha, ha, ha! Don't you remember Mr. Pillage, your uncle's steward? Ha, ha, ha!

Per. Not dead! I begin to fear I am tricked too.

Col. F. Don't you remember the signing of a lease, Mr. Periwinkle?

Per. Well, and what signifies that lease, if my uncle is not dead? Ha! I am sure it was a lease I signed.

Col. F. Ay, but it was a lease for life, sir; and for this beautiful tenement, I thank you.

[*Taking hold of Miss Lovely.*]

All. Ha, ha, ha! neighbours' fare.

Free. So then, I find you are all tricked, ha, ha!

Per. I am certain I read as plain a lease as ever I read in my life.

Col. F. You read a lease I grant you; but you signed this contract. [*Shewing a paper.*]

Per. How durst you put this trick upon me, Mr. Freeman? Didn't you tell me my uncle was dying?

Free. And would tell you twice as much to serve my friend: ha, ha!

Sir P. What, the learned and famous Mr. Periwinkle choused too! ha, ha, ha! I shall die with laughing; ha, ha, ha!

Trade. Well, since you have out-witted us all, pray you, what and who are you, sir?

Sir P. Sir, the gentleman is a fine gentleman. I am glad you have got a person, madam, who understands dress and good breeding. I was resolved she should have one of my choosing.

Trade. A beau! nay, then, she is finely helped up.

Miss L. Why, beaus are great encouragers of trade, sir; ha, ha!

Col. F. Lookye, gentlemen: I am the person who can give you the best account of myself; and I must beg Sir Philip's pardon, when I tell him, that, I have as much aversion to what he calls dress and breeding, as I have to the enemies of my religion.

I have had the honour to serve his majesty, and headed a regiment of the bravest fellows that ever pushed bayonet into the throat of an enemy; and notwithstanding the fortune this lady brings me, whenever my country wants my aid, my sword and arm are at her service.

*And now, my fair, if thou'lt but deign to smile,
I meet a recompense for all my toil:*

*Love and religion ne'er admit restraint,
And force makes many sinners, not one saint;
Still free as air the active mind does rove,
And searches proper objects for its love;
But that once fix'd, 'tis past the power of art
To chase the dear idea from the heart:
'Tis liberty of choice that sweetens life,
Makes the glad husband, and the happy wife.*

Exeunt.

THE BUSY BODY;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS,

BY MRS. CENTLIVRE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SIR GEORGE AIRY
SIR FRANCIS GRIPE
SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK
CHARLES
MARPLOT
WHISPER

MIRANDA
ISABINDA
PATCH

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Park.*

Enter SIR GEORGE AIRY, meeting CHARLES.

Charles. Ha! Sir George Airy, a birding thus early! What forbidden game roused you so soon? for no lawful occasion could invite a person of your figure abroad at such unfashionable hours.

Sir G. There are some men, Charles, whom fortune has left free from inquietudes, who are diligently studious to find out ways and means to make themselves uneasy.

Charles. Is it possible that anything in nature can ruffle the temper of a man whom the four seasons of the year compliment with as many thousand pounds; nay, and a father at rest with his ancestors.

Sir G. Why, there it is now! a man that wants money thinks none can be unhappy that has it; but my affairs are in such a whimsical posture, that it will require a calculation of my nativity to find if my gold will relieve me or not.

Charles. Ha, ha, ha! never consult the stars about that; gold has a power beyond them. Then what can thy business be that gold won't serve thee in.

Sir G. Why I'm in love.

Charles. In love! Ha, ha, ha! in love! Ha, ha, ha, ha! with what, prythee? a cherubin?

Sir G. No; with a woman.

Charles. A woman! good. Ha, ha, ha, ha! and gold not help thee?

Sir G. But suppose I'm in love with two?

Charles. Ay, if thou'rt in love with two hundred, gold will fetch them, I warrant thee, boy. But who are they? who are they? come.

Sir G. One is a lady whose face I never saw, but witty to a miracle; the other beautiful as Venus—

Charles. And a fool.

Sir G. For ought I know, for I never spoke to her; but you can inform me. I am charmed by the wit of the one, and die for the beauty of the other.

Charles. And pray which are you in quest of now?

Sir G. I prefer the sensual pleasure; I'm for her I've seen, who is thy father's ward, Miranda.

Charles. Nay, then I pity you; for the Jew, my father, will no more part with her and thirty thousand pounds than he would with a guinea to keep me from starving.

Sir G. Now you see gold can't do every thing, Charles.

Charles. Yes; for it is her gold that bars my father's gate against you.

Sir G. Why, if he be this avaricious wretch, how can'st thou by such a liberal education?

Charles. Not a sous out of his pocket, I assure you: I had an uncle who defrayed that charge; but for some little wildness of youth, though he made me his heir, left dad my guardian till I came to years of discretion, which I presume the old gentleman will never think I am; and now he has got the estate into his clutches, it does me no more good than if it lay in Prester John's dominions.

Sir G. What, canst thou find no stratagem to redeem it?

Charles. I have made many essays to no purpose; though want, the mistress of invention, still tempts me on, yet still the old fox is too cunning for me. I

am upon my last project, which if it fails, then for my last refuge, a brown musket.

Sir G. What is't? can I assist thee?

Charles. Not yet; when you can, I have confidence enough in you to ask it.

Sir G. I am always ready. But what does he intend to do with Miranda? Is she to be sold in private, or will he put her up by way of auction, at who bids most? If so, 'egad I'm for him; my gold, as you say, shall be subservient to my pleasure.

Charles. To deal ingenuously with you, Sir George, I know very little of her or home; for since my uncle's death, and my return from travel, I have never been well with my father; he thinks my expenses too great, and I his allowance too little; he never sees me but he quarrels, and to avoid that I shun his house as much as possible. The report is, he intends to marry her himself.

Sir G. Can she consent to it?

Charles. Yes faith, so they say; but I tell you I am wholly ignorant of the matter. I fancy she plays the mother-in-law already, and sets the old gentleman on to do mischief.

Sir G. Then I have your free consent to get her?

Charles. Ay, and my helping hand, if occasion be.

Sir G. Poh! yonder's a fool coming this way; let's avoid him.

Charles. What, Marplot? No, no, he's my instrument; there's a thousand conveniences in him; he'll lend me his money, when he has any, run of my errands and be proud on it; in short, he'll pimp for me, lie for me, drink for me, do anything but fight for me, and that I trust to my own arm for.

Sir G. Nay, then he's to be endured; I never knew his qualifications before. [*Retires.*]

Enter MARPLOT, with a patch across his face.

Mar. Dear Charles, your's. Ha! Sir George Airy! the man in the world I have an ambition to be known to. [*Aside.*] Give me thy hand, dear boy.

[*To Charles.*]

Charles. A good assurance! But harkye, how came your beautiful countenance clouded in the wrong place?

Mar. I must confess 'tis a little mal-a-propos; but no matter for that. A word with you, Charles. Pr'ythee introduc'd me to Sir George, he is a man of wit, and I'd give ten guineas to—

Charles. When you have them, you mean.

Mar. Ay, when I have them; poh, plague! you cut the thread of my discourse. I will give ten guineas, I say, to be ranked in his acquaintance. But, pr'ythee, introduce me.

Charles. Well, on condition you'll give us a true account how you came by that mourning nose, I will.

Mar. I'll do it.

Charles. Sir George, here's a gentleman has a passionate desire to kiss your hand.

Sir G. [*advancing.*] Oh! I honour men of the sword; and I presume this gentleman is lately come from Spain or Portugal, by his scars.

Mar. No, really, Sir George, mine sprung from civil fury. Happening last night to step into the groom-porter's, I had a strong inclination to go ten guineas with a sort of a, sort of a—kind of a milk-sop, as I thought. A plague of the dice! he flung out, and my pockets being empty, as Charles knows they often are, he proved a surly North Briton, and broke my face for my deficiency.

Sir G. Ha, ha! and did you draw?

Mar. Draw, sir! why I did but lay my hand upon my sword to make a swift retreat, and he roared

out. Now the deil a ma saul, sir, gin ye touch yer steel I'll se whip mine through yer wem.

Sir G. Ha, ha, ha!

Charles. Ha, ha, ha, ha! Safe was the word. So you walked off, I suppose.

Mar. Yes, for I avoid fighting, purely to be serviceable to my friends, you know.

Sir G. Your friends are much obliged to you, sir; I hope you will rank me in that number.

Mar. Sir George, a bow from the side-box, or to be seen in your chariot, binds me ever yours.

Sir G. Trifles; you may command them when you please.

Charles. Provided he may command you.

Mar. Me! why I live for no other purpose. Sir George, I have the honour to be caressed by most of the reigning toasts of the town: I'll tell them you are the finest gentleman—

Sir G. No, no, pr'ythee let me alone to tell the ladies my parts. Can you convey a letter upon occasion, or deliver a message with an air of business, ha?

Mar. With the assurance of a page and the gravity of a statesman.

Sir G. You know Miranda?

Mar. What! my sister ward! why, her guardian is mine; we are fellow sufferers. Ah! he is a covetous, cheating, sanctified, curnudgeon: that Sir Francis Gripe is a d—d old—hypocritical—

Charles. Hold, hold; I suppose, friend, you forget that he is my father.

Mar. I ask your pardon, Charles, but it is for your sake I hate him. Well, I say, the world is mistaken in him; his outside piety makes him every man's executor, and his inside cunning makes him every heir's gaoler. 'Egad, Charles, I'm half persuaded that thou art some ward too, and never of his getting; for never were two things so unlike as you and your father; he scrapes up everything, and thou spendest every thing; everybody is indebted to him, and thou art indebted to everybody.

Charles. You are very free, Mr. Marplot.

Mar. Ay, I give and take, Charles; you may be as free with me, you know.

Sir G. A pleasant fellow.

Charles. The dog is diverting sometimes, or there would be no enduring his impertinence. He is pressing to be employed, and willing to execute; but some ill fate generally attends all he undertakes, and he oftener spoils an intrigue than helps it.

Mar. I have always your good word; but if I miscarry, 'tis none of my fault; I follow my instructions.

Charles. Yes, witness the merchant's wife.

Mar. Pish, poh! that was an accident.

Sir G. What was it, pr'ythee?

Mar. Nay, Charles, now don't expose your friend.

Charles. Why, you must know I had lent a certain merchant my hunting horses, and was to have met his wife in his absence. Sending him along with my groom to make the compliment, and to deliver a letter to the lady at the same time, what does he do but gives the husband the letter and offers her the horses!

Mar. Why to be sure I did offer her the horses, and I remember you was even with me, for you denied the letter to be yours, and swore I had a design upon her, which my bones paid for.

Charles. Come, Sir George, let us walk round, if you are not engaged, for I have sent my man upon a little earnest business, and I have ordered him to bring me the answer into the park.

Mar. Business! and I not know it! 'Egad, I'll watch him. [*Aside.*]

Sir G. I must beg your pardon, Charles, I am to meet your father.

Charles. My father!

Sir G. Ay, and about the oddest bargain perhaps you ever heard of; but I'll not impart till I know the success.

Mar. What can his business be with Sir Francis? Now would I give all the world to know it. Why the devil should not one know every man's concerns?

[*Aside.*]

Charles. Prosperity to't, whatever it be: I have private affairs too: over a bottle we'll compare notes.

Mar. Charles knows I love a glass as well as any man; I'll make one; shall it be to-night? I long to know their secrets. [*Aside.*]

Enter WHISPER.

Whis. Sir, sir, Mrs. Patch says Isabinda's Spanish father has quite spoiled the plot, and she cannot meet you in the park, but he infallibly will go out this afternoon, she says; but I must step again to know the hour.

Mar. What did Whisper say now? I shall go stark mad if I'm not let into the secret. [*Aside.*]

Charles. Curst misfortune!

Mar. Curst! what's curst, Charles?

Charles. Come along with me; my heart feels pleasure at her name. Sir George, yours; we'll meet at the old place, the usual hour.

Sir G. Agreed, I think I see Sir Francis yonder.

[*Exit.*]

Charles. Marplot, you must excuse me; I am engaged. [*Exit.*]

Mar. Engaged! Egad, I'll engage my life I'll know what your engagement is. [*Exit.*]

Enter MIRANDA.

Mir. Let the chair wait. My servant, that dogged Sir George, said he was in the park.

Enter PATCH.

Ha! Miss Patch alone! did not you tell me you had contrived a way to bring Isabinda to the park?

Patch. Oh, madam, your ladyship cannot imagine what a wretched disappointment we have met with! Just as I had fetched a suit of my clothes for a disguise, comes my old master into his closet, which is right against her chamber door: this struck us into a terrible fright; at length I put on a grave face, and asked him if he was at leisure for his chocolate? in hopes to draw him out of his hole; but he snapp'd my nose off: "No, I shall be busy here these two hours." At which my poor mistress, seeing no way of escape, ordered me to wait on your ladyship with the sad relation.

Mir. Unhappy Isabinda! was ever any thing so unaccountable as the humour of Sir Jealous Traffick?

Patch. Oh, madam, it's his living so long in Spain; he vows he'll spend half his estate but he'll be a parliament man, on purpose to bring in a bill for women to wear veils, and other odious Spanish customs. He swears it is the height of impudence to have a woman seen barefaced even at church, and scarce believes there's a true begotten child in the city.

Mir. Ha, ha, ha! how the old fool torments himself! Suppose he could introduce his rigid rules, does he think we could not match them in contrivance? No, no! let the tyrant man make what laws he will, if there's a woman under the government, I warrant she finds a way to break them. Is his mind set upon the Spaniard for a son-in-law, still?

Patch. Ay, and he expects him by the next fleet, which drives his daughter to melancholy and despair. But, madam, I find you retain the same gay, cheerful spirit you had when I waited on your ladyship. My lady is mighty good-humoured too, and I have found a way to make Sir Jealous believe I am wholly in his interest, when my real design is to serve her: he makes me her gaoler, and I set her at liberty.

Mir. I knew thy prolific brain would be of singular service to her, or I had not parted with thee to her father.

Patch. But, madam, the report is that you are going to marry your guardian.

Mir. It is necessary such a report should be, Patch.

Patch. But is it true, madam?

Mir. That's not absolutely necessary.

Patch. I thought it was only the old strain, coaxing him still for your own, and railing at all the young fellows about town: in my mind now, you are as ill plagued with your guardian, madam, as my lady is with her father.

Mir. No, I have liberty, wench; that she wants: what would she give now to be in this dishabille in the open air; nay more, in pursuit of the young fellow she likes? for that's my case, I assure you.

Patch. As for that, madam, she's even with you; for though she cannot come abroad, we have a way to bring him home in spite of old Argus.

Mir. Now, Patch, your opinion of my choice, for here he comes. Ha! my guardian with him! what can be the meaning of this? I'm sure Sir Francis can't know me in this dress. Let's observe them. [*They withdraw.*]

Enter SIR FRANCIS GRIPE and SIR GEORGE AIRY.

Sir F. Verily, Sir George, thou wilt repent throwing away thy money so, for I tell thee sincerely, Miranda, my charge, does not like a young fellow; they are all vicious, and seldom make good husbands. In sober sadness she cannot abide them.

Mir. [*Peeping.*] In sober sadness, you are mistaken. What can this mean?

Sir G. Lookye, Sir Francis, whether she can or cannot abide young fellows is not the business: will you take the fifty guineas?

Sir F. In good troth I will not; for I knew thy father, he was a hearty, wary man, and I cannot consent that his son should squander away what he saved to no purpose.

Mir. [*Peeping.*] Now, in the name of wonder, what bargain can he be driving about me for fifty guineas?

Sir G. Well, Sir Francis, since you are so conscientious for my father's sake, then permit me the favour gratis.

Sir F. No, verily; if thou dost not buy thy experience thou wilt never be wise; therefore give me a hundred and try thy fortune.

Sir G. The scruples arose, I find, from the scanty sum. Let me see—a hundred guineas. [*Takes the money out of a purse and chinks it.*] Ha! they have a very pretty sound, and a very pleasing look. But then, Miranda; but if she should be cruel—

Sir F. Ay, do consider on't. He, he, he!

Sir G. No, I'll do it. Come, to the point; here is the gold; sum up the conditions. [*Sir Francis pulls out a paper.*]

Mir. [*Peeping.*] Ay, for heaven's sake do, for my expectation is on the rack.

Sir F. Well, at your peril be it.

Sir G. Ay, go on.

Sir F. Imprimis, you are to be admitted into my house in order to move your suit to Miranda, for the

space of ten minutes, without let or molestation, provided I remain in the same room.

Sir G. But out of ear-shot.

Sir F. Well, well, I don't desire to hear what you say; ha, ha, ha! In consideration I am to have that purse and a hundred guineas.

Sir G. Take it. [*Gives him the purse.*] And this agreement is to be performed to-day?

Sir F. Ay, ay; the sooner the better. Poor fool! how Miranda and I shall laugh at him! [*Aside.*] Well, Sir George, ha, ha, ha! take the last sound of your guineas, ha, ha, ha! [*Chinks them. Exit.*]

Mir. [*Peeping.*] Sure he does not know that I am Miranda.

Sir G. A very extraordinary bargain I have made, truly; if she should be really in love with this old cuff now? Psha! that's morally impossible. But then, what hopes have I to succeed? I never spoke to her.

Mir. [*Peeping.*] Say you so? then I am safe.

Sir G. What, though my tongue never spoke, my eyes said a thousand things, and my hopes flattered me her's answered them. If I am lucky—if not, it is but a hundred guineas thrown away. [*Miranda comes forward.*]

Mir. Upon what, Sir George?

Sir G. Ha! my incognita! upon a woman, madam.

Mir. They are the worst things you can deal in, and damage the soonest; your very breath destroys them, and I fear you'll never see your return, Sir George, ha, ha!

Sir G. Were they more brittle than china, and dropped to pieces with a touch, every atom of her I have ventured at, if she is but mistress of thy wit, balances ten times the sum. Pr'ythee, let me see thy face.

Mir. By no means; that may spoil your opinion of my sense.

Sir G. Rather confirm it, madam.

Patch. So rob the lady of your gallantry, sir.

Sir G. No child, a dish of chocolate, in the morning never spoils my dinner; the other lady I design for a set meal; so there's no danger.

Mir. Matrimony! ha, ha, ha! what crimes have you committed against the god of love, that he should revenge them so severely, as to stamp husband on your forehead?

Sir G. For my folly, in having so often met you here without pursuing the laws of nature and exercising her commands: but I resolve ere we part now to know who you are, where you live, what kind of flesh and blood your face is; therefore unmask, and don't put me to the trouble of doing it for you.

Mir. My face is the same flesh and blood with my hand, Sir George; which if you will be so rude to provoke—

Sir G. You'll apply to my cheek; the ladies' favours are always welcome, but I must have that cloud withdrawn. [*Taking hold of her.*] Remember you are in the park, child; and what a terrible thing would it be to lose this pretty white hand!

Mir. And how it will sound in a chocolate-house, that Sir George Airy rudely pulled off a lady's mask, when he had given her his honour that he never would, directly or indirectly, endeavour to know her till she gave him leave?

Sir G. But if that lady thinks fit to pursue and meet me at every turn, like some troubled spirit, shall I be blamed if I inquire into the reality? I would have nothing dissatisfied in a female shape.

Mir. What shall I do? [*Pauses.*]

Sir G. Ay, pr'ythee, consider, for thou shalt find me very much at thy service.

Patch. Suppose, sir, the lady should be in love with you?

Sir C. Oh! I'll return the obligation in a moment.

Patch. And marry her?

Sir G. Ha, ha, ha! that's not the way to love her, child.

Mir. If he discovers me I shall die. Which way shall I escape? let me see. [*Pauses.*]

Sir G. Well, madam.

Mir. I have it. Sir George, 'tis fit you should allow something; if you'll excuse my face, and turn your back (if you look upon me I shall sink, even masked as I am,) I will confess why I have engaged you so often, who I am, and where I live.

Sir G. Well, to shew you I am a man of honour, I accept the conditions: let me but once know those, and the face won't be long a secret to me.

Patch. What do you mean, madam? [*Aside to Miranda.*]

Mir. To get off. [*Aside to Patch.*]

Sir G. 'Tis something indecent to turn one's back upon a lady; but you command, and I obey. [*Turns his back.*] Come, madam, begin.

Mir. First, then it was my unhappy lot to see you at Paris [*Draws back a little way, and speaks*], at a ball upon a birth-day; your shape and air charmed my eyes, your wit and complaisance my soul, and from that fatal night I loved you. [*Drawing back.*]

*And when you left the place, grief seiz'd me so,
Nor rest my heart, nor sleep my eyes could know;
Last, I resolv'd a hazardous point to try,
And quit the place in search of liberty.*

[*Exit, followed by Patch.*]

Sir G. Excellent! I hope she's handsome. Well, now, madam, to the two other things, your name, and where you live. I am a gentleman, and this confession will not be lost upon me. Nay, pr'ythee, don't weep, but go on, for I find my heart melts in thy behalf. Speak quickly, or I shall turn about. Not yet; poor lady! she expects I should comfort her, and, to do her justice, she has said enough to encourage me. [*Turns about.*] Ha! gone! the devil! jilted! Why, what a tale she has invented, of Paris, balls, and birth-days! 'Egad, I'd give ten guineas to know who the gipsy is. A curse of my folly; I deserve to lose her. What woman can forgive a man that turns his back?

*The bold and resolute in love and war
To conquer take the right and swiftest way:
The boldest lover soonest gains the fair,
As courage makes the rudest force obey;
Take no denial, and the dames adore ye;
Closely pursue them, and they fall before ye.*

[*Exit.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Room in Sir Francis Gripe's house.

Enter SIR FRANCIS GRIFE and MIRANDA.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha!

Mir. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! Oh! I shall die with laughing: the most romantic adventure. Ha, ha, ha! what does the odious young fop mean? A hundred pieces to talk ten minutes with me! ha, ha, ha, ha!

Sir F. And I am to be by too, there's the jest, adad, if it had been in private, I should not have cared to trust the young dog.

Mir. Indeed and indeed but you might, gardy. Now methinks there's nobody handsomer than you : so neat, so clean, so good-humoured, and so loving.

Sir F. Pretty rogue, pretty rogue ! and so thou shalt find me, if thou dost prefer thy gardy before these capers of the age : thou shalt outshine the queen's box on an opera night ; thou shalt be the envy of the ring (for I will carry thee to Hyde-park,) and thy equipage shall surpass the—what d'y'e call 'em ambassador's ?

Mir. Nay, I am sure the discreet part of my sex will envy me more for the inside furniture, when you are in it, than my outside equipage.

Sir F. A cunning baggage, ifaith thou art, and a wise one too ! and to shew thee that thou hast not chosen amiss, I'll this moment disinheret my son and settle my whole estate upon thee.

Mir. There's an old rogue now. [*Aside.*] No, gardy, I would not have your name be so black in the world. You know my father's will runs that I am not to possess my estate, without your consent, till I am five-and-twenty ; you shall only abate the odd seven years, and make me mistress of my estate to-day, and I'll make you master of my person to-morrow.

Sir F. Humph ! that may not be safe. No, chargy, I'll settle it upon thee for pin money, and that will be every bit as well, thou knowest.

Mir. Unconscionable old wretch ! bribe me with my own money ! Which way shall I get out of his hands ? [*Aside.*]

Sir F. Well, what art thou thinking on, my girl, ha ! how to banter Sir George ?

Mir. I must not pretend to banter ; he knows my tongue too well. [*Aside.*] No, gardy, I have thought of a way will confound him more than all I could say, if I could talk to him seven years.

Sir F. How's that ? oh ! I'm transported, I'm ravished, I'm mad.

Mir. It would make you mad if you knew all. [*Aside.*] I'll not answer him a word, but be dumb to all he says.

Sir F. Dumb ! good ; ha, ha, ha ! Excellent ! ha, ha, ha, ha ! I think I have you now, Sir George. Dumb ! he'll go distracted ; well, she is the wittiest rogue. Ha, ha ! dumb ! I can't but laugh, ha, ha ! to think how d—d mad he'll be when he finds he has given his money away for a dumb shew ! ha, ha, ha !

Mir. Nay, gardy, if he did but know my thoughts of him it would make him ten times madder ; ha, ha, ha, ha !

Sir F. Ay, so it would, chargy, to hold him in such derision, to scorn to answer him, to be dumb ; ha, ha, ha

Enter CHARLES.

How now, sirrah ! who let you in ?

Charles. My necessities, sir.

Sir F. Your necessities are very impertinent, and ought to have sent before they entered.

Charles. Sir, I knew it was a word would gain admittance nowhere.

Sir F. Then, sirrah, how durst you rudely thrust that upon your father which nobody else would admit ?

Charles. Sure the name of a son is a sufficient plea ! I ask this lady's pardon, if I have intruded.

Sir F. Ay, ay, ask her pardon and her blessing too, if you expect anything from me.

Mir. I believe your's, Sir Francis, and a purse of guineas, would be more material. Your son may have business with you ; I'll retire.

Sir F. I guess his business, but I'll dispatch him ;

I expect the knight every minute : you'll be in readiness ?

Mir. Certainly. My expectation is more upon the wing than yours, old gentleman. [*Aside, and exit.*]

Sir F. Well, sir.

Charles. Nay, it is very ill, sir ; my circumstances are, I'm sure.

Sir F. And what's that to me, sir ? your management should have made them better.

Charles. If you please to entrust me with the management of my estate, I shall endeavour it, sir.

Sir F. What, to set upon a card, and buy a lady's favour at the price of a thousand pieces—to rig out an equipage for a wench—or by your carelessness to enrich your steward to fine for sheriff, or put up for a parliament man.

Charles. I hope I should not spend it this way : however, I ask only for what my uncle left me ; yours you may dispose of as you please, sir.

Sir F. That I shall, out of your reach, I assure you, sir. Adad, these young fellows think old men get estates for nothing but for them to squander away in dicing, wenching, drinking, dressing, and so forth.

Charles. I think I was born a gentleman, sir ; I am sure my uncle bred me like one.

Sir F. From which you would infer, sir, that gambling and wenching are requisites for a gentleman.

Charles. Monstrous ! when I would ask him only for a support, he falls into these unmannerly reproaches. I must, though against my will, employ invention, and by stratagem relieve myself. [*Aside.*]

Sir F. Sirrah, what is it you mutter, sirrah, ha ? [*Holds up his cane.*] I say you sha'n't have a groat out of my hands till I please, and may be I'll never please ; and what's that to you ?

Charles. Nay, to be robbed or have one's throat cut is not much.

Sir F. What's that, sirrah ! would you rob me or cut my throat, you rogue ?

Charles. Heaven forbid, sir ! I said no such thing.

Sir F. Mercy on me ! what a plague it is to have a son of one-and-twenty, who wants to elbow one out of one's life to edge himself into the estate !

Enter MARPLOT.

Mar. 'Egad he's here. I was afraid I had lost him : his secret could not be with his father ; his wants are public there. Guardian, your servant. O Charles, are you there ? I know by that sorrowful countenance of thine, the old man's fist is as close as his strong box. But I'll help thee. [*Aside.*]

Sir F. So ! here's another extravagant coxcomb, that will spend his fortune before he comes to it ! but he shall pay swinging interest, and so let the fool go on. Well, what, does necessity bring you too, sir ?

Mar. You have hit it, guardian. I want a hundred pounds.

Sir F. For what ?

Mar. Poh ! for a hundred things ; I can't for my life tell you for what.

Charles. Sir, I suppose I have received all the answer I am like to have ?

Mar. O, the devil ! if he gets out before me I shall lose him again. [*Aside.*]

Sir F. Ay, sir, and you may be marching as soon as you please. I must see a change in your temper, ere you find one in mine.

Mar. Pray, sir, despatch me ; the money, sir ; I'm in mighty haste.

Sir F. Fool, take this and go to the cashier. I shall not be long plagued with thee.

[*Gives him a note*]

Mar. Devil take the cashier! I shall certainly have Charles gone before I come back.

[*Exit, running.*]

Charles. Well, sir, I take my leave; but remember you expose an only son to all the miseries of wretched poverty, which too often lays the plan for scenes of mischief.

Sir F. Stay, Charles! I have a sudden thought come into my head which may prove to thy advantage.

Charles. Ha! does he relent?

Sir F. My Lady Wrinkle, worth forty thousand pounds, sets up for a handsome young husband; she praised thee the other day; though the match-makers can get twenty guineas for a sight of her, I can introduce thee for nothing.

Charles. My Lady Wrinkle, sir! why she has but one eye.

Sir F. Then she'll see but half your extravagance, sir.

Charles. Condemn me to such a piece of deformity! a toothless, dirty, wry-necked, hunch-backed hag!

Sir F. Hunch-backed! so much the better! then she has a rest for her misfortunes, for thou wilt load her swingingly. Now, I warrant, you think this is no offer of a father; forty thousand pounds is nothing with you.

Charles. Yes, sir, I think it too much; a young beautiful woman with half the money would be more agreeable. I thank you, sir; but you choose better for yourself, I find.

Sir F. Out of my doors, you dog! you pretend to meddle with my marriage, sirrah!

Charles. Sir, I obey you, but—

Sir F. But me no buts—begone, sir! dare to ask me for money again!—refuse forty thousand pounds! Out of my doors, I say, without reply.

[*Exit CHARLES.*]

Enter MARPLOT, running.

Mar. Ha! gone! is Charles gone, gardy?

Sir F. Yes, and I desire your wise worship to walk after him.

Mar. Nay, egad I shall run, I tell you that. A plague of the cashier for detaining me so long! Where the devil shall I find him now? I shall certainly lose this secret, and I had rather by half lose my money. Where shall I find him now? D'ye know where Charles is gone, gardy?

Sir F. Gone to the devil, and you may go after him.

Mar. Ay, that I will as fast as I can. [*Going, returns.*] Have you any commands there, gardy?

[*Exit.*]

Sir F. What, is the fellow distracted?

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir George Airy inquires for you, sir.

Sir F. Desire Sir George to walk up. [*Exit Servant.*] Now for a trial of skill, that will make me happy and him a fool. Ha, ha, ha! In my mind he looks like an ass already.

Enter Sir GEORGE AIRY.

Well, Sir George, do you hold in the same mind, or would you capitulate? ha, ha, ha! Look, here are the guineas. [*Chinks them.*] Ha, ha, ha!

Sir G. Not if they were twice the sum, Sir Francis; therefore be brief, call in the lady, and take your post.

Sir F. Agreed. Miranda!

[*Exit.*]

Sir G. If she's a woman, and not seduced by witchcraft, to this old rogue, I'll make his heart ache; for if she has but one grain of inclination about her, I'll vary a thousand shapes but find it.

Re-enter Sir FRANCIS GRIPE and MIRANDA.

Sir G. So from the eastern chambers breaks the sun,
Dispers the clouds, and gilds the vales below.

[*Salutes her.*]

Sir F. Hold, sir! kissing was not in our agreement.

Sir G. Oh! that's by way of prologue. Pr'ythee, old Mammon, to thy post.

Sir F. [*Takes out his watch.*] Well, young Timon, 'tis uow four exactly; ten minutes, remember, is your utmost limit; not a minute more. [*Retires.*]

Sir G. Madam, whether you'll excuse or blame my love, the author of this rash proceeding depends upon your pleasure, as also the life of your admirer; your sparkling eyes speak a heart susceptible of love, your vivacity a soul too delicate to admit the embraces of decayed mortality. Shake off this tyrant guardian's yoke; assume yourself, and dash his bold, aspiring hopes. The deity of his desires is avarice, a heretic in love, and ought to be banished by the queen of beauty. [*Kneels.*] See, madam, a faithful servant kneels, and begs to be admitted in the number of your slaves.

[*MIRANDA gives him her hand to raise him.*]

Sir F. [*Comes forward.*] Hold, hold, hold! no palming; that's contrary to articles.

Sir G. 'Sdeath, sir! keep your distance, or I'll write another article in your guts.

[*Lays his hand to his sword.*]

Sir F. [*Going back.*] A bloody-minded fellow!

Sir G. Not answer me! perhaps she thinks my address too grave: I'll be more free. [*Aside.*] Can you be so unconscionable, madam, to let me say all these fine things to you without one single compliment in return?

Sir F. [*Running up with his watch in his hand.*] There's five of the ten minutes gone, Sir George. Adad! I don't like those close conferences.

Sir G. More interruptions! You will have it, sir.

[*Lays his hand to his sword.*]

Sir F. [*Going back.*] No, no; you sha'n't have her, neither.

[*Aside.*]

Sir G. Dumb still! Sure, this old dog has enjoin'd her silence. I'll try another way. [*Aside.*] Madam, these few minutes cost me an hundred pounds, and, would you answer me, I could purchase the whole day so. However, madam, you must give me leave to make the best interpretation I can for my money, and take the indication of your silence for the secret liking of my person; therefore, madam, I will instruct you how to keep your word inviolate to Sir Francis, and yet answer me to every question: as for example, when I ask anything to which you would reply in the affirmative, gently nod your head, thus [*nods*]; and when in the negative, thus [*shakes his head*]; and in the doubtful, a tender sigh, thus [*sighs*].

Mir. How every action charms me! But I'll fit him for signs, I warrant him.

[*Aside.*]

Sir G. Was it by his desire that you are dumb, madam, to all I can say? [*Mir. nods.*] Very well; she's tractable, I find. [*Aside.*] And is it possible that you can love him? [*Mir. nods.*] Miraculous! Pardon the bluntness of my questions, for my time is short. May I not hope to supplant him in your esteem? [*Mir. sighs.*] Good! she answers me as I could wish. [*Aside.*] You'll not consent to marry him then? [*Mir. sighs.*] How! doubtful in that? Undone again! Humph! but that may proceed from his power to keep her out of her estate till twenty-five: I'll try that. [*Aside.*] Come, madam, I cannot think you hesitate in this affair out of any motive but your

fortune: let him keep it till those few years are expired; make me happy with your person, let him enjoy your wealth. [*MIR. holds up her hands.*] Why, what sign is that now? Nay, nay, madam, except you observe my lesson I can't understand your meaning.

Sir F. What a vengeance! are they talking by signs? 'Ad! I may be fooled here. [*Aside.*] What do you mean, Sir George?

Sir G. To cut your throat, if you dare mutter another syllable.

Sir F. 'Od! I wish he were fairly out of my house. [*Aside.*]

Sir G. Pray, madam, will you answer me to the purpose? [*Miranda shakes her head, and points to Sir Francis.*] What does she mean? She won't answer me to the purpose; or is she afraid you old cuff should understand her signs? ay, it must be that. [*Aside.*] I perceive, madam, you are too apprehensive of the promise you have made, to follow my rules, therefore, I'll suppose your mind, and answer for you. First for myself, madam; "That I am in love with you is an infallible truth." Now for you. [*Turns on her side.*] "Indeed, sir! and may I believe it?" "As certainly, madam, as that 'tis daylight, or that I die if you persist in silence. Bless me with the music of your voice, and raise my spirits to their proper heaven. [*Kneels.*] Thus low let me entreat! ere I am obliged to quit this place, grant me some token of a favourable reception, to keep my hopes alive." [*Arises hastily, and turns on her side.*] "Rise, sir, and since my guardian's presence will not allow me privilege of tongue, read that, and rest assured you are not indifferent to me." [*Offers her a letter, she strikes it down.*] Ha! right woman! but no matter; I'll go on. [*Aside.*]

Sir F. Ha! what's that? a letter! Ha, ha, ha! thou art balked.

Sir G. Ha! a letter! Oh! let me kiss it with the same raptures that I would do the dear hand that touched it. [*Opens it.*] Now for a quick fancy, and a long extempore. [*Aside.*]

Sir F. [*Coming up hastily.*] The time is expired, sir, and you must take your leave. There, my girl; there's the hundred pounds which thou hast won. Go; I'll be with you presently. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

[*Exit Miranda.*]

Sir G. Adsheart, madam! you won't leave me just in the nick, will you?

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! she has nicked you, Sir George, I think! ha, ha, ha! Have you any more hundred pounds to throw away upon courtship? ha, ha, ha!

Sir G. He, he, he, he! A curse of your fleering jests! Yet, however ill I have succeeded, I'll venture the same wager she does not value thee a spoonful of snuff; nay, more, though you enjoined her silence to me, you'll never make her speak to the purpose with yourself.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! Did I not tell thee thou would'st repent thy money? Did I not say she hated young fellows? ha, ha, ha!

Sir G. And I am positive she is not in love with age.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! No matter for that; ha, ha! She is not taken with your youth, nor your rhetoric to boot; ha, ha!

Sir G. Whatever her reasons are for disliking of me, I am certain she can be taken with nothing about thee.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! how he swells with envy! Poor man, poor man! ha, ha, ha! I must beg your pardon, Sir George; Miranda will be impatient to

have her share of mirth. Verily, we shall laugh at thee most egregiously; ha, ha, ha!

Sir G. With all my heart, faith! I shall laugh in my turn too; for if you dare marry her, old Belzebub, you will be cuckolded most egregiously: remember that, and tremble. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*Sir Jealous Traffick's House.*

Enter SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK, ISABINDA, and PATCH.

Sir J. What! in the balcony again—notwithstanding my positive commands to the contrary? Why don't you write a bill on your forehead to shew passengers there's something to be let?

Isa. What harm can there be in a little fresh air, sir?

Sir J. Is your constitution so hot, mistress, that it wants cooling, ha? Apply the virtuous Spanish rules; banish your taste and thoughts of flesh, feed upon roots, and quench your thirst with water.

Isa. That, and a close room, would certainly make me die of the vapours.

Sir J. No, mistress, 'tis your high-fed, lusty, rambling, rampant ladies that are troubled with the vapours: 'tis your ratafia, persico, cinnamon, citron, and spirit of clara, cause such swimming in the brain, that carries many a guinea full tide to the doctor: but you are not to be bred this way: no galloping abroad, no receiving visits at home—for in our loose country, the women are as dangerous as the men.

Patch. So I told her, sir; and that it was not decent to be seen in a balcony; but she threatened to slap my chops, and told me I was her servant, not her governess.

Sir J. Did she so? but I'll make her to know that you are her duenna. Oh! that incomparable custom of Spain! Why, here is no depending upon old women in my country, for they are as wanton at eighty as a girl of eighteen; and a man may as safely trust to Asgil's translation, as to his great-grandmother's not marrying again.

Isa. Or to the Spanish ladies' veils and duennas for the safeguard of their honour.

Sir J. Dare to ridicule the cautious conduct of that wise nation, and I'll have you locked up this fortnight, without a peep-hole.

Isa. If we had but the ghostly helps in England which they have in Spain, I might deceive you if you did. Let me tell you, sir, confinement sharpens the invention, as want of sight strengthens the other senses, and is often more pernicious than the recreation that innocent liberty allows.

Sir J. Say you so, mistress? Who the devil taught you the art of reasoning? I assure you they must have a greater faith than I pretend to, that can think any woman innocent that requires liberty; therefore, Patch, to your charge I give her; lock her up till I come back from Change. I shall have some sauntering coxcomb, with nothing but a red coat and a feather, think, by leaping into her arms, to leap into my estate; but I'll prevent them; she shall be only Signior Babinetto's.

Patch. Really, sir, I wish you would employ any body else in this affair; I lead a life like a dog in obeying your commands. Come, madam, will you be locked up?

Isa. Ay! to enjoy more freedom than he is aware of. [*Aside.—Exit with Patch.*]

Sir J. I believe this wench is very true to my in-

terest : I am happy I met with her : if I can but keep my daughter from being blown upon till Signior Babinetto arrives, he shall marry her as soon as he comes, and carry her to Spain as soon as he has married her. She has a pregnant wit, and I would no more have her an English wife than the grand signior's mistress. *[Exit.]*

SCENE III.—*Outside of Sir JEALOUS TRAFFICK'S House.*

Sir J. comes from his House, looks about, then exit.

Enter WHISPER.

Whis. So ; there goes Sir Jealous : where shall I find Mrs. Patch, now ?

Enter PATCH.

Patch. Oh, Mr. Whisper ! my lady saw you out of the window, and ordered me to bid you fly and let your master know she's now alone.

Whis. Hush ! speak softly ! I go, I go. But Jarkye, Mrs. Patch, shall not you and I have a little confabulation, when my master and your lady are engaged ?

Patch. Ay, ay ; farewell.

[Goes in and shuts the door. Whisper peeps after her through the key-hole.]

Re-enter Sir JEALOUS TRAFFICK.

Sir J. Sure, whilst I was talking with Mr. Trade-well, I heard my door clap. *[Seeing Whisper.]* Ha ! a man lurking about my house ! Who do you want there, sir ?

Whis. Want—want ? A plague ! Sir Jealous ! What must I say now ? *[Aside.]*

Sir J. Ay, want. Have you a letter or message for anybody there ? O my conscience ! this is some he-bawd.

Whis. Letter or message, sir ?

Sir J. Ay ; letter or message, sir !

Whis. No, not I, sir.

Sir J. Sirrah, sirrah ! I'll have you set in the stocks if you don't tell your business immediately.

Whis. Nay, sir, my business is no great matter of business neither ; and yet, 'tis business of consequence too.

Sir J. Sirrah, don't trifle with me.

Whis. Trifle, sir ! have you found him, sir ?

Sir J. Found what, you rascal ?

Whis. Why, Trifle is the very lapdog my lady lost, sir ; I fancied I saw him run into this house. I am glad you have found him, sir ; my lady will be overjoyed that I have found him.

Sir J. Who is your lady, friend ?

Whis. My Lady Lovepuppy, sir.

Sir J. My lady Lovepuppy, sir ! then, pr'ythee, carry thyself to her, for I know of no other whelp that belongs to her ; and let me catch you no more puppy-hunting about my doors, lest I have you pressed into the service, sirrah !

Whis. By no means, sir : your humble servant. I must watch whether he goes or no, before I can tell my master. *[Aside.—Exit.]*

Sir J. This fellow has the officious leer of a pimp, and I half suspect a design ; but I'll be upon them before they think on me, I warrant them.

[Exit into the house.]

SCENE IV.—*Charles's Lodgings.*

Enter CHARLES and MARPLOT.

Charles. Honest Marplot, I thank thee for this supply. I expect my lawyer with a thousand pounds

I have ordered him to take up, and then you shall be repaid.

Mar. Pho, pho ! no more of that. Here comes Sir George Airy.

Enter Sir GEORGE AIRY.

cursedly out of humour at his disappointment. See how he looks ! ha, ha, ha !

Sir G. Ah, Charles ! I am so humbled in my pretensions to plots upon women, that I believe I shall never have courage enough to attempt a chambermaid again. I'll tell thee—

Charles. Ha, ha ! I'll spare you the relation by telling you : impatient to know your business with my father, when I saw you enter I slipped back into the next room, where I overheard every syllable.

Mar. Did you, Charles ? I wish I had been with you.

Sir G. That I said ; but I'll be hanged if you heard her answer. But, pr'ythee, tell me, Charles, is she a fool ?

Charles. I never suspected her for one ; but Marplot can inform you better, if you'll allow him a judge.

Mar. A fool ! I'll justify she has more wit than all the rest of her sex put together. Why, she'll rally me till I ha'n't a word to say for myself.

Charles. A mighty proof of her wit, truly !

Mar. There must be some trick in it, Sir George ; egad ! I'll find it out, if it cost me the sum you paid for it.

Sir G. Do, and command me.

Mar. Enough : let me alone to trace a secret.

Enter WHISPER, who speaks aside to his master.

The devil ! he here again ! d—n that fellow, he never speaks out. Is this the same, or a new secret ?—*[Aside.]* You may speak out, here are none but friends.

Charles. Pardon me, Marplot, 'tis a secret.

Mar. A secret ! ay, or, ecod ! I would not give a farthing for it. Sir George, won't you ask Charles what news Whisper brings ?

Sir G. Not I, sir ; I suppose it does not relate to me.

Mar. Lord, lord ! how little curiosity some people have ! Now my chief pleasure is in knowing everybody's business. *[Exit Whisper.]*

Sir G. I fancy, Charles, thou hast some engagement upon thy hands ?

Mar. Have you, Charles ?

Sir G. I have a little business too.

Mar. Have you, Sir George ?

Sir G. Marplot, if it falls in your way to bring me any intelligence from Miranda, you'll find me at the Thatched-house, at six.

Mar. You do me much honour.

Charles. You guess right, Sir George ; wish me success.

Sir G. Better than attended me. Adieu. *[Exit.]*

Charles. Marplot, you must excuse me.

Mar. Nay, nay ; what need of any excuse amongst friends ? I'll go with you.

Charles. Indeed you must not.

Mar. No ! then I suppose 'tis a duel ; and I will go to secure you.

Charles. Well, but 'tis no duel ; consequently, no danger ; therefore, pr'ythee, be answered.

Mar. What is't, a mistress, then ? Mum ! you know I can be silent upon occasion.

Charles. I wish you could be civil too ; I tell you, you neither must nor shall go with me. Farewell. *[Exit.]*

Mar. Why, then, I must and will follow you. *[Exit.]*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Street.

Enter CHARLES.

Charles. Well! here's the house which holds the lovely prize, quiet and serene: here no noisy footmen throng to tell the world that beauty dwells within; no ceremonious visit makes the lover wait, no rival to give my heart a pang. Who would not scale the window at midnight without fear of the jealous father's pistol, rather than fill up the train of a coquette, where every minute he is jostled out of place? [*Knocks softly.*] Mrs. Patch, Mrs. Patch!

Enter PATCH from the House.

Patch. Oh! are you come, sir? All's safe.

Charles. So! in—in then. [*They go in.*]

Enter MARPLOT.

Mar. There he goes! Who the devil lives here? Except I find out that, I am as far from knowing his business as ever. Gad! I'll watch; it may be a bawdy-house, and he may have his throat cut. I there should be any mischief, I can make oath he went in. Well, Charles, in spite of your endeavours to keep me out of the secret, I may save your life, for aught I know. At that corner I'll plant myself; there I shall see whoever goes in or comes out. Gad! I love discoveries. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—A Chamber in the house of Sir Jealous Traffick.

Enter CHARLES, ISABINDA, and PATCH.

Isa. Patch, look out sharp; have a care of dad.

Patch. I warrant you. [*Exit.*]

Isa. Well, sir, if I may judge your love by your courage, I ought to believe you sincere; for you venture into the lion's den when you come to see me.

Charles. If you'll consent, whilst the furious beast is abroad, I'd free you from the reach of his paws.

Isa. That would be but to avoid one danger by running into another—like poor wretches, who fly the burning ship, and meet their fate in the water. Come, come, Charles; I fear, if I consult my reason, confinement and plenty are better than liberty and starving. I know you would make the frolic pleasing for a little time, by saying and doing a world of tender things; but when our small substance is exhausted, and a thousand requisites for life are wanting, love, who rarely dwells with poverty, would also fail us.

Charles. Faith! I fancy not: methinks my heart has laid up a stock will last for life; to back which, I have taken a thousand pounds upon my uncle's estate; that, surely, will support us till one of our fathers relent.

Isa. There's no trusting to that, my friend: I doubt your father will carry his humour to the grave, and mine till he sees me settled in Spain.

Charles. And can you then cruelly resolve to stay till that cursed Don arrives, and suffer that youth, beauty, fire, and wit, to be sacrificed to the arms of a dull Spaniard, to be immured, and forbid the sight of any thing that's human?

Isa. No: when it comes to that extremity, and no stratagem can relieve us, thou shalt list for a soldier, and I'll carry thy knapsack after thee.

Charles. Bravely resolved! the world cannot be

more savage than our parents, and fortune generally assists the bold; therefore, consent now; why should we put it to a future hazard? who knows when we shall have another opportunity?

Isa. Oh! you have your ladder of ropes, I suppose; and the closet-window stands just where it did; and, if you ha'n't forgot to write in characters, Patch will find a way for our assignations. Thus much of the Spanish contrivance my father's severity has taught me; I thank him; though I hate the nation, I admire their management in these affairs.

Enter PATCH.

Patch. Oh, madam! I see my master coming up the street.

Charles. Oh, the devil! Would I had my ladder now! I thought you had not expected him till night. Why—why—why—why—what shall I do, madam?

Isa. Oh! for heaven's sake, don't go that way! you'll meet him full in the teeth. Oh, unlucky moment!

Charles. Adsheart! can you shut me into no cupboard, nor ram me into a chest, eh?

Patch. Impossible, sir! he searches every hole in the house.

Isa. Undone for ever! If he sees you I shall never see you more.

Patch. I have thought on it; run you to your chamber, madam; and, sir, come you along with me; I am certain you may easily get down from the balcony.

Charles. My life, adieu! Lead on, guide.

[Exit PATCH and CHARLES.]

Isa. Heavens preserve him! [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—The Street.

Enter Sir JEALOUS TRAFFICK, followed by MARPLOT.

Sir J. I don't know what's the matter, but I have a strong suspicion all is not right within; that fellow's sauntering about my door!—and his tale of a puppy had the face of a lie, methought. By St. Jago, if I should find a man in the house, I'd make mince-meat of him.

Mar. Mince-meat! Ah, poor Charles! how I sweat for thee! Egad! he's old; I fancy I might bully him, and make Charles have an opinion of my courage. Egad! I'll pluck up, and have a touch with him.

Sir J. My own key shall let me in; I'll give them no warning. [*Feeling for his key.*]

Mar. What's that you say, sir? [*Going up to Sir Jealous.*]

Sir J. What's that to you, sir? [*Turns quick upon him.*]

Mar. Yes, 'tis to me, sir; for the gentleman you threaten is a very honest gentleman. Look to it; for if he comes not as safe out of your house as he went in—

Sir J. What! is he in then?

Mar. Yes, sir, he is in then; and I say if he does not come out, I have half-a-dozen myrmidons hard by shall beat your house about your ears.

Sir J. Ah! a combination to undo me. I'll myrmidon you, ye dog, you! Thieves, thieves! [*Beats Marplot.*]

Mar. Murder, murder! I was not in your house, sir.

Enter Servant.

Serv. What's the matter, sir?

Sir J. The matter, rascal! you have let a man into my house; but I'll flay him alive. Follow me;

I'll not leave a mouse-hole unsearched. If I find him, by St. Jago! I'll equip him for the opera.

[Exit.]

Mar. A deuce of his cane! There's no trusting to age. What shall I do to relieve Charles? Egad! I'll raise the neighbourhood. Murder, murder! [Charles drops down upon him from the balcony.] Charles! faith, I'm glad to see thee safe out, with all my heart!

Charles. A plague of your bawling! how the devil came you here?

Mar. Egad! it's very well for you that I was here; I have done you a piece of service: I told the old thunderbolt, that the gentleman that was gone in was—

Charles. Was it you that told him, sir? [Laying hold of him.] 'Sdeath! I could crush thee into atoms.

[Exit.]

Mar. What! will you choke me for my kindness? Will my inquiring soul never leave searching into other people's affairs till it gets squeezed out of my body? I dare not follow him now for my blood, he's in such a passion. I'll go to Miranda; if I can discover aught that may oblige Sir George, it may be a means to reconcile me again to Charles.

Sir J. [Within.] Look about! search, find him out.

Mar. Oh, the devil! there's old Crabstick again. [Exit.]

SCENE IV.—A Hall in the house of Sir Jealous Traffick.

Enter Sir JEALOUS TRAFFICK and his Servants.

Sir J. Are you sure you have searched everywhere?

Serv. Yes, from the top of the house to the bottom.

Sir J. Under the beds and over the beds?

Serv. Yes, and in them too, but found nobody, sir.

Sir J. Why, what could this rogue mean?

Enter ISABINDA and PATCH.

Patch. Take courage, madam; I saw him safe out. [Aside to ISABINDA.]

Isa. Bless me! what's the matter, sir?

Sir J. You know best. Pray, where's the man that was here just now?

Isa. What man, sir? I saw none.

Patch. Nor I, by the trust you repose in me! Do you think I would let a man come within these doors when you are absent?

Sir J. Ah, Patch! she may be too cunning for thy honesty; the very scout that he had set to give warning discovered it to me, and threatened me with half-a-dozen myrmidons; but I think I mauled the villain. These afflictions you draw upon me, mistress. [To ISABINDA.]

Isa. Pardon me, sir, 'tis your own ridiculous humour draws you into these vexations, and gives every fool pretence to banter you.

Sir J. No, 'tis your idle conduct, your coquettish flirting into the balcony. Oh! with what joy shall I resign thee into the arms of Don Diego Babinetto!

Isa. And with what industry shall I avoid him! [Aside.]

Sir J. Certainly that rogue had a message from somebody or other, but being balked by my coming popped that sham upon me. Come along, ye sots, let's see if we can find the dog again. Patch, lock her up, d'ye hear? [Exeunt Sir J. and Servants.]

Patch. Yes, sir. Ay! walk till your heels ache, you'll find nobody, I promise you.

Isa. Who could that scout be he talks of?

Patch. Nay, I can't imagine, without it was Whis-per.

Isa. Well, dear Patch! let's employ all our thoughts how to escape this horrid Don Diego; my very heart sinks at his terrible name.

Patch. Fear not, madam; Don Carlo shall be the man, or I'll lose the reputation of contriving; and then what's a chambermaid good for? [Exeunt.]

SCENE V.—Sir Francis Gripe's House.

Enter Sir FRANCIS GRIPE and MIRANDA.

Mir. Well, gardy, how did I perform the dumb scene?

Sir F. To admiration! Thou dear little rogue! let me buss thee for it: nay, adad! I will, chargy, so muzzle, and tuzzle, and hug thee; I will, i'faith! I will. [Hugging and kissing her.]

Mir. Nay, gardy, don't be so lavish. Who would ride post when the journey lasts for life?

Sir F. Oh, I'm transported! When, when, my gard, wilt thou convince the world of the happy day? when shall we marry, eh?

Mir. There's nothing wanting but your consent, Sir Francis.

Sir F. My consent! What does my charmer mean?

Mir. Nay, 'tis only a whim; but I'll have every thing according to form: therefore, when you sign an authentic paper, drawn up by an able lawyer, that I have your leave to marry, the next day makes me your's, gardy.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! a whim indeed! why is it not demonstration I give my leave when I marry thee?

Mir. Not for your reputation, gardy; the malicious world will be apt to say you tricked me into marriage, and so take the merit from my choice: now I will have the act my own, to let the idle fops see how much I prefer a man loaded with years and wisdom.

Sir F. Humph! Pr'ythee, leave out years, chargy; I'm not soold, as thou shalt find. Adad! I'm young: there's a caper for ye. [Jumps.]

Mir. Oh! never excuse it; why, I like you the better for being old: but I shall suspect you don't love me if you refuse me this formality.

Sir F. Not love thee, chargy! Adad! I do love better than—than—than—better than—what shall I say? egad! better than money; i'faith, I do.

Mir. That's false, I'm sure. [Aside.] To prove it, do this then.

Sir F. Well, I will do it, chargy, provided I bring a license at the same time.

Mir. Ay! and a parson too, if you please. Ha, ha, ha! I can't help laughing to think how all the young coxcombs about town will be mortified when they hear of our marriage.

Sir F. So they will, so they will! ha, ha, ha!

Mir. Well, I fancy, I shall be so happy with my gardy!

Sir F. If wearing pearls and jewels, or eating gold, as the old saying is, can make thee happy, thou shalt be so, my sweetest, my lovely, my charming, my—verily, I know not what to call thee.

Mir. You must know, gardy, that I am so eager to have this business concluded, that I employed my woman's brother, who is a lawyer in the Temple, to settle matters just to your liking; you are to give your consent to my marriage—which is to yourself you know; but, mum! you must take no notice of that. So then I will—that is, with your leave—put my writings into his hands; then to-morrow we come slap upon them with a wedding that nobody

thought on, by which you seize me and my estate, and, I suppose, make a bonfire of your own act and deed.

Sir F. Nay, but chary, if—

Mir. Nay, gardy, no ifs. Have I refused three northern lords, two British peers, and half-a-score knights, to have you put in your ifs?

Sir F. So thou hast indeed, and I will trust to thy management. Od! I'm all of a fire.

Mir. 'Tis a wonder the dry stubble does not blaze.
[*Aside.*]

Enter MARPLOT.

Sir F. How now! who sent for you, sir? What! is the hundred pounds gone already?

Mar. No, sir; I don't want money now, gardy.

Sir F. No! that's a miracle! but there's one thing you want, I'm sure.

Mar. Ay! what's that?

Sir F. Manners. What! had I no servants without?

Mar. None that could do my business, guardian; which is, at present, with this lady.

Mir. With me, Mr. Marplot? what is it, I beseech you?

Sir F. Ay, sir! what is it? any thing that relates to her, may be delivered to me.

Mar. I deny that.

Mir. That's more than I do, sir.

Mar. Indeed, madam! Why, then, to proceed: Fame says (you know best whether she tells truth or not), that you and my most conscionable guardian here, designed, contrived, plotted, and agreed to chouse a very civil, honest, honourable gentleman out of a hundred pounds: guilty or not?

Mir. That I contrived it?

Mar. Ay, you! you said never a word against it; so far you are guilty.

Sir F. Pray tell that civil, honest, honourable gentleman, that if he has any more such sums to fool away, they shall be received like the last; ha, ha, ha! Choused, quotha! But, harkye, let him know, at the same time, that if he dare to report I tricked him of it, I shall recommend a lawyer to him, who shall shew him a trick for twice as much. D'ye hear? tell him that.

Mar. So, and this is the way you use a gentleman, and my friend!

Mir. Is the wretch thy friend?

Mar. The wretch! look ye, madam, don't call names; egad! I won't take it.

Mir. Why, you won't beat me, will you? ha, ha!

Mar. I don't know whether I will or no.

Sir F. Sir, I shall make a servant shew you out at the window if you are saucy.

Mar. I am your most humble servant, guardian; I design to go out the same way I came in. I would only ask this lady one question: don't you think he's a fine gentleman?

Sir F. Who's a fine gentleman?

Mar. Not you, gardy, not you. Don't you think, in your soul, that Sir George Airy is a very fine gentleman?

Mir. He dresses well.

Sir F. Which is chiefly owing to his tailor and valet-de-chambre.

Mar. Well! and who is your dress owing to, eh? There's a beau, ma'am! do but look at him!

Sir F. Sirrah!

Mir. And if being a beau be a proof of his being a fine gentleman, he may be so.

Mar. He may be so! Why, ma'am, the judicious part of the world allow him wit, courage, gallantry,

and economy too, though I think he forfeited that character when he flung away a hundred pounds upon your dumb ladyship.

Sir F. Does that gall him? ha, ha, ha!

Mir. So, Sir George, remaining in deep discontent, has sent you, his trusty squire, to utter his complaint. Ha, ha, ha!

Mar. Yes, madam; and you, like a cruel hard-hearted Jew, value it no more—than I would your ladyship, were I Sir George; you, you, you—

Mir. Oh, don't call names; I know you love to be employed, and I'll oblige you, and you shall carry him a message from me.

Mar. According as I like it. What is it?

Mir. Nay, a kind one you may be sure. First, tell him I have chose this gentleman, to have and to hold, and so forth. [*Taking the hand of Sir F.*]

Mar. Much good may it do you.

Sir F. Oh the dear rogue! how I dote on her!
[*Aside.*]

Mir. And advise his impertinence to trouble me no more, for I prefer Sir Francis for a husband before all the universe.

Mar. Oh lord, oh lord! she's bewitched, that's certain. Here's a husband for eighteen; here's a tit-bit for a young lady; here's a shape, an air, and a grace; here's bones rattling in a leathern bag; [*Turning Sir F. about.*] here's buckram and canvass to scrub you to repentance.

Sir F. Sirrah, my cane shall teach you repentance, presently.

Mar. No, faith, I have felt its twin brother from just such a withered hand too lately.

Mir. One thing more; advise him to keep from the garden-gate on the left hand, for if he dare to saunter there, about the hour of eight, as he used to do, he shall be saluted with a pistol or a blunderbuss.

Sir F. Oh, monstrous! Why, chary, did he use to come to the garden-gate?

Mir. The gardener described just such another man that always watched his coming out, and fain would have bribed him for an entrance: tell him he shall find a warm reception if he comes this night.

Mar. Pistols and blunderbusses! Egad, a warm reception indeed! I shall take care to inform him of your kindness, and advise him to keep further off.

Mir. I hope he will understand my meaning better than to follow your advice.
[*Aside.*]

Sir F. Thou hast signed, sealed, and taken possession of my heart for ever, chary, ha, ha, ha! and for you, Mr. Saucebox, let me have no more of your messages, if ever you design to inherit your estate, gentleman.

Mar. Why, there 'tis now. Sure I shall be out of your clutches one day. Well, guardian, I say no more; but if you be not as arrant a cuckold as ever drove bargain upon the exchange, or paid attendance to a court, I am the son of a whetstone; and so your humble servant.

Mir. Mr. Marplot, don't forget the message; ha, ha, ha!

Mar. Nang, nang, nang!
[*Exit.*]

Sir F. I am so provoked; 'tis well he's gone.

Mir. Oh, mind him not, gardy, but let's sign articles, and then—

Sir F. And then—Adad, I believe I am metamorphosed! my pulse beats high, and my blood boils, methinks.
[*Kissing and hugging her.*]

Mir. Oh, fie, gardy, be not so violent; consider the market lasts all the year. Well, I'll in, and see if the lawyer be come; you'll follow.
[*Exit.*]

Sir F. Ay, to the world's end, my dear. Well,

Frank, thou art a lucky fellow in thy old age—to have such a delicate morsel, and thirty thousand pounds, in love with thee. I shall be the envy of bachelors, the glory of married men, and the wonder of the town. Some guardians would be glad to compound for part of the estate at despatching an heiress, but I engross the whole. *O! mihi prateritos referet Jupiter annos.* [Exit.]

SCENE VI.—A Tavern.

Sir GEORGE AIRY and CHARLES discovered, with wine, pens, ink and paper on the table. WHISPER waiting.

Sir G. Nay, pr'ythee, don't be grave, Charles; misfortunes will happen. Ha, ha, ha! 'tis some comfort to have a companion in our sufferings.

Charles. I am only apprehensive for Isabinda; her father's humour is implacable; and how far his jealousy may transport him to her undoing, shocks my soul to think.

Sir G. But since you escap'd undiscovered by him, his rage will quickly lash into a calm, never fear it.

Charles. But who knows what that unlucky dog, Marplot, told him? nor can I imagine what brought him thither; that fellow is ever doing mischief, and yet, to give him his due, he never designs it. This is some blundering adventure wherein he thought to shew his friendship, as he calls it—a curse on him!

Sir G. Then you must forgive him. What said he?

Charles. Said! nay, I had more mind to cut his throat, than to hear his excuses.

Sir G. Where is he?

Whis. Sir, I saw him go into Sir Francis Gripe's just now.

Charles. Oh! then he's upon your business, Sir George; a thousand to one but he makes some mistake there too.

Sir G. Impossible, without he huffs the lady, and makes love to Sir Francis.

Enter Drawer.

Draw. Mr. Marplot is below, gentlemen, and desires to know if he may have leave to wait upon ye.

Charles. How civil the rogue is, when he has done a fault!

Sir G. Oh! desire him to walk up. [Exit Drawer.] Pr'ythee, Charles, throw off this chagrin, and be good company.

Charles. Nay, hang him, I'm not angry with him.

Enter MARPLOT.

Do but mark his sheepish look, Sir George.

Mar. Dear Charles, don't overwhelm a man already under insupportable affliction. I'm sure I always intend to serve my friends; but if my malicious stars deny the happiness, is the fault mine?

Sir G. Never mind him, Mr. Marplot; he's eat up with spleen. But tell me, what says Miranda?

Mar. Says! Nay, we are all undone there too.

Charles. I told you so; nothing prospers that he undertakes.

Mar. Why, can I help her having chose your father for better or worse?

Charles. So; there's another of fortune's strokes. I suppose I shall be edged out of my estate with twins every year, let who will get 'em.

Sir G. What! is the woman really possessed?

Mar. Yes, with the spirit of contradiction; she railed at you most prodigiously.

Sir G. That's no ill sign.

Mar. You'd say it was no good sign if you knew all.

Sir G. Why, pr'ythee?

Mar. Harkye, Sir George, let me warn you; pur-

sue your old haunt no more; it may be dangerous.

[CHARLES sits down to write.

Sir G. My old haunt! what do you mean?

Mar. Why, in short then, since you will have it, Miranda vows if you dare approach the garden gate at eight o'clock, as you used, you shall meet with a warm reception.

Sir G. A warm reception!

Mar. Ay, a very warm reception; you shall be saluted with a blunderbuss, sir. These were her very words; nay, she bid me tell you so too.

Sir G. Ha! the garden-gate at eight, as I used to do! There must be meaning in this. Is there such a gate, Charles?

Mar. Is there such a gate, Charles?

Charles. Yes, yes, it opens into the Park; I suppose her ladyship has made many a scamper through it.

Sir G. It must be an assignation then. Ha! my heart springs for joy; 'tis a propitious omen. My dear Marplot, let me embrace thee; thou art my friend, my better angel.

Mar. What do you mean, Sir George?

Sir G. No matter what I mean. Here, take a bumper to the garden-gate, you dear rogue, you!

Mar. You have reason to be transported, Sir George; I have saved your life.

Sir G. My life! thou hast saved my soul, man. Charles, if thou dost not pledge this health, may'st thou never taste the joys of love.

Charles. Whisper, be sure you take care how you deliver this. [Gives him a letter.] Bring me the answer to my lodgings.

Whis. I warrant you, sir.

[To CHARLES.

Mar. Whither does that letter go? Now dare I not ask for my blood; that fellow knows more secrets than I do. [Aside, following WHISPER as he is going.] Whisper! Whisper!

Whis. Sir.

[Aside to MAR.

Mar. Whisper, here's half a crown for you.

[Aside to WHIS.

Whis. Thank ye, sir.

[Aside to MAR.

Mar. Now, where is that letter going?

[Aside to WHIS.

Whis. Into my pocket, sir.

[Aside to MAR. Exit.

Charles. Now I'm for you.

Sir G. To the garden-gate at the hour of eight, Charles.—Allons; huzza!

Charles. I begin to conceive you.

Mar. That's more than I do, egad. To the garden gate, huzza! [Drinks.] But I hope you design to keep far enough off on't, Sir George.

Sir G. Ay, ay, never fear that; she shall see I despise her frowns; let her use the blunderbuss against the next fool; she sha'n't reach me with the smoke, I warrant her, ha, ha, ha!

Mar. Ah, Charles! if you could receive a disappointment thus, *en cavalier*, one should have some comfort in being beat for you.

Charles. The fool comprehends nothing.

[Aside to Sir G.

Sir G. Nor would I have him. Pr'ythee, take him along with thee.

[Aside to CHARLES

Charles. Enough.

[Aside to Sir G.

Sir G. I kiss both your hands; and now for the garden-gate.

It's beauty gives the assignation there,

And love too powerful grows t' admit of fear.

[Exit.

Charles. Come, you shall go home with me.

Mar. Shall I? and are we friends, Charles? I am glad of it.

Charles. Come along.

[Exit.]

Mar. Egad, Charles's asking me to go home with him gives me a shrewd suspicion there's more in the garden-gate than I comprehend. Faith, I'll give him the drop, and away to gardy's and find it out.

[Exit.]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The Outside of Sir JEALOUS TRAFFICK'S house: PATCH peeping out of the door.*

Enter WHISPER.

Whis. Ha! Mrs. Patch, this is a lucky minute, to find you so readily; my master dies with impatience.

Patch. My lady imagined so, and by her orders I have been scouting this hour in search of you, to inform you that Sir Jealous has invited some friends to supper with him to-night, which gives an opportunity to your master to make use of his ladder of ropes. The closet window shall be open, and Isabinda ready to receive him. Bid him come immediately.

Whis. Excellent! he'll not disappoint, I warrant him;—but hold, I have a letter here which I'm to carry an answer to. I cannot think what language the direction is.

Patch. Pho! 'tis no language, but a character which the lovers invented to avert discovery. Ha! I hear my old master coming down stairs; it is impossible you should have an answer. Away, and bid him come himself for that. Be gone, we're ruined if you're seen, for he has doubled his care since the last accident.

Whis. I go, I go.

[Exit.]

Patch. There, go thou into my pocket. [Puts it aside, and it falls down.] Now, I'll up the back stairs, lest I meet him. Well, a dexterous chambermaid is the ladies' best utensil, I say.

[Exit.]

Enter Sir JEALOUS TRAFFICK, with a letter in his hand.

Sir J. So, this is some comfort; this tells me that Signior Don Diego Babinetto is safely arrived. He shall marry my daughter the minute he comes. Ha, ha! what's here? [Takes up the letter PATCH dropped.] A letter! I don't know what to make of the superscription. I'll see what's within-side. [Opens it.] Humph! 'tis Hebrew, I think. What can this mean? There must be some trick in it. This was certainly designed for my daughter; but I don't know that she can speak any language but her mother tongue. No matter for that; this may be one of love's hieroglyphics; and I fancy I saw Patch's tail sweep by; that wench may be a slut, and instead of guarding my honour, betray it. I'll find it out, I'm resolved. Who's there?

Enter Servant.

What answer did you bring from the gentlemen I sent you to invite?

Serv. That they'd all wait on you, sir, as I told you before; but I suppose you forgot, sir.

Sir J. Did I so, sir? but I sha'n't forget to break your head if any of them come, sir.

Serv. Come, sir! why, did not you send me to desire their company, sir?

Sir J. But I send you now to desire their absence. Say I have something extraordinary fallen out, which calls me abroad, contrary to expectation, and ask their pardon; and, d'ye hear, send the butler to me.

Serv. Yes, sir

[Exit.]

Enter Butler.

Sir J. If this paper has a meaning I'll find it.—Lay the cloth in my daughter's chamber, and bid the cook send supper thither presently.

But. Yes, sir. Heyday! what's the matter now?

[Exit.]

Sir J. He wants the eyes of Argus, that has a young handsome daughter in this town; but my comfort is, I shall not be troubled long with her. He that pretends to rule a girl once, in her teens, had better be at sea in a storm, and would be in less danger.

[Exit]

SCENE II.—*Isabinda's Chamber*

Enter ISABINDA and PATCH.

Isa. Are you sure nobody saw you speak to Whis-per?

Patch. Yes, very sure, madam; But I heard Sir Jealous coming down stairs, so clapped his letter into my pocket. [Feels for the letter.]

Isa. A letter! give it me quickly.

Patch. Bless me! what's become o't? I'm sure I put it— [Searching still.]

Isa. Is it possible thou could'st be so careless? Oh, I'm undone for ever if it be lost.

Patch. I must have dropp'd it upon the stairs. But why are you so much alarmed? If the worst happens nobody can read it, madam, nor find out whom it was designed for.

Isa. If it falls into my father's hand the very figure of a letter will produce ill consequences. Run and look for it upon the stairs this moment.

Patch. Nay, I'm sure it can be no where else.

[Going.]

Enter Butler.

How now, what do you want?

But. My master ordered me to lay the cloth here for supper.

Isa. Ruined past redemption. [Aside.]

Patch. You mistake, sure. What shall we do?

Isa. I thought he expected company to-night.—Oh, poor Charles! oh, unfortunate Isabinda! [Aside.]

But. I thought so, too, madam; but I suppose he has altered his mind. [Lays the cloth, and exit.]

Isa. The letter is the cause. This heedless action has undone me. Fly and fasten the closet window, which will give Charles notice to retire. Ha! my father! Oh, confusion!

Enter Sir JEALOUS TRAFFICK.

Sir J. Hold, hold, Patch; whither are you going? I'll have nobody stir out of the room till after supper.

Patch. Sir, I was going to reach your easy chair. Oh, wretched accident! [Aside.]

Sir J. I'll have nobody stir out of this room. I don't want my easy chair.

Isa. What will be the event of this? [Aside.]

Sir J. Harkye, daughter, do you know this hand?

Isa. As I suspected. [Aside.] Hand, do you call it, sir? 'tis some schoolboy's scrawl.

Patch. Oh, invention! thou chambermaid's best friend, assist me. [Aside.]

Sir J. Are you sure you don't understand it?

[Patch feels in her bosom, and shakes her clothes.]

Isa. Do you understand it, sir?

Sir J. I wish I did.

Isa. Thank heaven you do not. [Aside.] Then I know no more of it than you do, indeed, sir.

Patch. O lord, O lord! what have you done, sir?

Why, the paper is mine; I dropp'd it out of my bosom. [*Snatching it from him.*]

Sir J. Ha! yours, mistress?

Patch. Yes sir, it is—

Sir J. What is it? Speak.

Patch. Yes, sir, it is a charm for the tooth-ache: I have worn it these seven years; 'twas given me by an angel for aught I know, when I was raving with the pain, for nobody knew from whence he came nor whither he went. He charged me never to open it, lest some dire vengeance befell me, and heaven knows what will be the event. Oh, cruel misfortune! that I should drop it and you should open it.

Sir J. Plague of your charms and whims for me! if that be all, 'tis well enough: there, there, burn it, and I warrant you no vengeance will follow.

Patch. So, all's right again thus far. [*Aside.*]

Isa. I would not lose Patch for the world; I'll take courage a little. [*Aside.*] Is this usage for your daughter, sir? must my virtue and conduct be suspected for every trifle? You immure me like some dire offender here, and deny me all the recreations which my sex enjoy, and the custom of the country and modesty allow; yet not content with that, you make my confinement more intolerable by your mistrusts and jealousies. Would I were dead, so I were free from this.

Sir J. To-morrow rids you of this tiresome load; Don Diego Babinetto will be here, and then my care ends and his begins.

Isa. Is he come, then? Oh, how shall I avoid this hated marriage! [*Aside.*]

Enter Servants, with supper.

Sir J. Come, will you sit down?

Isa. I can't eat, sir.

Patch. No, I dare swear he has given her supper enough. I wish I could get into the closet. [*Aside.*]

Sir J. Well, if you can't eat, then give me a song whilst I do.

Isa. I have such a cold I can scarce speak, sir, much less sing. How shall I prevent Charles's coming in? [*Aside.*]

Sir J. I hope you have the use of your fingers, madam. Play a tune upon your spinnet whilst your woman sings me a song.

Patch. I'm as much out of tune as my lady, if he knew all. [*Aside.*]

Isa. I shall make excellent music.

[*Sits down to play.*]

Patch. Really, sir, I am so frightened about your opening this charm that I can't remember one thing.

Sir J. Pish! hang your charm! come, come, sing anything.

Patch. Yes, I'm likely to sing, truly. [*Aside.*] Humph, humph! bless me, I can't raise my voice, my heart pants so.

Sir J. Why, what, does your heart pant so that you can't play neither? Pray, what key are you in, eh?

Patch. Ah, would the key was turned on you once. [*Aside.*]

Sir J. Why don't you sing, I say?

Patch. When madam has put her spinnet in tune, sir; humph, humph!

Isa. I cannot play, sir, whatever ails me. [*Rising.*]

Sir J. Zounds! sit down and play me a tune, or I'll break the spinnet about your ears.

Isa. What will become of me?

[*Sits down and plays.*]

Sir J. Come, mistress.

[*To Patch.*]

Patch. Yes, sir. [*Sings, but horribly out of tune.*]

Sir J. Hey, hey! why, you are a-top of the house, and you are down in the cellar. What is the meaning of this? Is it on purpose to cross me, eh?

Patch. Pray madam, take it a little lower; I cannot reach that note, nor any note I fear.

Isa. Well, begin. Oh, Patch, we shall be discovered. [*Aside.*]

Patch. I sink with apprehension, madam. [*Aside.*]

Humph, humph! [*Sings. Charles opens the closet door.*]

Charles. Music and singing! Death! her father there! [*The women shriek.*] Then I must fly.

[*Exit into the closet. Sir J. rises up hastily, seeing*]

CHARLES slip back into the closet.]

Sir J. Hell and furies! A man in the closet!

Patch. Ah! a ghost! a ghost! He must not enter the closet. [*Aside.*]

[*ISABINDA throws herself down before the closet door, as in a swoon.*]

Sir J. The devil! I'll make a ghost of him, I warrant you. [*Strives to get by.*]

Patch. Oh, hold, sir, have a care; you'll tread upon my lady. Who waits there? Bring some water. Oh, this comes of your opening the charm. Oh, oh, oh! [*Weeps aloud.*]

Sir J. I'll charm you, housewife. Here lies the charm that conjured this fellow in, I'm sure on't. Come out, you rascal, do. Zounds! take her from the door, or I'll spurn her from it, and break your neck down stairs. Where are you, sirrah? Villain! robber of my honour! I'll pull you out of your nest. [*Goes into the closet.*]

Patch. You'll be mistaken, old gentleman; the bird is flown.

Isa. I'm glad I have escaped so well; I was all most dead in earnest with the fright.

Re-enter Sir JEALOUS out of the closet.

Sir J. Whoever the dog was, he has escaped out of the window, for the sash is up; but though he is got out of my reach, you are not. And first, Mrs. Pander, with your charms for the tooth-ache, get out of my house, go, troop; yet hold, stay, I'll see you of doors myself; but I'll secure your charge ere I do.

Isa. What do you mean, sir? was she not a creature of your own providing?

Sir J. She was of the devil's providing, for aught I know.

Patch. What have I done, sir, to merit your displeasure?

Sir J. I don't know which of you have done it, but you shall both suffer for it, till I can discover whose guilt it is. Go, get in there; I'll move you from this side of the house. [*Pushes ISABINDA in at the door and locks it, puts the key in his pocket.*] I'll keep the key myself; I'll try what ghost will get into that room; and now, forsooth, I'll wait on you down stairs.

Patch. Ah, my poor lady! Down stairs, sir! but I won't go out, sir, till I have locked up my clothes, and that's flat.

Sir J. If thou wert as naked as thou wert born, thou shouldst not stay to put on a rag, and that's flat. [*Ereunt.*]

SCENE III.—The Street.

Sir J. [*Putting PATCH out of the door.*] There, go, and come no more within sight of my habitation these three days, I charge you.

[*Slaps the door after her.*]

Patch. Did ever anybody see such an old monster?

Enter CHARLES.

Oh, Mr. Charles! your affairs and mine are in an ill posture.

Charles. I am inured to the frowns of fortune; but what has befallen thee?

Patch. Sir Jealous, whose suspicious nature is always on the watch, nay, even while one eye sleeps the other keeps sentinel, upon sight of you flew into such a violent passion, that I could find no stratagem to appease him, but in spite of all arguments he locked his daughter into her own apartment, and turned me out of doors.

Charles. Ha! Oh, Isabinda!

Patch. And swears she shall see neither sun nor moon, till she is Don Diego Babinetto's wife, who arrived last night, and is expected with impatience.

Charles. He dies; yes, by all the wrongs of love, he shall; here will I plant myself, and through my breast he shall make his passage, if he enters.

Patch. A most heroic resolution! there might be ways found out more to your advantage; policy is often preferred to open force.

Charles. I apprehend you not.

Patch. What think you of personating this Spaniard, imposing upon the father, and marrying your mistress, by his own consent?

Charles. Say'st thou so, my angel! Oh, could that be done, my life to come would be too short to recompense thee; but how can I do that when I neither know what ship he came in, nor from what part of Spain; who recommends him, or how attended?

Patch. I can solve all this. He is from Madrid, his father's name is Don Pedro Questo Portento Babinetto. Here's a letter of his to Sir Jealous, which he dropped one day. You understand Spanish, and the hand may be counterfeited. You conceive me, sir?

Charles. My better genius! thou hast revived my drooping soul. I'll about it instantly. Come to my lodgings, and we'll concert matters. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*A Garden-gate open; SCENTWELL waiting within.*

Enter Sir GEORGE AIRY.

Sir G. So, this is the gate, and most invitingly open. If there should be a blunderbuss here, now, what a dreadful dirty would my fall make for fools, and what a jest for the wits; how my name would be roared about the streets! Well, I'll venture all.

Scent. Hist! hist! Sir George Airy. [*Comes forward.*]

Sir G. A female voice! thus far I'm safe. My dear,—

Scent. No, I'm not your dear, but I'll conduct you to her. Give me your hand; you must go through many a dark passage and dirty step before you arrive—

Sir G. I know I must before I arrive at paradise; therefore be quick, my charming guide:—

Scent. For aught you know. Come, come, your hand, and away.

Sir G. Here, here, child; you can't be half so swift as my desires. [*Exeunt through the gate.*]

SCENE V.—*The House.*

Enter MIRANDA.

Mir. Well, let me reason a little with my mad self. Now, don't I transgress all rules to venture upon a man without the advice of the grave and wise? But then a rigid, knavish guardian, who would have married me—to whom? even to his nau-

seous self, or nobody. Sir George is what I have tried in conversation, inquired into his character, and am satisfied in both. Then his love! who would have given a hundred pounds only to have seen a woman he had not infinitely loved? So I find my liking him has furnished me with arguments enough of his side; and now the only doubt remains, whether he will come or no.

Enter SCENTWELL and Sir GEORGE AIRY.

Scent. That's resolved, madam, for here's the knight. [*Exit.*]

Sir G. And do I once more behold that lovely object whose idea fills my mind, and forms my pleasing dreams?

Mir. What, beginning again in heroics? Sir George, don't you remember how little fruit your last prodigal oration produced? Not one bare single word in answer.

Sir G. Ha! the voice of my incognita! Why did you take ten thousand ways to captivate a heart your eyes alone had vanquished?

Mir. No more of these flights. Do you think we can agree on that same terrible bugbear, matrimony, without heartily repenting on both sides?

Sir G. It has been my wish since first my longing eyes beheld you.

Mir. And your happy ears drank in the pleasing news I had thirty thousand pounds.

Sir G. Unkind! Did I not offer you, in those purchased minutes, to run the risk of your fortune, so you would but secure that lovely person to my arms?

Mir. Well, if you have such love and tenderness, since our wooing has been short, pray reserve it for our future days, to let the world see we are lovers after wedlock; 'twill be a novelty.

Sir G. Haste then, and let us tie the knot, and prove the envied pair—

Mir. Hold, not so fast; I have provided better than to venture on dangerous experiments headlong. My guardian, trusting to my dissembled love, has given up my fortune to my own disposal, but with this proviso, that he to-morrow morning weds me. He is now gone to Doctor's Commons for a licence.

Sir G. Ha! a licence!

Mir. But I have planted emissaries that infallibly take him down to Epsom, under a pretence that a brother usurer of his is to make him his executor—the thing on earth he covets.

Sir G. 'Tis his known character.

Mir. Now my instruments confirm him this man is dying, and he sends me word he goes this minute. It must be to-morrow ere he can be undecieved; that time is ours.

Sir G. Let us improve it then, and settle on our coming years endless happiness.

Mir. I dare not stir till I hear he's on the road; then I, and my writings, the most material point, are soon removed.

Sir G. I have one favour to ask; if it lies in your power you would be a friend to poor Charles; though the son of this tenacious man, he is as free from all his vices as nature and a good education can make him; and what now I have vanity enough to hope will induce you, he is the man on earth I love.

Mir. I never was his enemy, and only put it on as it help'd my designs on his father. If his uncle's estate ought to be in his possession, which I shrewdly suspect, I may do him a singular piece of service.

Sir G. You are all goodness.

Enter SCENTWELL.

Scent. Oh, madam! my master and Mr. Marplot are just coming into the house.

Mir. Undone, undone; if he finds you here in this crisis, all my plots are unravelled.

Sir G. What shall I do? Can't I get back into the garden?

Scent. Oh, no! he comes up those stairs.

Mir. Here, here, here! Can you condescend to stand behind this chimney-board, Sir George?

Sir G. Any where, any where, dear madam, without ceremony.

Scent. Come, come, sir, lie close. [*They put him behind the chimney-board.*]

Enter SIR FRANCIS GRIPE and MARPLOT; Sir Francis peeling an orange.

Sir F. I could not go, though 'tis upon life and death, without taking leave of dear charge. Besides, this fellow buzzed in my ears that thou might'st be so desperate as to shoot that wild rake that haunts the garden-gate, and that would bring us into trouble, dear.

Mir. So Marplot brought you back then?

Mar. Yes, I brought him back.

Mir. I'm obliged to him for that, I'm sure. [*Frowning at MARPLOT aside.*]

Mar. By her looks she means she's not obliged to me. I have done some mischief now, but what I can't imagine. [*Aside.*]

Sir F. Well, chargy, I have had three messengers to come to Epsom to my neighbour Squeezum's, who, for all his vast riches, is departing. [*Sighs.*]

Mar. Ay, see what all you usurers must come to.

Sir F. Peace, you young knave! Some forty years hence I may think on't; but, chargy, I'll be with thee to-morrow before those pretty eyes are open; I will, I will, chargy; I'll rouse you, i'faith. Here, Mrs. Scentwell, lift up your lady's chimney-board, that may throw my peel in, and not litter her chamber.

Mir. Oh, my stars! what will become of us now?

[*Aside.*]

Scent. O, pray, sir, give it me; I love it above all things in nature, indeed I do.

Sir F. No, no, hussy; you have the green pip already; I'll have no apothecary's bills.

[*Goes toward the chimney.*]

Mir. Hold, hold, hold, dear gardy! I have a,—a monkey shut up there; and if you open it before the man comes that is to tame it, 'tis so wild 'twill break all my china or get away, and that would break my heart; for I'm fond on't to distraction, next thee, dear gardy! [*In a flattering tone.*]

Sir F. Well, well, chargy, I won't open it; she shall have her monkey, poor rogue! Here, throw this peel out of the window. [*Exit SCENTWELL.*]

Mar. A monkey! Dear madam, let me see it; I can tame a monkey as well as the best of them all. Oh, how I love the little miniatures of man.

Mir. Be quiet, mischief; and stand further from the chimney. You shall not see my monkey—why sure—[*Striving with him.*]

Mar. For heaven's sake, dear madam, let me but peep, to see if it be as pretty as Lady Fiddlefaddle's. Has it got a chain?

Mir. Not yet; but I design it one shall last its life-time. Nay, you shall not see it. Look, gardy, how he teazes me!

Sir F. [*Getting between him and the chimney.*] Sirrah, sirrah, let my chargy's monkey alone, or my

bamboo shall fly about your ears. What, is there no dealing with you?

Mar. Pugh! plague of the monkey! here's a rout! I wish he may rival you.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir, they have put two more horses to the coach, as you ordered, and 'tis ready at the door.

Sir F. Well, I am going to be executor; better for thee, jewel. B'ye, chargy; one buss. I'm glad thou hast got a monkey to divert thee a little.

Mir. Thankye, dear gardy! Nay, I'll see you to the coach.

Sir F. That's kind, adad!

Mir. Come along, impertinence! [*To MARPLOT.*] *Mar.* [*Stepping back.*] 'Egad, I will see the monkey now. [*Lifts up the board and discovers Sir GEORGE.*]

O lord! O lord! thieves, thieves! murder! *Sir G.* D—n ye, you unlucky dog! 'tis I. Which way shall I get out? Shew me instantly, or I'll cut your throat.

Mar. Undone, undone! At that door there. But hold, hold; break that china, and I'll bring you off. [*He runs off at the corner, and throws down some china.*]

Re-enter SIR FRANCIS GRIPE, MIRANDA, and SCENTWELL.

Sir F. Mercy on me! what's the matter?

Mir. O, you toad! what have you done?

Mar. No great harm; I beg of you to forgive me. Longing to see this monkey, I did but just raise up the board, and it flew over my shoulders, scratched all my face, broke your china, and whisked out of the window.

Sir F. Where, where is it, sirrah?

Mar. There, there, Sir Francis, upon your neighbour Parmazan's pantiles.

Sir F. Was ever such an unlucky rogue! Sirrah, I forbid you my house. Call the servants to get the monkey again. Pug, pug, pug! I would stay myself to look for it, but you know my earnest business.

Scent. Oh, my lady will be best to lure it back: all them creatures love my lady extremely.

Mir. Go, go, dear gardy! I hope I shall recover it.

Sir F. B'ye, b'ye, dearee! Ah, mischief! how you look now! B'ye, b'ye. [*Exit.*]

Mir. Scentwell, see him in the coach, and bring me word.

Scent. Yes, madam.

[*Exit.*]

Mir. So, sir, you have done your friend a signal piece of service, I suppose.

Mar. Why, look you, madam, if I have committed a fault, thank yourself; no man is more serviceable when I am let into a secret, and none more unlucky at finding it out. Who could divine your meaning? when you talked of a blunderbuss, who thought of a rendezvous? and when you talked of a monkey, who the devil dreamt of Sir George?

Mir. A sign you converse but little with our sex, when you can't reconcile contradictions.

Re-enter SCENTWELL.

Scent. He's gone, madam, as fast as the coach and six can carry him.

Re-enter SIR GEORGE AIRY.

Sir G. Then I may appear.

Mar. Here's pug, madam. Dear Sir George, make my peace; on my soul I never took you for a monkey before.

Sir G. I dare swear thou didst not. Madam, I beg you to forgive him.

Mir. Well, Sir George, if he can be secret.

Mar. 'Odsheart, madam! I'm as secret as a priest when trusted.

Sir G. Why 'tis with a priest our business is at present.

Scent. Madam, here's Mrs. Isabinda's woman to wait on you.

Mir. Bring her up.

Enter PATCH.

How do ye, Mrs. Patch? What news from your lady?

Patch. That's for your private ear, madam. Sir George, there's a friend of yours has an urgent occasion for your assistance.

Sir G. His name.

Patch. Charles.

Mar. Ha! then there's something a-foot that I know nothing of. [*Aside.*] I'll wait on you Sir George.

Sir G. A third person may not be proper, perhaps. As soon as I have despatched my own affairs I am at his service. I'll send my servant to tell him I'll wait on him in half an hour.

Mir. How came you employed in this message, Mrs. Patch?

Patch. Want of business, madam; I am discharged by my master, but hope to serve my lady still.

Mir. How, discharged! you must tell me the whole story within.

Patch. With all my heart, madam.

Mar. Tell it here, Mrs. Patch. Pish! plague! I wish I were fairly out of the house. I find marriage is the end of this secret; and now I'm half mad to know what Charles wants him for. [*Aside.*]

Sir G. Madam, I'm doubly pressed by love and friendship. This exigence admits of no delay. Shall we make Marplot of the party?

Mir. If you'll run the hazard, Sir George; I believe he means well.

Mar. Nay, for my part I desire to be let into nothing; I'll be gone, therefore pray don't mistrust me.

Sir G. So, now he has a mind to be gone to Charles; but not knowing what affairs he may have upon his hands at present, I'm resolv'd he shan't stir. [*Aside.*] No, Mr. Marplot, you must not leave us; we want a third person. [*Takes hold of him.*]

Mar. I never had more mind to be gone in my life.

Mir. Come along then; if we fail in the voyage, thank yourself for taking this ill-starr'd gentleman on board.

Sir G. That vessel ne'er can unsuccessful prove,
Whose freight is beauty, and whose pilot's love.

Mar. Tyty ti, tyty ti. [*Exeunt, with MIRANDA. Steals off the other way.*]

Re-enter Sir GEORGE.

Sir G. Marplot! Marplot!

Mar. [*Entering.*] Here! I was coming, Sir George. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Room in Sir Francis Gripe's House.

Enter MIRANDA, PATCH, and SCENTWELL.

Mir. Well, Patch, I have done a strange bold thing; my fate is determined, and expectation is no more. Now to avoid the impertinence and roguery of an old man, I have thrown myself into the extravagance of a young one; if he should despise, slight, or use me ill, there's no remedy from a husband but

the grave, and that's a terrible sanctuary to one of my age and constitution.

Patch. Oh! fear not, madam; you'll find your account in Sir George Airy; it is impossible a man of sense should use a woman ill, endued with beauty, wit, and fortune. It must be the lady's fault if she does not wear the unfashionable name of wife easy, when nothing but complaisance and good humour is requisite on either side to make them happy.

Mir. I long till I am out of this house, lest an accident should bring my guardian back. Scentwell, put my best jewels into the little casket, slip them into thy pocket, and let us march off to Sir Jealous's.

Scent. It shall be done, madam. [*Exit.*]

Patch. Sir George will be impatient, madam. If their plot succeeds, we shall be well received; if not, he will be able to protect us. Besides, I long to know how my young lady fares.

Mir. Farewell, old Mammon, and thy detested walls! 'Twill be no more sweet Sir Francis! I shall be compelled to the odious task of dissembling no longer to get my own, and coax him with the wheedling names of my precious, my dear, dear gardy! O heavens!

Enter Sir FRANCIS GRIPE.

Sir F. Ah, my sweet charge! don't be frightened; [*She starts.*] but thy poor gardy has been abused, cheated, fooled, betrayed; but nobody knows by whom.

Mir. Undone, past redemption. [*Aside.*]

Sir F. What, won't you speak to me, charge?

Mir. I am so surprised with joy to see you, I know not what to say.

Sir F. Poor dear girl! But do you know that my son, or some such rogue, to rob or murder me, or both, contrived this journey; for upon the road I met my neighbour Squeezum well, and coming to town.

Mir. Good lack, good lack! what tricks are there in this world!

Re-enter SCENTWELL, with a diamond necklace in her hand, not seeing Sir FRANCIS.

Scent. Madam, be pleased to tie this necklace on, for I can't get into the— [*Seeing Sir F.*]

Mir. The wench is a fool, I think! Could you not have carried it to be mended without putting it in the box.

Sir F. What's the matter?

Mir. Only, dearee,—I bid her, I bid her—Your ill-usage has put everything out of my head. But won't you go, gardy, and find out these fellows, and have them punished, and, and—

Sir F. Where should I look for them, child? no, I'll sit me down contented with my safety, nor stir out of my own doors till I go with thee to a parson.

Mir. If he goes into his closet I am ruined [*Aside.*] Oh, bless me! In this fright I had forgot Mrs. Patch.

Patch. Ay, madam, and I stay for your speedy answer.

Mir. I must get him out of the house. Now assist me, fortune! [*Aside.*]

Sir F. Mrs. Patch! I profess I did not see you: how dost thou do, Mrs. Patch? Well, don't you repent leaving my charge?

Patch. Yes, everybody must love her; but I come now—Madam, what did I come for? my invention is at the last ebb. [*Aside to MIRANDA.*]

Sir F. Nay, never whisper; tell me.

Mir. She came, dear gardy, to invite me to her lady's wedding, and you shall go with me, gardy; 'tis to be done this moment, to a Spanish merchant.

Old Sir Jealous keeps on his humour : the first minute he sees her, the next he marries her.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha, ha ! I'd go if I thought the sight of matrimony would tempt chary to perform her promise. There was a smile, there was a consenting look, with those pretty twinklers, worth a million ! 'Ods-precious ! I am happier than the great mogul, the emperor of China, or all the potentates that are not in the wars. Speak, confirm it, make me leap out of my skin.

Mir. When one has resolved, 'tis in vain to stand shilly-shally. If ever I marry, positively this is my wedding-day.

Sir F. Oh ! happy, happy man. Verily, I will beget a son the first night shall disinherit that dog Charles. I have estate enough to purchase a barony, and be the immortalizing the whole family of the Gripes.

Mir. Come then, gardy, give me thy hand ; let's to this house of Hymen.

My choice is fixed, let good or ill betide ;

Sir F. The joyful bridegroom I,

Mir. And I the happy bride. [Exeunt.

SCENE II.—An Apartment in the House of Sir Jealous Traffick.

Enter Sir JEALOUS TRAFFICK, meeting a Servant.

Serv. Sir, here's a couple of gentlemen inquires for you ; one of them calls himself Signior Diego Babinetto.

Sir J. Ha ! Signior Babinetto ! admit 'em instantly,—joyful minute ! I'll have my daughter married to-night.

Enter CHARLES, in a Spanish habit, with Sir GEORGE AIRY, dressed like a merchant.

Senhor, beso las manos: vuestra merced es muy bien venido en esta tierra.

Charles. *Senhor, soy muy humi lde, y muy obligado cryado de vuestra merced: mi padre embia a vuestra merced, los mas profundos de sus respetos; y a commissionado este mercadil Ingles, de concluyr un negocio, que me haze el mas dichos shombre del mundo, haziendo me su yerno.*

Sir J. I am glad on't, for I find I have lost much of my Spanish. Sir, I am your most humble servant. Signior Don Diego Babinetto has informed me that you are commissioned by Signior Don Pedro, &c. his worthy father—

Sir G. To see an affair of marriage consummated between a daughter of yours and Signior Diego Babinetto, his son here. True, sir, such a trust is reposed in me, as that letter will inform you. I hope it will pass upon him. [Aside.—Gives him a letter.

Sir J. Ay, 'tis his hand. [Seems to read.

Sir G. Good, you have counterfeited to a nicety, Charles. [Aside to CHARLES.

Sir J. Sir, I find by this that you are a man of honour and probity ; I think, sir, he calls you Meanwell.

Sir G. Meanwell is my name, sir.

Sir J. A very good name, and very significant. For to mean well is to be honest, and to be honest is the virtue of a friend, and a friend is the delight and support of human society.

Sir G. You shall find that I'll discharge the part of a friend in what I have undertaken, Sir Jealous. Therefore, sir, I must entreat the presence of your fair daughter, and the assistance of your chaplain ; for Signior Don Pedro strictly enjoined me to see the marriage rites performed as soon as we should arrive, to avoid the accidental overtures of Venus.

ACT. DRAMA.—NOS. 63 & 64.

Sir J. Overtures of Venus !

Sir G. Ay, sir ; that is, those little hawking females, that traverse the park and the playhouse to put off their damaged ware ; they fasten upon foreigners like leeches, and watch their arrival as carefully as the Kentish men do a shipwreck : I warrant you they have heard of him already.

Sir J. Nay, I know this town swarms with them.

Sir G. Ay, and then you know the Spaniards are naturally amorous, but very constant ; the first face fixes 'em ; and it may be very dangerous to let him ramble ere he is tied.

Sir J. Pat to my purpose. Well, sir, there is but one thing more, and they shall be married instantly.

Charles. Pray heaven that one thing more won't spoil all. [Aside.

Sir J. Don Pedro wrote me word, in his last but one, that he designed the sum of five thousand crowns by way of jointure for my daughter, and that it should be paid into my hand upon the day of marriage—

Charles. Oh, the devil ! [Aside.

Sir J. In order to lodge it in some of our funds in case she should become a widow, and return to England.

Sir G. Plague on't ! this is an unlucky turn. What shall I say ? [Aside.

Sir J. And he does not mention one word of it in this letter.

Sir G. Humph ! True, Sir Jealous, he told me such a thing, but, but, but—he, he, he, he—he did not imagine that you would insist upon the very day ; for, for, for, for money, you know, is dangerous returning by sea, an, an, an—

Charles. Zounds ! say we have brought it in commodities. [Aside to Sir G.

Sir G. And so, sir, he has sent it in merchandize ; tobacco, sugars, spices, lemons, and so forth, which shall be turned into money with all expedition ; in the meantime, sir, if you please to accept of my bond for performance—

Sir J. It is enough, sir ; I am so pleased with the countenance of Signior Diego, and the harmony of your name, that I'll take your word, and will fetch my daughter this moment. Within there !

Enter Servant.

Desire Mr. Tackum, my neighbour's chaplain, to walk hither.

Serv. Yes, sir. [Exit.

Sir J. Gentlemen, I'll return in an instant. [Exit.

Sir G. 'Egad, that five thousand crowns had like to have ruined the plot.

Charles. But that's over ; and if fortune throws no more rubs in our way—

Sir G. Thou'lt carry the prize—But hist ! here he comes.

Re-enter Sir JEALOUS TRAFFICK, dragging in ISABINDA.

Sir J. Come along, you stubborn baggage, you—come along.

Isa. Oh ! hear me, sir, hear me but speak one word:

Do not destroy my everlasting peace ; My soul abhors this Spaniard you have chose.

Sir J. How's that ?

Isa. Let this posture move your tender nature. [Kneels.

For ever will I hang upon these knees,
Nor loose my hands till you cut off my hold,
If you refuse to hear me, sir.

Sir J. Did you ever see such a perverse slut ? Off, I say. Mr. Meanwell, pray help me a little.

3 G

Sir G. Rise, madam, and do not disoblige your father, who has provided a husband worthy of you, one that will love you equal with his soul, and one that you will love, when once you know him.

Isa. Oh! never, never!

Could I suspect that falsehood in my heart,
I would this moment tear it from my breast,
And straight present him with the treach'rous part.

Sir J. Falsehood! why, who the devil are you in love with? Don't provoke me, for by St. Jago I shall beat you, housewife.

Sir G. Sir Jealous, you are too passionate. Give me leave, I'll try by gentle words to work her to your purpose.

Sir J. I pray do, Mr. Meanwell, I pray do; she'll break my heart. [*Weeps.*] There is in that casket, jewels of the value of three thousand pounds, which were her mother's, and a paper, wherein I have settled one half of my estate upon her now, and the whole when I die—but provided she marries this gentleman; else, by St. Jago, I'll turn her out of doors to beg or starve. Tell her this, Mr. Meanwell, pray do.

Sir G. Ha! this is beyond expectation. [*Aside.*] Trust to me, sir, I'll lay the dangerous consequence of disobeying you at this juncture before her, I warrant you. Come, madam, do not blindly cast your life away just in the moment you would wish to save it.

Isa. Pray cease your trouble, sir: I have no wish but death to free me from this hated Spaniard. If you are his friend, inform him what I say.

Sir G. Suppose this Spaniard, which you strive to shun, should be the very man to whom you'd fly?

Isa. Ha!

Sir G. Would you not blame your rash resolve, and curse your eyes that would not look on Charles?

Isa. On Charles! Where is he? [*Rises.*]

Sir G. Hold, hold, hold. 'Sdeath! madam, you'll ruin all. Your father believes him to be Signior Babinetto. Compose yourself a little, pray, madam. [*He runs to Sir JEALOUS.*] She begins to hear reason, sir; the fear of being turned out of doors has done it. Speak gently to her, sir; I'm sure she'll yield: I see it in her face.

Sir J. Well, Isabinda, can you refuse to bless a father whose only care is to make you happy?

Isa. Oh, sir! do with me what you please; I am all obedience.

Sir J. And wilt thou love him?

Isa. I will endeavour it, sir.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir, here is Mr. Tackum.

Sir J. Shew him into the parlour. [*Exit Servant.*] Senhor, tome vind sueipora; este momento les junta las manos. [*Gives her to CHARLES.*]

Charles. Senhor, yo la recibo como se deve un tesora tan grande. [*Embraces her.*]

Sir J. Now, Mr. Meanwell, let's to the parson: Who, by his art, will join this pair for life, Make me the happiest father, her the happiest wife.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—A Street before *Sir Jealous Traffick's* house.

Enter MARPLOT.

Mar. I have hunted all over the town for Charles, but can't find him, and by Whisper's scouting at the end of the street, I suspect he must be in the house again. I am informed too that he has borrowed a Spanish habit out of the playhouse: what can it mean?

Enter a Servant of Sir Jealous Traffick's to him out of the house.

Harkye, sir, do you belong to this house?

Serv. Yes, sir.

Mar. Isn't your name Richard?

Serv. No, sir; Thomas.

Mar. Oh, ay, Thomas. Well, Thomas, there's a shilling for you.

Serv. Thank you, sir.

Mar. Pray, Thomas, can you tell if there be a gentleman in it in a Spanish habit?

Serv. There's a Spanish gentleman within, that is just a-going to marry my young lady, sir.

Mar. Are you sure he is a Spanish gentleman?

Serv. I'm sure he speaks no English that I hear of.

Mar. Then that can't be him I want, for 'tis an English gentleman that I inquire after; he may be dressed like a Spaniard, for aught I know.

Serv. Ha! who knows but this may be an impostor? I'll inform my master, for if he should be imposed upon, he'll beat us all round. [*Aside.*] Pray come in, sir, and see if this be the person you inquire for.

Mar. Ay, I'll follow you. Now for it.

[*Exeunt into the house.*]

SCENE IV.—The inside of the house.

Enter MARPLOT, and Servant.

Serv. Sir, please to stay here; I'll send my master to you. [*Exit.*]

Mar. So, this was a good contrivance. If this be Charles now, he will wonder how I found him out.

Re-enter Servant, and SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK.

Sir J. What is your earnest business, blockhead! that you must speak to me before the ceremony's past! Ha! who's this?

Serv. Why this gentleman, sir, wants another gentleman in a Spanish habit, he says.

Sir J. In a Spanish habit! 'tis some friend of Signior Don Diego's, I warrant. [*Aside.*] Sir, your servant.

Mar. Your servant, sir.

Sir J. I suppose you would speak with Signior Babinetto?

Mar. Sir?

Sir J. I say, I suppose you would speak with Signior Babinetto?

Mar. Hey-day! what the devil does he say now? [*Aside.*] Sir, I don't understand you.

Sir J. Don't you understand Spanish, sir?

Mar. Not I, indeed, sir.

Sir J. I thought you had known Signior Babinetto.

Mar. Not I, upon my word, sir.

Sir J. What, then, you'd speak with his friend, the English merchant, Mr. Meanwell?

Mar. Neither, sir, not I; I don't mean any such thing.

Sir J. Why, who are you then, sir? and what do you want?

Mar. Nay nothing at all, not I, sir. Plague on him! I wish I were out; he begins to exalt his voice! I shall be beaten again. [*Aside.*]

Sir J. Nothing at all, sir! Why then what business have you in my house, ha?

Serv. You said you wanted a gentleman in a Spanish habit.

Mar. Why ay, but his name is neither Babinetto nor Meanwell.

Sir J. What is his name then, sirrah? Ha! now

I look at you again, I believe you are the rogue that threatened me with half a dozen myrmidons—

Mar. Me, sir! I never saw your face in all my life before.

Sir J. Speak, sir; who is it you look for? or, or—

Mar. A terrible old dog! [*Aside.*] Why, sir, only an honest young fellow of my acquaintance—I thought that there might be a ball, and that he might have been here in a masquerade. 'Tis Charles, Sir Francis Gripe's son,—because I know he used to come hither sometimes.

Sir J. Did he so?—Not that I know of, I'm sure. Pray heaven that this be Don Diego. If I should be tricked now—Ha! my heart misgives me plaguily. Within there! stop the marriage. Run, sirrah, call all my servants! I'll be satisfied that this is Signior Pedro's son ere he has my daughter.

Mar. Ha! Sir George! what have I done now?

Enter Sir GEORGE AIRY, with a drawn sword.

Sir G. Ha! Marplot here! oh! the unlucky dog! What's the matter, Sir Jealous? [*well.*]

Sir J. Nay, I don't know the matter, Mr. Mean-

Mar. Upon my soul, Sir George—

[*Going up to Sir George.*]

Sir J. Nay, then, I'm betrayed, ruined, undone. Thieves, traitors, rogues! [*Offers to go in.*] Stop the marriage, I say—

Sir G. I say go on, Mr. Tackum—Nay, no entering here; I guard this passage, old gentleman: the act and the deed were both your own, and I'll see them signed, or die for't.

Enter Servant.

Sir J. A plague on the act and deed!—Fall on, sir, knock him down.

Sir G. Ay, come on, scoundrels! I'll prick your jackets for you. [*Beats Marplot.*]

Sir J. Zounds! sirrah, I'll be revenged on you.

Sir G. Ay, there your vengeance is due. Ha, ha!

Mar. Why, what do you beat me for? I han't married your daughter.

Sir J. Rascals! why don't you knock him down?

Serv. We are afraid of his sword, sir; if you'll take that from him, we'll knock him down presently.

Enter CHARLES and ISABINDA.

Sir J. Seize her, then.

Charles. Rascals, retire, she's my wife; touch her if you dare; I'll make dogs'-meat of you, rascals.

Mar. Ay, I'll make dogs'-meat of you, rascals.

Sir J. Ah! downright English.—Oh, oh, oh, oh!

Enter Sir FRANCIS GRIPE and MIRANDA.

Sir F. Into the house of joy we enter without knocking.—Ha! I think 'tis the house of sorrow, Sir Jealous.

Sir J. Oh, Sir Francis, are you come? What! was this your contrivance, to abuse, trick, and chouse me out of my child?

Sir F. My contrivance! what do you mean?

Sir J. No, you don't know your own son there in a Spanish habit?

Sir F. How! my son in a Spanish habit! Sirrah, you'll come to be hanged. Get out of my sight, ye dog! get out of my sight.

Sir J. Get out of your sight, sir! get out with your bags. Let's see what you'll give him now to maintain my daughter on.

Sir F. Give him! he shall never be the better for a penny of mine; and you might have looked after your daughter better, Sir Jealous. Tricked, quotha! Egad, I think you design to trick me: but look ye, gentlemen, I believe I shall trick you both. This lady is my wife, do you see, and my estate shall descend only to her children.

Sir G. I shall be extremely obliged to you, sir Francis.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha, ha! poor Sir George! does not your hundred pounds stick in your stomach? ha, ha, ha!

Sir G. No, faith, Sir Francis, this lady has given me a cordial for that. [*Takes her by the hand.*]

Sir F. Hold, sir, you have nothing to say to this lady.

Sir G. Nor you nothing to do with my wife, sir.

Sir F. Wife, sir!

Mir. Ay, really, guardian, 'tis even so. I hope you'll forgive my first offence.

Sir F. What, have you choused me out of my consent and your writings then, mistress, ha?

Mir. Out of nothing but my own, guardian.

Sir J. Ha, ha, ha! 'tis some comfort at least to see you are over-reached as well as myself. Will you settle your estate upon your son now?

Sir F. He shall starve first.

Mir. That I have taken care to prevent. There, sir, are the writings of your uncle's estate, which have been your due these three years.

[*Gives Charles papers.*]

Charles. I shall study to deserve this favour.

Mar. Now, how the devil could she get those writings, and I know nothing of it?

Sir F. What, have you robbed me too, mistress? 'Egad, I'll make you restore 'em—hussey, I will so.

Sir J. Take care I don't make you pay the arrears, sir. 'Tis well 'tis no worse, since 'tis no better. Come, young man, seeing thou hast out-witted me, take her, and bless you both!

Charles. I hope, sir, you'll bestow your blessing too; 'tis all I ask. [*Kneels.*]

Mar. Do, gardy, do.

Sir F. Confound you all!

[*Erit.*]

Mar. Mercy upon us, how he looks!

Sir G. Ha, ha, ha! never mind his curses, Charles; thou'lt thrive not one jot the worse for 'em. Since this gentleman is reconciled, we are all made happy.

Sir J. I always loved precaution, and took care to avoid dangers; but when a thing was past, I ever had philosophy to be easy.

Charles. Which is the true sign of a great soul. I loved your daughter, and she me, and you shall have no reason to repent her choice.

Isa. You will not blame me, sir, for loving my own country best.

Mar. So, here's every body happy, I find, but poor Pilgrarick. I wonder what satisfaction I shall have for being cuffed, kicked, and beaten in your service!

Sir J. I have been a little too familiar with you as things are fallen out; but since there's no help for it, you must forgive me.

Mar. 'Egad I think so; but provided that you be not so familiar for the future.

Sir G. Thou hast been an unlucky rogue.

Mar. But very honest.

Chas. That I'll vouch for, and freely forgive thee.

Sir G. And I'll do you one piece of service more, Marplot; I'll take care Sir Francis makes you master of your estate.

Mar. That will make me as happy as any of you.

Sir J. Now let us in, and refresh ourselves with a cheerful glass, in which we'll bury all animosities; and *By my example let all parents move,*

And never strive to cross their children's love;

But still submit that care to Providence above.

[*Exeunt.*]

THE FOLLIES OF A DAY; OR, THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO.

A COMEDY, IN THREE ACTS,

BY THOMAS HOLCROFT.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

COUNT ALMAVIVA
BASIL
PEDRO
FIGARO
ANTONIO
PAGE

COUNTESS
SUSAN
AGNES

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Room in the castle.*

FIGARO and SUSAN discovered. FIGARO measuring the chamber.

Fig. Eighteen feet by twenty-six: good.

Susan. What art thou so busy about?

Fig. Measuring, to try if the bed our noble lord intends to give us will stand well here.

Susan. In this chamber?

Fig. Yes.

Susan. I won't lie in this chamber.

Fig. Why so?

Susan. I don't like it.

Fig. Your reason?

Susan. What if I have no reason? What if I don't choose to give my reason? Thou knowest how our generous Count, when he, by thy help, obtained Rosina's hand, and made her Countess of Almaviva, during the first transports of love, abolished a certain Gothic right—

Fig. Of sleeping the first night with every bride.

Susan. Which, as lord of the manor, he could claim.

Fig. Know it? To be sure I do; or I would not have married even my charming Susan in his domain.

Susan. Tired of prowling among the rustic beauties of the neighbourhood, he returned to the castle—

Fig. And his wife.

Susan. And thy wife. Dost thou understand me?

Fig. Perfectly!

Susan. And endeavours, secretly, to re-purchase from her a right, which he now most sincerely repents he ever parted with.

Fig. Most gracious penitent!

Susan. This is what he hints to me every instant; and this, the faithful Basil, the honest agent of his pleasures, and our most noble music-master, every day repeats with my lesson.

Fig. Basil!

Susan. Basil.

Fig. Indeed! Well, if tough ashen-plant, or supple-jack, twine not round thy lazy sides, rascal—

Susan. Ha, ha, ha! Why, wert thou ever wise enough to imagine that the portion the Count intends to give us, was meant as a reward for thy services?

Fig. I think I had some reason to hope as much.

Susan. Lord, lord! what great fools are you men of wit!

Fig. I believe so.

Susan. I am sure so.

Fig. Oh! that it were possible to deceive this arch deceiver, this lord of mine! A thousand blundering boobies have had art enough to filch a wife from the side of her sleeping, simple, unsuspecting spouse; and, if he complained, to redress his injuries with a cudgel: but, to turn the tables on this poacher, make him pay for a delicious morsel he shall never taste, infect him with fears for his own honour, and—

Susan. [*Bell rings.*] Hark! my lady rings: I must run; for she has several times strictly charged me to be the first person at her breakfast the morning of our marriage.

Fig. Why the first?

Susan. The old saying tells us, that it's lucky to a neglected wife to meet a young bride on the morning of her wedding-day. [*Exit.*]

Fig. Ah! my sweet girl! She's an angel! Such wit, such grace, and so much prudence and modesty, too! I'm a happy fellow!—So, Mr. Basil, is it me, rascal, you mean to practise the tricks of your trade upon? I'll teach you to put your spoon in my milk. But, hold! a moment's reflection, friend Figaro, on the events of the day: first, thou must promote the sports and feastings already projected, that appearances may not cool, but that thy marriage may proceed with greater certainty; next, thou must—Ha! here again?

Enter SUSAN, with the Countess's gown, cap, and riband, in her hand.

Susan. It wasn't my lady's bell; she has left her

room. Methinks, Figaro, you seem very indifferent about our wedding. Why aren't you gone to summon the bride-men and maids? and what's become of your fine plot to be revenged on my lord?

Fig. I'll away this moment, and prepare everything. Pr'ythee, my Susan, give me one kiss before I go; 'twill quicken my wits, and lend imagination a new impulse.

Susan. Oh! to be sure! But, if I kiss my lover to-day, what will my husband say to me to-morrow? Psha! Figaro, when wilt thou cease to trifle thus from morning till night?

Fig. When I may trifle from night till morning, sweet Susan. *[Exit.*

Susan. Ah! Figaro, Figaro! if thou provest but as loving a husband as thou art a fond lover, thou'lt never need fear the proudest lord of them all. I declare, I forget what I came for.

[Puts the gown on the arm-chair; but keeps the cap and riband in her hand.

Page. *[Without.]* Thank you, thank you, Figaro: I shall find her. *[Enter the Page, running.*

Susan. So, master Hannibal; what do you want here?

Page. Oh! my dear, dear, pretty Susan! I have been looking for you these two hours.

Susan. Well, what have you to say to me, now you have found me?

Page. How does your beauteous lady do, Susan?

Susan. Very well.

Page. Do you know, Susan, my lord is going to send me back to my papa and mamma?

Susan. Poor child!

Page. Child, indeed! umph! And, if my charming god-mother, your dear lady, cannot obtain my pardon, I shall soon be deprived of the pleasure of your company, Susan.

Susan. Upon my word! You are toying all day long with Agnes, and fancy yourself, moreover, in love with my lady, and then come to tell me you shall be deprived of my company. Ha, ha, ha!

Page. Agnes is good-natured enough to listen to me; and that is more than you are, Susan; for all I love you so.

Susan. Love me! Why, you amorous little villain, you are in love with every woman you meet.

Page. So I am, Susan, and I can't help it. If nobody is by, I swear it to the trees, the waters, and the winds; nay, to myself. Oh! how sweet are the words women, maidens, and love, in my ears!

Susan. Ha, ha, ha! he's bewitched. And what is the Count going to send you from the castle for?

Page. Last night, you must know, he caught me with Agnes, in her room: "Begone," said he, "thou little—"

Susan. Little what?

Page. Lord! he called me such a name—I can't for shame repeat it before a woman. I dare never meet his face again. *[room?*

Susan. And, pray, what were you doing in Agnes's

Page. Teaching her her part.

Susan. Her part?

Page. Yes; the love-scene, you know she is to act in the comedy this evening.

Susan. *[Aside.]* Which my lord would choose to teach her himself.

Page. Agnes is very kind, Susan.

Susan. Well, well; I'll tell the Countess what you say. But you are a little more circumspect in her presence.

Page. Ah! Susan, she is a divinity. How noble is her manner! her very smiles are awful!

Susan. That is to say, you can take what liberties you please with such people as me.

Page. Oh! how do I envy thy happiness, Susan! Always near her; dressing her every morning; undressing her every evening; putting her to bed; touching her; looking at her; speaking to—What is it thou hast got there, Susan?

Susan. It is the fortunate riband of the happy cap, which, at night, enfolds the auburn ringlets of the beauteous Countess.

Page. Give it me: nay, give it me; I will have it.

Susan. But, I say, you sha'n't. *[The Page snatches it.]* Oh! my riband.

Page. Be as angry as thou wilt, but thou shalt never have it again; thou should'st have one of my eyes rather.

Susan. I can venture to predict, young gentleman, that, three or four years hence, thou wilt be one of the most deceitful, veriest knaves—

Page. If thou dost not hold thy tongue, Susan, I'll kiss thee into the bargain.

Susan. Kiss me! Don't come near me, if thou lovest thy ears. I say, beg my lord to forgive you, indeed! No, I assure you.

Count A. *[Without.]* Jaques!

Page. Ah! I'm undone! 'Tis the Count himself, and there's no way out of this room. Lord, lord! what will become of me? *[Hides himself.]*

Enter Count ALMAVIVA.

Count A. So, my charming Susan, have I found thee at last? But thou seemest frightened, my little beauty.

Susan. Consider, my lord, if any body should come and find you here.

Count A. That would be rather *mal apropos*; but there's no great danger *[Offers to kiss Susan.]*

Susan. Fie, my lord!

Count A. Thou knowest, my charming Susan, the king has done me the honour to appoint me ambassador to the court of Paris. I shall take Figaro with me, and give him a very excellent post; and, as it is the duty of a wife to follow her husband, I may then be as happy as I could wish.

Susan. I really don't understand you, my lord. I thought your affection for my lady, whom you took so much pains to steal from her old guardian, and for love of whom you generously abolished a certain vile privilege—

Count A. For which all the young girls are very sorry, are they not?

Susan. No, indeed, my lord. I thought, my lord, I say—

Count A. Pr'ythee, say no more, my sweet Susan, but promise thou wilt meet me to-night in the garden; and be certain, if thou wilt but grant me this small favour, nothing thou canst ask shall ever—

Basil. *[Without.]* He is not in his own apartment. *Count A.* Heavens! here's somebody coming; and this infernal room has but one door. Where can I hide? Is there no place here?

[The Count runs behind the arm-chair: SUSAN keeps between him and the Page, who steals away as the Count advances, leaps into the arm-chair, and is covered over with the Countess's gown by SUSAN.]

Enter BASIL.

Basil. Ah! Susan, good morrow. Is my lord the Count here?

Susan. Here? what should he be here for?

Basil. Nay, there would be no miracle in it, if he were; would there, eh, gentle Susan?

Susan. It would be a greater miracle to see you honest.

Basil. Figaro is in search of him.

Susan. Then he is in search of the man who wishes most to injure him—yourself excepted.

Basil. It is strange that a man should injure the husband by obliging the wife.

Count A. [*Peeping.*] I shall hear now how well he pleads my cause.

Basil. For my part, marriage being of all serious things the greatest farce, I imagined—

Susan. All manner of wickedness.

Basil. That though you are obliged to fast to-day, you might be glad to feed to-morrow; grace being first duly said.

Susan. Begone, and don't shock my ears with your vile principles.

Basil. Yes, my pretty Susan; but you must not suppose I am the dupe of these fine appearances: I know it isn't Figaro who is the great obstacle to my lord's happiness; but a certain beardless Page, whom I surprised here yesterday looking for you, as I entered.

Susan. I wish you'd begone, you wicked devil.

Basil. Wicked devil! Ah! one is a wicked devil for not shutting one's eyes.

Susan. I wish you'd begone, I tell you.

Basil. Wasn't it for you that he wrote the song, which he goes chanting up and down the house at every instant?

Susan. Oh! yes, for me, to be sure.

Basil. I'm sure it was either for you or your lady.

Susan. What next?

Basil. Why, really, when he sits at table, he does cast certain very significant glances towards a beautiful Countess, who shall be nameless. But let him beware. If my lord catches him at his tricks, he'll make him dance without music.

Susan. Nobody but such a wicked creature as you, could ever invent such scandalous tales to the ruin of a poor youth, who has, unhappily, fallen into his lordship's displeasure.

Basil. I invent? Why, it's in every body's mouth.

Count A. [*Discovers himself, and comes forward.*] How? in every body's mouth?

Basil. Zounds!—

Count A. Run, Basil; let him have fifty pistols and a horse given him, and be sent back to his friends instantly.

Basil. I'm very sorry, my lord, that I happened to speak of—

Susan. Oh, oh! I am quite suffocated.

Count A. Let us seat her in this great chair, Basil: quick, quick.

Susan. This wicked fellow has ruined the poor boy. No, no; I won't sit down: I always faint best standing.

Basil. I assure you, my lord, what I said was only meant to sound Susan.

Count A. No matter; he shall depart: a little wanton, impudent rascal, that I meet at every turning! No longer ago than yesterday, I surprised him with the gardener's daughter.

Basil. Agnes?

Count A. In her very bed-chamber.

Susan. Where my lord happened to have business himself.

Count A. Hem! I was going there to seek her father, Antonio, my drunken gardener: I knocked at the door, and waited some time; at last Agnes came, with confusion in her countenance: I entered, cast a look around; and, perceiving a kind of long cloak or curtain, or some such thing, approached; and,

without seeming to take the least notice, drew it gently aside, thus. Eh!

[*Approaches the arm-chair, and draws aside the gown that hides the Page.*]

Basil. Zounds! Susan—

Count A. Why, this is a better trick than t'other.

Basil. Worth ten of it. No; I won't sit down: I faint best standing. Ha, ha, ha!

Count A. And so, it was to receive this pretty youth that you were so desirous of being alone. And you, you little villain, what, you don't intend to mend your manners, then?—but, forgetting all respect for your friend Figaro, and for the Countess, your god-mother, likewise, you are endeavouring here to seduce her favourite woman! I, however, shall not suffer Figaro, a man whom I esteem sincerely, to fall the victim of such deceit. Did this imp enter with you, Basil?

Basil. No, my lord.

Susan. There's neither victim nor deceit in the case, my lord: he was here when you entered.

Count A. I hope that's false; his greatest enemy couldn't wish him so much mischief.

Susan. Knowing that you were angry with him, the poor boy came running to me, begging me to solicit my lady in his favour, in hopes she might engage you to forgive him; but was so terrified when he heard you coming, that he hid himself in the great chair.

Count A. A likely story! I sat down in it as soon as I came in.

Page. Yes, my lord; but I was then trembling behind it.

Count A. That's false again; for I hid myself behind it when Basil entered.

Page. Pardon me, my lord; but, as you approached, I returned, and crouched down as you now see me.

Count A. It's a little serpent that glides into every cranny. And he has been listening, too, to our discourse.

Page. Indeed, my lord, I did all I could not to hear a word.

Count A. [*To SUSAN.*] There is no Figaro, no husband for you, however.

Basil. [*To PAGE.*] Somebody's coming: get down. Enter the COUNTESS, FIGARO, AGNES, PEDRO, and Servants; Figaro carrying the nuptial cap.

Count A. [*Plucks the Page from the arm-chair.*] What, would you continue crouching there before the whole world?

Fig. We are come, my lord, to beg a favour, which, we hope, for your lady's sake, you will grant. [*Aside to SUSAN.*] Be sure to second what I say.

Susan. [*Aside to FIG.*] It will end in nothing.

Fig. [*Aside to SUS.*] No matter; let's try, at least.

Countess. You see, my lord, I am supposed to have a much greater degree of influence with you than I really possess.

Count A. Oh no, madam; not an atom, I assure you.

Fig. [*Presenting the cap to the Count.*] Our petition is, that the bride may have the honour of receiving from our worthy lord's hand this nuptial cap, ornamented with half-blown roses and white ribands, symbols of the purity of his intentions.

Count A. [*Aside.*] Do they mean to laugh at me?

Countess. Let me beg, my lord, you will not deny their request; in the name of that love you once had for me.

Count A. And have still, madam.

Fig. Join with me, my friends.

All. My lord, my lord—

Count A. Well, well; I consent. [*Gives SUSAN the cap.*] Remember the garden. [*Aside.*]

Fig. Look at her, my lord: never could a more beautiful bride better prove the greatness of the sacrifice you have made.

Susan. Oh! don't speak of my beauty, but his lordship's virtues.

Count A. [*Aside.*] My virtues! Yes, yes; I see they understand each other.

Agnes. [*Pointing to the Page.*] Have you forgiven what happened yesterday, my lord?

Count A. Hush!

Fig. [*To the Page.*] What's the matter, young Hannibal the brave? What makes you so silent?

Susan. He's sorrowful, because my lord is going to send him from the castle.

All. Oh! my lord—

Countess. Let me beg you will forgive him.

Count A. He does not deserve to be forgiven.

Countess. Consider, he is so young.

Count A. [*Aside.*] Not so young, perhaps, as you suppose.

Page. My lord certainly has not ceded away the right to pardon.

Susan. And, if he had, that would certainly be the first he would secretly endeavour to reclaim.

Count A. No doubt, no doubt.

Page. My conduct, my lord, may have been indiscreet; but I can assure your lordship, that the least word shall never pass my lips—

Count A. Enough, enough! since every body begs for him, I must grant. I shall, moreover, give him a company in my regiment.

All. Oh! my lord—

Count A. But, on condition, that he departs to-day for Catalonia, to join the corps.

All. Oh! my lord—

Fig. To-morrow, my lord?

Count A. To-day. It shall be so. [*To the Page.*] Take leave of your god-mother, and beg her protection. [*The Page kneels to the Countess.*]

Fig. Go, go, child; go. [*Pushes the Page forward.*]

Countess. [*With great emotion.*] Since it is not possible to obtain leave for you to remain here to-day, depart, young man, and follow the noble career which lies before you. Go where fortune and glory call. Be obedient, polite, and brave, and be certain we shall take part in your prosperity. [*Raises him.*]

Count A. You seem agitated, madam.

Countess. How can I help it, recollecting the perils to which his youth must be exposed? He has been bred in the same house with me, is of the same kindred, and is, likewise, my god-son.

Count A. [*Aside.*] Basil, I see, was in the right. [*To the Page.*] Go; kiss Susan, for the last time.

Fig. No, there's no occasion for kissing, my lord; he'll return in the winter; and, in the mean time, he may kiss me. The scene must now be changed, my delicate youth: you must not run up stairs and down into the women's chambers, play at hunt the slipper, steal cream, suck oranges, and live upon sweet-meats. Instead of that, zounds! you must look bluff; tan your face; handle your musket; turn to the right; wheel to the left; and march to glory—that is, if you are not stopped short by a bullet.

Susan. Fie! Figaro.

Countess. What a prophecy!

Fig. Were I a soldier, I'd make some of them scamper. But, come, come, my friends, let us prepare our feast against the evening.

Count A. Well, much diversion to you all, my friends. [*Gong.*]

Countess. You will not leave us, my lord.

Count A. I am undressed, you see.

Countess. We shall see nobody but our own people.

Count A. I must do what you please. Wait for me in the study, Basil. I shall make out his commission immediately. [*Exeunt all but Fig. and Page.*]

Fig. [*Retains the Page.*] Come, come; let us study our parts well for the play in the evening: I dare say, you know no more of your's than Agnes does of her's.

Page. You forget, Figaro, that I am going.

Fig. And you wish to stay?

Page. Ah! yes.

Fig. Follow my advice, and so thou shalt.

Page. How, how?

Fig. Make no murmuring, but clap on your boots, and seem to depart; gallop as far as the farm; return to the castle on foot; enter by the back way; and hide yourself, till I can come to you, in the lodge at the bottom of the garden; you will find pretty Agnes thereabouts.

Page. Ay, and then I may teach her her part, you know.

Fig. Yes, you have no objection to that, I suppose. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—The Countess's Bed-chamber.

The COUNTESS seated at her toilet, and SUSAN, waiting, discovered.

Countess. Shut the door. And so, the Page was hid behind the great chair?

Susan. Yes, madam.

Countess. But how did he happen to be in your room, Susan?

Susan. The poor boy came to beg I would prevail on you to obtain his pardon of my lord the count.

Countess. But why did not he come to me himself? I should not have refused him a favour of that kind.

Susan. Bashfulness, madam. "Ah! Susan, (said he,) she is a divinity! How noble is her manner! Her very smiles are awful."

Countess. Is that true, Susan?

Susan. Can you doubt it, madam?

Countess. I have always afforded him my protection.

Susan. Had you, madam, but seen him snatch the riband from me!

Countess. [*Rising.*] Psha! enough of this nonsense. And so, my lord the Count endeavours to seduce you, Susan?

Susan. Oh! no, indeed, madam, he does not give himself the trouble to seduce; he endeavours to purchase me; and, because I refuse him, will certainly prevent my marriage with Figaro.

Countess. Fear nothing. We shall have need, however, of a little artifice, perhaps; in the execution of which, Figaro's assistance may not be amiss.

Susan. He'll be here, madam, as soon as my lord is gone a-coursing.

Countess. Your lord is an ungrateful man, Susan! an ungrateful man! Open the window; I am stifled for want of air. Vows, protestations, and tenderness, are all forgotten. My love offends, my caresses disgust: his own infidelities must be overlooked, yet my conduct must be irreproachable.

Susan. [*Looking out of the window.*] Yonder goes my lord, with all his grooms and greyhounds.

Countess. To divert himself with hunting a poor,

timid, harmless hare to death. This, however, will give us time to—[*Knocking at the door.*] Somebody is at the door, Susan.

Enter FIGARO.

Countess. Well, Figaro, you've heard of my lord the Count's designs on your fair bride.

Fig. Oh! yes, my lady. There was nothing very surprising in the news. My lord sees a sweet, young, lovely angel, and wishes to have her: can any thing be more natural? I wish the very same.

Countess. I don't find it so very pleasant, Figaro.

Fig. He endeavours to overturn the schemes of those who oppose his wishes; and in this he only follows the example of the world: I will endeavour to do the same by him; and first, my scheme requires that you dress up the Page in your clothes, my dear Susan: he is to be your representative in the design I have plotted.

Countess. The Page!

Susan. He is gone.

Fig. Is he? Perhaps so; but a whistle from me will bring him back.

Susan. So, now Figaro's happy; plots and contrivances—

Fig. Two, three, four, at a time! Embarrassed, involved, perplexed! Leave me to unravel them. I was born to thrive in courts.

Susan. I've heard the trade of a courtier is not so difficult as some pretend.

Fig. Ask for every thing that falls, seize every thing in your power, and accept every thing that's offered; there's the whole art and mystery in three words.

Countess. But should my lord discover the disguised Page?

Susan. He'll only give him a smart lecture, and that will do his boyish vanity no harm.

Countess. And, in truth, it deserves a little mortification. Well, next for the Count, Figaro.

Fig. Permit me, madam, to manage him. And first, the better to secure my property, I shall begin by making him dread the loss of his own: to which end, an anonymous letter must be sent, informing him, that a gallant (meaning to profit by his neglect and absence) is at present with his beauteous Countess; and, to confess the truth, the thing is already done, madam.

Countess. How? have you dared to trifle thus with a woman of honour?

Fig. Oh! madam, it is only with a woman of honour I should presume to take a liberty like this; lest my joke should happen to prove a reality.

Countess. You don't want an agreeable excuse for your plot, Figaro. Though I hardly know how to give into it.

[*Aside.*]

Fig. If you please, madam, I'll go and send the Page hither to be dressed. We must not lose a moment.

[*Exit.*]

Countess. [*Examining her head-dress in the looking-glass.*] What a hideous cap this is, Susan! it's quite awry. This youth who is coming—

Susan. Ah! madam, your beauty needs not the addition of art in his eyes.

Countess. I assure you, Susan, I shall be very severe with him; I shall tell him of all the complaints I hear against him.

Susan. Oh! yes, madam; I can see you will scold him heartily.

Countess. What do you say, Susan?

Susan. [*Goes to the chamber-door.*] Come, come in, Mister Soldier.

Enter the Page.

Page. Um!

[*Aside*]

Countess. Well, young gentleman! [*Aside to SUSAN.*] How innocent he looks, Susan!

Susan. And how bashful, madam!

[*Aside to the Countess.*]

Countess. Have you reflected on the duties of your new profession?

Susan. [*Aside to the Page.*] Ay, ay, young rake, I'll tell all I know. [*Returns to the Countess.*] Observe his downcast eyes, madam, and long eyelashes. [*Aside to the Page.*] Hypocrite, I'll tell—

Countess. Nay, Hannibal, don't be terrified. I—Come nearer.

Susan. [*Pushing him towards the Countess.*] Advance, modesty.

Countess. Poor youth, he's quite affected. I'm not angry with you; I was only going to speak to you on the duties of a soldier. Why do you seem so sorrowful?

Page. Alas! madam, I may well be sorrowful; being, as I am, obliged to leave a lady so gentle, and so kind,—

Susan. And so beautiful.

Page. Ah! yes.

Susan. [*Mimicking.*] Ah! yes. Come, let me try on one of my gowns upon you. Come here, let's measure: I declare the little villain is not so tall as I am.

Page. Um.

Susan. Turn about; let me untie your cloak.

Countess. But suppose anybody should come?

Susan. Dear, my lady, we are not doing any harm; I'll lock the door, however, for fear. Well! have you nothing to say to my beauteous lady, and your charming god-mother?

Page. Oh! yes; that I am sure I shall love her as long as I live.

Countess. Esteem, you mean, Hannibal.

Page. Ye—ye—yes; esteem, I should have said.

Susan. [*Laughs.*] Yes, yes; esteem! The poor youth overflows with esteem, and affection, and—

Page. Um!

[*Aside to SUSAN.*]

Susan. Now, let us try whether one of my caps—

Countess. There's a close cap of mine lies on my dressing-table. [*Exit SUSAN.*] Is your commission made out?

Page. Oh! yes, madam, and given me: here it is.

[*Presents his commission to the Countess.*]

Countess. Already? They have made haste, I see; they are not willing to lose a moment; their hurry has made them even forget to affix the seal to it.

Re-enter SUSAN, with a cap in her hand.

Susan. The seal? to what, madam?

Countess. His commission.

Susan. So soon!

Countess. I was observing, there has been no time lost.

Susan. Come. [*Makes the Page kneel down, and puts the cap on him.*] What a pretty little villain it is! I declare I am jealous. See, if he is not handsomer than I am! Turn about; there. What's here? the riband? So, so, so! now all's out. I am glad of it. I told my young gentleman I would let you know his thievish tricks, madam.

Countess. Fetch me some black patches, Susan.

Susan. There are none in your room, madam; I'll fetch some out of mine.

[*Exit*]

Countess. And—and so you—you are sorry leave us?

Page. Ye—yes, madam.

Countess. 'Tis that good-for-nothing Figaro who has frightened the child with his prognostics.

Page. No, indeed, madam; I am only grieved to part from so dear a lady. [*Weeps.*]

Countess. Nay, but don't weep, don't weep. Come, come, be comforted. [*A knocking at the chamber-door.*] Who's there?

Count A. [*Without.*] Open the door, my lady.

Countess. Heavens! it is the Count! I am ruined; if he finds the Page here, after receiving Figaro's anonymous letter, I shall be for ever lost. What imprudence!

Count A. [*Without.*] Why don't you open the door?

Page. Oh, ma'am!

Countess. Because—I am alone.

Count A. Alone! Who are you talking to, then?

Countess. To you, to be sure.—How could I be so thoughtless? This villainous Figaro!

Page. After the scene of the great chair this morning, he will certainly murder me if he finds me here.

Countess. Run into my dressing-room; and, Hannibal, lock the door on the inside.

[*Exit Page into the dressing-room. The Countess opens the chamber-door.*]

Enter Count ALMAVIVA.

Count A. You did not use to lock yourself in, when you were alone, madam. Whom were you speaking to?

Countess. To—Susan, who is rummaging in her own room.

Count A. You seem agitated, madam.

Countess. That is not impossible.—We were speaking of you.

Count A. Of me?

Countess. Your jealousy, your indifference, my lord. [*Noise of a table overturned by the Page in the dressing-room.*] What will become of me! [*Aside.*]

Count A. What noise is that?

Countess. I heard no noise.

Count A. No? You must be most confoundedly absent, then.

Countess. Oh! to be sure.

Count A. There's somebody in your dressing-room, madam.

Countess. Who should be there?

Count A. That's what I want to know.

Countess. It's Susan, I suppose, putting the chairs and tables in their places.

Count A. What! your favourite woman turned housemaid. You told me just now she was in her own room.

Countess. In her room, or my room, it's the same thing.

Count A. Really, my lady, this Susan of yours is a very nimble, convenient kind of person.

Countess. Really, my lord, this Susan of mine disturbs your quiet very much.

Count A. Very true, madam; so much, that I'm determined to see her. [*He goes to the dressing-room door, and calls.*] Susan, Susan! If Susan you are, come forth!

Countess. Very well, my lord, very well. Would you have the girl come out half undressed? She's trying on one of my left-off dresses. To disturb female privacy in this manner, my lord, is not to be endured.

[*During this altercation, SUSAN comes out of her own room, perceives what is passing, and, after listening long enough to know how to act, slips, unseen by both, behind the curtains of the bed.*]

Count A. Well, if she can't come out, she can answer, at least. [*Calls.*] Susan! answer me, Susan!

Countess. I say, do not answer, Susan; I forbid you to speak a word. We shall see whom she'll obey.

Count A. But if it is nobody but Susan, what is the reason, madam, of that emotion and perplexity so very evident in your countenance?

Countess. Emotion and perplexity? Ha, ha, ha! Ridiculous!

Count A. Be it as ridiculous as it may, I am determined to be satisfied; and I think present appearances give me a sufficient plea. [*Goes to the chamber-door, and calls.*] Hollo! Who waits there?

Countess. Do, do, my lord; expose your jealousy to your very servants! Make yourself and me the jest of the whole world.

Count A. Why do you oblige me to it? However, since you will not suffer that door to be quietly opened, will you be pleased to accompany me while I procure an instrument to force it.

Countess. To be sure, my lord, to be sure; if you please.

Count A. I shall lock the chamber-door after me; and, that you may be fully justified, I'll make this other door fast. [*Goes to SUSAN'S room-door; locks it, and takes the key.*] Now, [*showing the key to the Countess*] I am sure nobody can get in or out of this room; and the Susan of the dressing-room must submit to be confined here till my return.

Countess. This behaviour is greatly to your honour, my lord. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter SUSAN from behind the bed; as they go off, she runs to the dressing-room door, and calls.

Susan. Hannibal! Hannibal! Open the door; quick, quick, it's I, Susan.

Enter Page, frightened.

Page. Oh! Susan.

Susan. Oh! my poor mistress.

Page. What will become of her?

Susan. What will become of my marriage?

Page. What will become of me?

Susan. Don't stand babbling here; but fly.

Page. The doors are all fast, how can I fly?

Susan. Don't ask me.—Fly!

Page. Here's a window open. [*Runs to the window.*] Below is a bed of flowers! I'll leap out.

Susan. [*Screams.*] You'll break your neck.

Page. Better that, than ruin my dear lady. [*Gets upon a table at the window.*] Give me one kiss before I go, Susan.

Susan. Was there ever such a young—[*Page kisses her, and jumps out of the window; SUSAN shrieks at seeing him jump down.*] Ah! [*Looks out of the window.*] He is safe; yonder he ruins, as light and as swift as the winds. If that boy does not make some woman's heart ache, one of these days, I'm mistaken. [*SUSAN goes in at the dressing-room door, but peeps back as she is going to shut it.*] And now, my good jealous Count, perhaps I may teach you to break open doors another time. [*Locks herself in.*]

Enter Count ALMAVIVA, with a wrenching-iron in one hand, and leading in the Countess with the other. Examines SUSAN'S room-door.

Count A. Yes, everything is as I left it. We now shall come at the truth. Do you still persist in forcing me to break open this door? I am determined to see who's within.

Countess. Let me beg, my lord, you'll have a moment's patience; hear me only, and you shall satisfy your utmost curiosity. Let me entreat you to be assured, that however appearances may condemn me, no injury was intended to your honour.

Count A. Then there is a man?

Countess. No; it is only—only—

Count A. Only—only who?

Countess. A child.

Count A. Let's see this child.—What child?

Countess. Hannibal.

Count A. The Page! This d—nable Page again.

The whole's unravelled. Come forth, viper!

Countess. Do not let the disorder in which you will see him—

Count A. The disorder! the disorder!

Countess. We were going to dress him in women's clothes for our evening's diversion.

Count A. I'll rack him! I'll—I'll make him a terrible example of an injured husband's wrath.

Countess. [Kneels.] Hold! my lord, hold!—Have pity on his youth, his infancy—

Count A. What? Intercede for him to me? [Runs to the dressing-room door.] Come forth, I say, once more. I'll rack him, I'll stab him, I'll—

[While the COUNT is speaking, SUSAN unlocks the dressing-room door, and bolts out upon him.

Susan. I'll rack him! I'll stab him! I'll—Ha, ha, ha!

[The COUNTESS hearing SUSAN's voice, recovers sufficiently to look round, is astonished, and turns back into her former position to conceal her surprise.

Count A. [After looking first at SUSAN, and then at the COUNTESS.] And can you act astonishment, too, madam? [To the COUNTESS.

Countess. I? My lord—

Count A. But, perhaps, she wasn't alone.

[Enters the dressing-room; the COUNTESS is again alarmed; SUSAN runs to her.

Susan. Fear nothing; he's not there. He has jumped out of the window.

Countess. And broken his neck!

Susan. Hush! [To the COUNTESS.] Hem! hem!

Re-enter Count ALMAVIVA, greatly agitated.

Count A. No, there's nobody there. I've been confoundedly in the wrong. [Approaching the COUNTESS.] Confusion, madam—Madam—Upon my soul, madam, you are a most excellent actress!

Susan. And am not I, too, my lord?

Count A. [Kneels to the COUNTESS.] You see my contrition. [Kisses her hand.] Be generous—

Susan. As you have been.

Count A. Hush! [Kisses SUSAN's hand.] Remember the garden to-night. [Turns to the COUNTESS.] My dear Rosina!—

Countess. No, no, my lord; I am no longer that Rosina whom you formerly loved with such affection: I am now nothing but the poor Countess of Almaviva—a neglected wife, not a beloved mistress.

Count A. Nay, do not make my humiliation too severe. But, wherefore have you been thus mysterious on this occasion?

Countess. That I might not betray that headlong thoughtless Figaro.

Count A. What, he wrote the anonymous billet, then?

Countess. But it was done, my lord, before I knew of it.

Susan. To suspect a man in my lady's dressing-room!

Count A. And to be thus severely punished for my suspicion—

Susan. Not to believe my lady, when she assured you it was her woman.

Count A. But what's the reason, you malicious little hussy, you did not come out when I called?

Susan. What, undressed, my lord?

Count A. But why didn't you answer, then?

Susan. My lady forbid me. And good reason she had so to do. *Aside.*

Count A. How could you, Rosina, be so cruel as to—

Enter FIGARO in a hurry; he stops on seeing the COUNT.

Fig. They told me, my lady was indisposed: I ran to inquire, and am very happy to find there was nothing in it.

Count A. You are very attentive.

Fig. It is my duty to be so, my lord. [Turns to SUSAN.] Come, come, my charmer, prepare for the ceremony; go to your bridesmaids.

Count A. But who is to take care of the Countess in the meantime?

Fig. Take care of her, my lord! My lady seems very well.

Count A. Who is to guard her from the gallant, who was to profit by my absence?

[SUSAN and the COUNTESS make signs to FIGARO.

Countess. Nay, nay, Figaro; the Count knows all.

Susan. Yes, yes; we've told my lord everything. The jest is ended, it's all over.

Fig. The jest is ended! And it's all over!

Count A. Yes, ended, ended, ended!—And all over! What have you to say to that?

Fig. Say, my lord?

Count A. Ay, say.

Fig. I—I—I wish I could say as much of my marriage.

Count A. And who wrote the pretty letter?

Fig. Not I, my lord.

Count A. If I did not know thou liest, I could read it in thy face.

Fig. Indeed, my lord? Then it's my face that lies, not I.

Countess. Psha! Figaro, why should you endeavour to conceal anything, when I tell you we have confessed all?

Susan. [Making signs to FIGARO.] We've told my lord of the letter, which made him suspect that Hannibal, the Page, who is far enough off by this, was hid in my lady's dressing-room, where I myself was locked in.

Fig. Well, well; since my lord will have it so, and my lady will have it so, and you all will have it so, why then so let it be.

Count A. Still at his wiles.

Countess. Why, my lord, would you oblige him to speak truth, so much against his inclination?

[COUNT and COUNTESS retire, talking familiarly.

Susan. Hast thou seen the Page?

Fig. Yes, yes; you have shook his young joints for him among you.

Enter ANTONIO, the gardener, half drunk.

Ant. My lord,—my good lord,—if so be as your lordship will not have the goodness to have these windows nailed up, I shall never have a nosgay fit to give to my lady. They break all my pots, and spoil my flowers; for they not only throw other rubbish out of the windows, as they used to do, but they have just now tossed out a man.

Count A. A man!

[The COUNT's suspicions all revive.

Ant. In white stockings.

[COUNT and SUSAN discover their fears, and make signs to FIGARO to assist them, if possible.

Count A. Where is the man?

Ant. That's what I want to know, my lord. I wish

I could find him. I'm your lordship's gardener; and though I say it, a better gardener is not to be found in all Spain; but if chamber-maids are permitted to toss men out of the window, to save their own reputation, what is to become of mine?

Fig. Oh, fie! What, setting so soon in a morning.
Ant. No; this is only the remains of last night.

Count A. On with your story, sir. What of the man? What followed?

Ant. I followed him myself, my lord, as fast as I could; but somehow, I unluckily happened to make a false step, and came with such a confounded whirl against the garden gate, that I—I quite for—forgot my errand.

Count A. And should you know this man again?

Ant. To be sure I should, my lord; if I had seen his face, that is.

Count A. Either speak more clearly, rascal, or I'll send you packing—

Ant. Send me packing, my lord? Oh! no; if your lordship has not enough—enough—[points to his forehead]—to know when you have a good gardener; I warrant I know when I have a good place.

Fig. There is no occasion, my lord, for all this mystery.—It was I that jumped out of the window into the garden.

Count A. You?

Fig. My own self, my lord.

Count A. Jump out of a one-pair of stairs window, and run the risk of breaking your neck?

Fig. The ground was soft, my lord.

Ant. And his neck is in no danger of being broken that way.

Fig. To be sure, I hurt my right leg a little in the fall; just here at the ankle. I feel it still.

Count A. But what reason had you to jump out of the window?

Fig. You had received my letter, my lord, (since I must own it,) and were come somewhat sooner than I expected, in a dreadful passion, in search of a man.

Ant. If it was you, you have grown plaguy fast within this half hour, to my thinking. The man that I saw did not seem so tall as you, by the head and shoulders.

Fig. Psha! Does not one always double one's self up when one takes a leap?

Ant. It seemed a great deal more like the Page.

Count A. The Page!

Fig. Oh! yes, to be sure, the Page has galloped back from Seville, horse and all, to leap out of the window!

Ant. No, no, my lord; I saw no such thing.—I'll take my oath, I saw no horse leap out of the window.

Count A. Drunkard! Boody!

[The Count seizes ANTONIO, and flings him on the bed.

Fig. Come, come, let us go, and prepare for our sports. [They are all going.

Ant. Well, since it was you, as I am an honest man, I ought to return you this paper which dropped out of your pocket, as you fell.

Count A. [Snatches the paper; the COUNTESS, FIGARO, and SUSAN are all surprised and embarrassed.] Now, if it were you, you doubtless can tell what this paper contains, [keeps the paper behind his back as he faces FIGARO] and how it happened to come into your pocket?

Fig. Oh! my lord, I've such quantities of papers. [Searches his pockets and pulls out a great many.] No, it is not this.—Hem!—This is a double love-letter from Marcelina, in seven pages.—Hem!—Hem! It would do a man's heart good to read it.—Hem! And

this is a petition from the poor poacher in prison. I never presented it to your lordship, because I know you have affairs much more serious on your hands, than the complaints of such half-starved rascals. Ah!—Hem! This—this—no, this is an inventory of your lordship's sword-knots, ruffs, ruffles, and roses.—Must take care of this.

[Endeavours to gain time, and keeps glancing and hemming to SUSAN and the COUNTESS to look at the paper and to give him a hint.

Count A. It is neither this, nor this, nor that, nor t'other, that you have in your hand, but what I hold here in mine, that I want to know the contents of.

[Holds out the paper, in action, as he speaks; the COUNTESS catches a sight of it.

Countess. [Aside to SUSAN.] 'Tis the commission.

Susan. [Aside to FIGARO.] The Page's commission.

Count A. Well, sir; so you know nothing of the matter.

Ant. There, my lord says you know nothing of the matter.

Fig. Keep off, and don't come to whisper me. [He pushes ANTONIO out at the chamber door. Oh! lord, lord! [Pretending to recollect himself.] What a stupid fool I am! I declare it's the commission of that poor youth, Hannibal! which I, like a block-head, forgot to return him; he'll be quite unhappy about it, poor boy.

Count A. And how came you by it?

Fig. By it, my lord?

Count A. Why did he give it to you?

Fig. To—to—to—

Count A. To what?

Fig. To get—

Count A. To get what? It wants nothing.

Countess. [Aside to SUSAN.] It wants the seal.

Susan. [Aside to FIGARO.] It wants the seal.

Fig. Oh! my lord, what it wants, to be sure, is a mere trifle.

Count A. What trifle?

Fig. You know, my lord, when you make out a commission, it's customary to—

Count A. To what?

Fig. To affix your lordship's seal.

Count A. [Looks at the commission, and finds the seal is wanting.] The devil and all his imps!

[Exit at the chamber door.

Fig. Are you going, my lord, without giving orders for our wedding? [Exit, following the Count.

Susan. What shall we do now, madam? The Page is too much frightened ever to be employed in a second plot.

Countess. No more plots of Figaro's inventing! You see into what danger I've been brought by his fine concerted letter. Still, however, I wish I could convict my false husband of his infidelity to his face. Ha! a happy thought strikes me. I'll meet him in the garden, instead of you; and then nobody will be exposed but himself. But you must not mention one word of this, Susan, to anybody.

Susan. Except Figaro!

Countess. No, not even to Figaro; he'll spoil my design, by mixing some plot of his own with it.

Susan. Your project's a charming one, madam; and I shall yet have my Figaro. [Ereunt.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Garden of the castle. Two Pavilions, one on each side of the stage.*

Enter AGNES, with a little basket of refreshments in her hand.

Agnes. Now for that good-natured, merry little Hannibal; he hasn't half learnt me my part yet. Poor thing, he has had nothing to eat since he came; and the cross good-for-nothing cook would not give me a morsel for him; so I was obliged to ask the butler for some cakes and oranges. It cost me a good kiss on the cheek; but I know who'll repay it. Hannibal! Hannibal! He's not there, sure. Oh! dear, and here's somebody coming!

[Exit, into the pavilion on the left]

Enter FIGARO, disguised in a roquelaure, with BASIL and PEDRO.

Fig. I was mistaken; 'twas Agnes. What o'clock is it?

Ped. Almost near the moon's rising.

Basil. What a gloomy night! We look like so many conspirators.

Fig. You understand, gentlemen, why you come hither; it is to be witnesses of the conduct of the virtuous bride I am soon to espouse, and of the honourable lord who has graciously bestowed her on me. You'll see my suspicions are not without cause.

Basil. Ay; and I shall be up with my lord now, for not employing me in this assignation.

[BASIL and PEDRO retire.]

Fig. No, my worthy lord and master, you have not got her yet. What, because you're a great man, you fancy yourself a great genius! But as little a man as I may, perhaps, be revenged on you. Oh! Susan, Susan!

[Hearing a noise, he wraps himself up in his roquelaure, and retires a little.]

Enter softly, the COUNTESS and SUSAN, both veiled.

Susan. *[Aside to the COUNTESS.]* So, so, in spite of all our secrecy, Figaro has, somehow or other, discovered our intention, and will be here. But I'll teach him how to suspect me, I warrant. Now let us begin. *[Speaks louder.]* If you don't want me, madam, I'll walk and enjoy the fresh air.

Fig. *[Aside.]* Oh! the cockatrice!

Countess. It may give thee cold.

Susan. Oh no, my lady.

Fig. *[Aside.]* Oh! no; she'll not take cold tonight.

[Susan retires a little.]

Enter the Page.

Page. *[Seeing the COUNTESS.]* Is that Agnes yonder? *[He approaches her.]* No. Surely, it's Susan: it must be Susan. *[Comes up and takes hold of the COUNTESS's hand.]* Ah! my dear Susan.

Countess. Let me go. *[In a feigned voice.]*

Page. Come, Susan, Susan, don't be so coy.—I know it isn't Figaro you're waiting for, it is my lord the Count. What, didn't I hear this morning when I was behind the great chair?

Susan. *[Aside.]* The babbling little villain!

Enter Count ALMAVIVA.

Count A. Is not that somebody with Susan? *Advances close up to them, and draws back in a fury.]* 'Tis that infernal Page again.

[Susan keeps out of the way, silently laughing.]

Page. 'Tis in vain to say no.—Since thou art

going to be the representative of the Countess, I am determined to give thee one kiss for thyself, and a hundred for thy beautiful lady. *[The COUNTESS draws back to avoid being kissed by the Page; the COUNT advances into her place; the Page, taking the COUNT's hand, perceives he is discovered, and suddenly retreats, crying in an under voice.]* Oh! the devil! The Count again!

[Exit Page into the pavilion on the left. While this passes, FIGARO has advanced to drive the Page from SUSAN, as he supposes.]

Count A. *[Thinking he speaks to the Page.]* Since you are so fond of kissing, take that.

[Strikes FIGARO.]

Fig. I've paid for listening.

[SUSAN laughs.]

Count A. *[Hears her laugh.]* What, do such salutations make the impudent rascal laugh?

Fig. *[Aside.]* It would be strange, if he should cry this time.

[COUNT and COUNTESS approach each other.]

Count A. But let us not lose the precious moments, my charming Susan! Let these kisses speak my passion!

[Kisses the COUNTESS.]

Fig. *[Aside.]* Oh, oh, oh!

Count A. Why dost thou tremble?

Countess. *[Continuing her feigned voice.]* Because I am afraid—

Count A. Thou seemest to have a cold. *[Takes the Countess's hand between his own, and kisses it.]* What a sweet, delicate, angel's hand! How smooth and soft! How long and small the fingers! What pleasure in the touch! Ah! how different is this from the Countess's hand.

Countess. *[Sighing.]* And yet you loved her once.

Count A. Yes, yes,—I did so; but three years of better acquaintance, have made the marriage state so respectable—Besides, wives think to ensure our fidelity by being always wives: whereas they should sometimes become—

Countess. What?

Count A. Our mistresses. I hope, thou'lt not forget this lesson.

Countess. Oh! no, indeed; not I.

Susan. *[Aloud.]* Nor I.

Fig. *[Aloud.]* Nor I.

Count A. Are there echoes here?

Countess. Oh! yes.

Count A. And now, my sweet Susan, receive the portion I promised thee. *[Gives her a purse, and puts a ring upon her finger.]* And continue likewise to wear this ring for my sake.

Countess. Susan accepts your favours.

Fig. *[Aside.]* Was there ever so faithless a hussy!

Susan. *[Aside.]* These riches are all for us!

Countess. I perceive torches.

Count A. They are preparatory to thy nuptials. *[The Countess pretends to be afraid.]* Come, come, let us retire for a moment into the pavilion.

Countess. What! in the dark?

Count A. Why not? There are no spirits.

Fig. *[Aside.]* Yes, but there are; and evil ones too. *[Countess follows the Count.]* She is going! Hem! *[In a great passion.]*

Count A. Who goes there?

Fig. A man.

Count A. *[Aside to the Countess.]* It's Figaro.

[Exit the Countess, and the Count retires.]

Fig. *[Desperate.]* They're gone in. *[Walks.]* Let her go, let her go!

Susan. *[Aside.]* Thou shalt pay presently for these fine suspicions. *[Susan advances and mimics the voice of the Countess.]* Who is that?

Fig. [Aside.] 'Tis the Countess. What lucky chance conducted you hither, madam? You know not what scenes are this moment transacting.

Susan. Oh! yes, but I do, Figaro.

Fig. What, that the Count and my virtuous bride are this moment in yonder pavilion, madam?

Susan. [Aside.] Very well, my gentleman! I know more than thou dost.

Fig. And will you not be revenged?

Susan. Oh! yes; we always have our revenge in our own power.

Fig. [Aside.] What does she mean? Perhaps, what I suspect. That would be a glorious retaliation! *[To Susan.]* There is no means but one, madam, of revenging such wrongs; and that now presents itself.

Susan. [Aside.] What does the good-for-nothing fellow mean? Does it, Figaro?

Fig. Pardon my presumption, madam; on any other occasion, the respect I bear your ladyship would keep me silent; but on the present, I dare encounter all. *[Falls on his knees.]* Oh! excuse, forgive me, madam. Let not the precious moments slip! Grant me your hand.

Susan. [Gives him a slap on the face.] Take it.

Fig. I have it, I think. The devil! This is the day of stripes.

Susan. Susan gives it thee! *[As soon as Figaro hears it is Susan, he laughs very heartily all the while she beats him.]* And that, and that, and that for thy insolence; and that for thy jealousy, and that for thy infidelity.

Fig. Oh! happy Figaro. Take thy revenge, my dear, kind, good angel; never did man or martyr suffer with such ecstasy.

Susan. Don't tell me of your ecstasy! How durst you, you good-for-nothing, base, false-hearted man, make love to me, supposing me the Countess? But I'll be revenged.

Fig. Talk not of revenge, my love; but tell me what blest angel sent thee hither; and how—

Susan. Know, to thy confusion, that I and my lady, coming here to catch one fox, have entrapped two.

Fig. But who has entrapped the other poor fox?

Susan. Why, his own wife.

Fig. His wife! Go, hang thyself, Figaro, for wanting the wit to divine this plot! And has all this intriguing been only about his own wife, after all?

Count A. [Advances.] Susan! Susan!

Fig. [Aside to Susan.] There's my lord. A thought strikes me. Pr'ythee second me, Susan. *[Speaks in a feigned voice, and kisses Susan's hand.]* Ah, madam, let us not longer converse of love, but enjoy its treasures.

Count A. What's here? A man on his knees to the Countess! *[Feels for his sword. Figaro and Susan still laughing.]* And I unarmed!

Fig. Quickly, then, madam, let us repair the wrong which love this morning suffered by the impertinent intrusion of your lord.

Count A. This is not to be borne. *[Darts between them, seizes Figaro by the collar, while Susan escapes.]* Villain!

Fig. [Pretends amazement.] My lord!

Count A. How, rascal! And, is it you? Holloa! Holloa! Who hears me? Where are my people? Lights, lights!

Enter Servants with flambeaux. PEDRO and BASIL advance.

Count A. [To the Servants.] Guard all the passages, and seize this fellow.

Fig. You command with absolute authority over all present, my lord, except yourself.

Count A. Now, sir, be pleased to declare before this company, who the—the woman is, that just now ran into that pavilion.

Fig. Into that? *[Going towards the pavilion on the right.]*

Count A. [Stopping him.] No, prevaricating fiend! into that! *[Pointing to the other.]*

Fig. Ah! that alters the case.

Count A. Answer, or—

Fig. The lady,—is a young lady, to whom my lord once paid his addresses; but who, happening to love me better than my betters, has this day given me the preference.

Count A. The preference? the preference? 'Tis too true. Yes, gentlemen, what he confesses, I give you my honour. I just now heard from the very mouth of his accomplice.

Basil. His accomplice!

Count A. Come forth, madam! *[Enters the pavilion on the left.]* Come forth, I say, shew yourself. *[Drags out the Page, still speaking, and not looking at him till he brings him to the rest of the company.]*

All. The Page!

Count A. Again, and again, and everlastingly, this d—d diabolical Page! You shall find, however, he was not alone.

Page. Ah! no. My lot would have been hard indeed, then!

Count A. Enter, Pedro, and drag the guilty wretch before her judge.

Ped. Come, madam, you must come out; I must not let you go, since my lord knows you are here. *[Pedro goes into the pavilion on the left, and brings out AGNES.]*

All. Agnes! Ha, ha, ha!

Count A. I'll find her, I warrant. Where is this daughter of infamy, who thus evades my just fury?

Enter SUSAN, with her fan before her face, from the pavilion on the left.

Here she comes, at last; proving her own shame, and my dishonour. *[Susan kneels to him, still hiding her face.]*

All. Pardon, pardon, gracious lord!

Count A. No, no, no! *[They all kneel.]* No, no! Were the whole world to kneel, I would be deaf.

Enter the COUNTESS, from the pavilion on the right, and kneels to the Count, whose back is turned to her.

Countess. Let me, my lord, make one of the number. *[Susan drops her fan; the Count hears the voice of the Countess, looks round, and suddenly conceives the whole trick they have been playing him.]*

Count A. And—is it you, madam?

Countess. [Inclines herself, in token of affirmation.]

Count A. [Returning her bow with great confusion.]

Ah! Yes, yes! A generous pardon, though unmerited.

Countess. Were you in my place, you would exclaim, No, no, no! but I grant it, without a single stipulation.

Susan. And I.

Fig. And I. There are echoes here.

Count A. I perceive, I perceive—I have been rightly served.

Countess. Here, Susan, here is the purse and ring which my lord gave thee. He will remember thy sweet delicate fingers, so long and so small.

Susan. Thank your lordship. Here, Figaro, *[Gives him the purse.]*

Fig. It was devilish hard to get at.

Count A. Pray, how did your valour like the box on the ear I gave you just now?
Page. [With his hand on his sword.] Me, my colonel?
Fig. Which I kindly received.
Count A. Thou?

Fig. I: and thus do the great distribute justice.
Susan. Our errors past, and all our follies done,
Oh! that 'twere possible you might be won
 To pardon faults, and misdemeanors smother,
 With the same ease we pardon one another. [Exeunt.]

MISS IN HER TEENS; OR, THE MEDLEY OF LOVERS;

A FARCE, IN TWO ACTS,

BY DAVID GARRICK.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

CAPTAIN LOVEIT
 FRIBBLE
 FLASH
 PUFF
 JASPER.

MISS BIDDY
 TAG.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Street.

Enter Captain LOVEIT and PUFF.

Capt. L. This is the place we were directed to; and now, Puff, if I can get no intelligence of her, what will become of me?

Puff. And me, too, sir. You must consider I am a married man, and can't bear fatigue as I have done. But, pray, sir, why did you leave the army so abruptly, and not give me time to fill my knapsack with common necessities? Half a dozen shirts and your regimentals are my whole cargo.

Capt. L. I was wild to get away; and, as soon as I obtained my leave of absence, I thought every moment an age till I returned to the place where I first saw this young, charming, innocent, bewitching creature.

Puff. With fifteen thousand pounds for her fortune. Strong motives, I must confess. And now, sir, as you are pleased to say you must depend upon my care and abilities in this affair, I think I have a

just right to be acquainted with the particulars of your passion, that I may be the better enabled to serve you.

Capt. L. You shall have them. When I first left the university, which is now seven months since, my father, who loves his money better than his son, and would not settle a farthing upon me—

Puff. Mine did so by me, sir.

Capt. L. Purchased me a pair of colours, at my own request; but before I joined the regiment, which was going abroad, I took a ramble into the country with a fellow collegian, to see a relation of his who lived in Berkshire.

Puff. A party of pleasure, I suppose.

Capt. L. During a short stay there, I became acquainted with this young creature; she was just come from the boarding-school, and though she had all the simplicity of her age and the country, yet it was mixed with such sensible vivacity, that I took fire at once.

Puff. I was tinder myself at your age. But, pray, sir, did you take fire before you knew of her fortune?

Capt. L. Before, upon my honour.

Puff. Folly and constitution! But, on, sir.

Capt. L. I was introduced to the family by the name of Rhodophil; (for so my companion and I had settled it;) at the end of three weeks, I was obliged to attend the call of honour in Flanders.

Puff. Your parting, to be sure, was heart-breaking.

Capt. L. I feel it at this instant. We vowed eternal constancy, and I promised to take the first opportunity of returning to her: I did so; but we found the house was shut up; and all the information, you know, that we could get from the neighbouring cottage was, that miss and her aunt were removed to town, and lived somewhere near this part of it.

Puff. And now we are got to the place of action, propose your plan of operation.

Capt. L. My father lives but in the next street; so I must decamp immediately for fear of discoveries; you are not known to be my servant, so make what inquiries you can in the neighbourhood, and I shall wait at the inn for your intelligence.

Puff. I'll patrol hereabouts, and examine all that pass; but I've forgot the word, sir: Miss Biddy—

Capt. L. Bellair.

Puff. A young lady of wit, beauty, and fifteen thousand pounds fortune. But, sir—

Capt. L. What do you say, Puff?

Puff. If your honour pleases to consider that I had a wife in town, whom I left somewhat abruptly half a year ago, you'll think it, I believe, but decent to make some inquiry after her first: to be sure, it would be some small consolation to me to know whether the poor woman is living, or has made away with herself, or—

Capt. L. Pr'ythee, don't distract me: a moment's delay is of the utmost consequence; I must insist upon an immediate compliance with my commands.

[*Exit.*]

Puff. The devil's in these fiery young fellows; they think of nobody's wants but their own. He does not consider that I am flesh and blood as well as himself. However, I may kill two birds at once; for I sha'n't be surprised if I meet my lady walking the streets. But who have we here? Sure, I should know that face.

Enter JASPER from a house.

Who's that? my old acquaintance, Jasper?

Jas. What, Puff! are you here?

Puff. My dear friend! Well, and now, Jasper, still easy and happy! *Toujours le mème!* What intrigues now? What girls have you ruined, and what cuckolds made, since you and I beat up together, eh?

Jas. Faith, business hath been very brisk during the war; men are scarce, you know; not that I can say I ever wanted amusement in the worst of times. But, harkye, Puff—

Puff. Not a word aloud, I am *incognito*.

Jas. Why, faith, I should not have known you, if you had not spoke first; you seem to be a little *en dishabille*, too, as well as *incognito*. Whom do you honour with your service now? Are you from the wars?

Puff. Piping hot, I assure you; fire and smoke will tarnish; a man that will go into such service as I have been in, will find his clothes the worse for wear, take my word for it: but how is it with you, friend Jasper? What, you still serve, I see. You live at that house, I suppose?

Jas. I don't absolutely live, but I am most of my time there; I have, within these two months, entered into the service of an old gentleman, who hired a reputable servant, and dressed him as you see, because he has taken it into his head to fall in love.

Puff. False appetite and second childhood! But, pr'ythee, what's the object of his passion?

Jas. No less than a virgin of sixteen, I assure you.

Puff. Oh, the toothless old dotard!

Jas. And he mumbles and plays with her till his mouth waters; and then he chuckles till he cries, and calls it his Bid and his Biddy, and is so foolishly fond—

Puff. Bidsy! what's that?

Jas. Her name is Biddy.

Puff. Biddy! What, Miss Biddy Bellair?

Jas. The same.

Puff. I have no luck, to be sure. [*Aside.*] Oh! I have heard of her; she's of a pretty good family, and has some fortune, I know. But are things settled? Is the marriage fixed?

Jas. Not absolutely; the girl, I believe, detests him; but her aunt, a very good, prudent old lady, has given her consent, if he can gain her niece's; how it will end I can't tell—but I am hot upon't myself.

Puff. The devil! not marriage, I hope.

Jas. That is not yet determined.

Puff. Who is the lady, pray?

Jas. A maid in the same family, a woman of honour, I assure you: she has one husband already, a scoundrel sort of a fellow that has run away from her, and listed for a soldier; so, towards the end of the campaign, she hopes to have a certificate he's knocked o' the head; if not, I suppose we shall settle matters another way.

Puff. Well, speed the plough. But, harkye! consummate without the certificate, if you can; keep your neck out of the collar, do: I have wore it these two years, and d—y galled I am.

Jas. I'll take your advice; but I must run away to my master, who will be impatient for an answer to his message which I have just delivered to the young lady; so, dear Mr. Puff, I am your most obedient humble servant.

Puff. And I must to our agent's for my arrears. If you have an hour to spare, you'll hear of me at George's, or the Tilt-yard. *Au revoir*, as we say abroad. [*Exit JASPER.*] Thus we are as civil and as false as our betters; Jasper and I were always the *beau monde* exactly; we ever hated one another heartily, yet always shake hands. But now to my master, with a head full of news and a heart full of joy.

[*Going, starts.*]

"*Angels and ministers of grace defend me!*" It can't be. By heavens! it is, that fretful porcupine, my wife. I can't stand it: what shall I do? I'll try to avoid her

Enter TAG.

Tag. It must be he. I'll swear to the rogue at a mile's distance; he either has not seen me, or won't know me: if I can keep my temper I'll try him further. Pray, good sir, if I may be so bold—

Puff. I have nothing for you, good woman; don't trouble me.

Tag. If your honour pleases to look this way—

Puff. The kingdom is over-run with beggars; I suppose the last I gave to has sent this; but I have no more loose silver about me; so, pr'ythee, woman, don't disturb me.

Tag. I can hold out no longer! oh! you villain, you! Where have you been, scoundrel? Do you know me now, varlet?

[*Seizes him.*]

Puff. Here, watch, watch! Zounds! I shall have my pocket picked.

Tag. Own me this minute, hang-dog! and confess everything; or by the rage of an injured woman, I'll raise up the neighbourhood, throttle you, and send you to Newgate.

Puff. Amazement! what, my own dear Tag? Come to my arms, and let me press you to my heart, that pants for thee, and only thee, my true and lawful wife. Now my stars have overpaid me for the fatigue and danger of the field; I have wandered about like Achilles in search of faithful Penelope, and the gods have brought me to this happy spot.

[*Embraces her.*]

Tag. The fellow's cracked, for certain. Leave

your bombastic stuff, and tell me, rascal, why you left me, and where you have been these six months, eh?

Puff. We'll reserve my adventures for our happy winter's evenings. I shall only tell you now, that my heart beat so strong in my country's cause, and being instigated by either honour or the devil, (I can't tell which,) I set out for Flanders, to gather laurels, and lay them at thy feet.

Tag. You left me to starve, villain, and beg my bread, you did so.

Puff. I left you too hastily, I must confess, and often has my conscience stung me for it. I am got into an officer's service, have been in several actions, gained some credit by my behaviour, and am now returned with my master to indulge the genteeler passions.

Tag. Don't think to fob me off with this nonsensical talk; what have you brought me home besides?

Puff. Honour, and immoderate love.

Tag. I could tear your eyes out.

Puff. Temperance, or I walk off.

Tag. Temperance, traitor, temperance! What can you say for yourself? Leave me to the wide world—

Puff. Well, I have been in the wide world too, ha'n't I? What would the woman have?

Tag. Reduce me to the necessity of going to service. [*Cries.*]

Puff. Why, I'm in service, too, your lord and master, a'n't I, you saucy jade, you? Come, where dost live, hereabouts? Hast got good vails? Dost go to market? Come, give me a kiss, darling, and tell me where I shall pay my duty to thee.

Tag. Why, there I live, at that house.

[*Pointing to the house JASPER came out of.*]

Puff. What, there? that house?

Tag. Yes, there, that house.

Puff. Huzza! We're made for ever, you slut, you. Huzza! Everything conspires this day to make me happy. Prepare for an inundation of joy. My master is in love with your Miss Biddy over head and ears, and she with him: I know she is courted by some old fool, and her aunt is not against the match; but now we are come, the town will be relieved, and the governor brought over: in plain English, our fortune is made; my master must marry the lady, and the old gentleman may go to the devil.

Tag. Heyday! What's all this?

Puff. Say no more, the dice are thrown, doublets for us; away to your young mistress, while I run to my master; tell her Rhodophil—Rhodophil will be with her immediately; then, if her blood does not mount to her face like quicksilver in a weather-glass, and point to extreme hot, believe the whole to be a lie, and your husband no politician.

Tag. This is news, indeed! I have had the place but a little while, and have not quite got into the secrets of the family; but part of your story is true, and if you bring your master, and miss is willing, I warrant we'll be too hard for the old folks.

Puff. I'll about it straight—But, hold, Tag, I had forgot; pray, how does Mr. Jasper do?

Tag. Mr. Jasper! what do you mean? I—I—I—

Puff. What, out of countenance, child? Oh, fie! Speak plain, my dear; and the certificate, when comes that, eh, love?

Tag. He has sold himself and turned conjurer, or he would never have known it. [*Aside.*]

Puff. Are not you a jade? Are not you a Jezebel? Ar'n't you a—

Tag. O, ho! temperance, or I walk off.

Puff. I know I am not finished yet, and so I am easy; but more thanks to my fortune than your virtue, madam

Tag. Away to your master, and I'll prepare his reception within.

Puff. Shall I bring the certificate with me? [*Exit.*]

Tag. Go, you graceless rogue, you richly deserve it. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—A Chamber.

Enter BIDDY.

Bid. How unfortunate a poor girl am I! I dare not tell my secret to anybody, and if I don't I'm undone. Heigho! [*Sighs.*]

Enter TAG.

Pray, Tag, is my aunt gone to her lawyer about me? Heigho!

Tag. What's that sigh for, my dear young mistress?

Bid. I did not sigh, not I. [*Sighs.*]

Tag. Nay, never gulp them down, they are the worst things you can swallow. There's something in that heart of your's, that swells it, and puffs it, and will burst it at last, if you don't give it vent.

Bid. What would you have me tell you? [*Sighs.*]

Tag. Come, come, you are afraid I'll betray you; but you had as good speak, I may do you some service you little think of.

Bid. It is not in your power, Tag, to give me what I want. [*Sighs.*]

Tag. Not directly, perhaps; but I may be the means of helping you to it; as for example, if you should not like to marry the old man your aunt designs for you, one may find a way to break—

Bid. His neck, Tag?

Tag. Or the match; either will do, child.

Bid. I don't care which, indeed, so I were clear of him. I don't think I'm fit to be married.

Tag. To him, you mean: you have no objection to marriage, but the man; and I applaud you for it. But, come, courage, miss; never keep it in: out with it all.

Bid. If you'll ask me any questions I'll answer them; but I can't tell you anything of myself—I shall blush if I do.

Tag. Well, then: in the first place, pray, tell me, Miss Biddy Bellair, if you don't like somebody better than old Sir Simon Loveit?

Bid. Heigho!

Tag. What's heigho, miss?

Bid. When I say heigho! it means yes.

Tag. Very well; and this somebody is a young, handsome fellow?

Bid. Heigho!

Tag. And if you were once his, you would be as merry as the best of us?

Bid. Heigho!

Tag. So far so good; and since I have got you to wet your feet, souse over head at once, and the pain will be ever.

Bid. There then. [*A long sigh.*] Now help me out, Tag, as fast as you can.

Tag. When did you hear from your gallant?

Bid. Never since he went to the army.

Tag. How so?

Bid. I was afraid the letters would fall into my aunt's hands, so I would not let him write to me; but I had a better reason then.

Tag. Pray, let's hear that, too.

Bid. Why, I thought if I should write to him, and promise him to love nobody else, and should afterwards change my mind, he might think I was inconstant, and call me a coquette.

Tag. What a simple innocent it is! [*Aside.*] And have you changed your mind, miss?

Bid. No, indeed, Tag; I love him the best of any of them.

Tag. Of any of them! Why, have you any more?

Bid. Pray, don't ask me.

Tag. Nay, miss, if you only trust me by halves, you can't expect—

Bid. I will trust you with everything. When I parted with him I grew melancholy; so, in order to divert me, I have let two others court me till he returns again.

Tag. Is that all, my dear? Mighty simple, indeed!

[*Aside.*]

Bid. One of them is a fine blustering man, and is called Captain Flash; he's always talking of fighting and wars; he thinks he's sure of me, but I shall baulk him; we shall see him this afternoon; for he pressed strongly to come, and I have given him leave, while my aunt is taking her afternoon's nap.

Tag. And who is the other, pray?

Bid. Quite another sort of a man; he speaks like a lady for all the world, and never swears, as Mr. Flash does, but wears nice white gloves, and tells me what ribands become my complexion, where to stick my patches, who is the best milliner, where they sell the best tea, and which is the best wash for the face and the best paste for the hands; he is always playing with my fan, and shewing his teeth; and whenever I speak, he pats me, so—and cries, "The devil take me, Miss Biddy, but you'll be my perdition." Ha, ha, ha!

Tag. Oh, the pretty creature! and what do you call him, pray?

Bid. His name is Fribble, and you shall see him too; for, by mistake, I appointed them at the same time; but you must help me out with them.

Tag. And suppose your favourite should come too?

Bid. I should not care what became of the others.

Tag. What's his name?

Bid. It begins with an R—h—o—

Tag. I'll be hang'd if it is not Rhodophil.

Bid. I am frightened at you. You are a witch!

Tag. I am so, and I can tell your fortune, too. Look me in the face. The gentleman you love most in the world will be at our house this afternoon; he arrived from the army this morning, and dies till he sees you.

Bid. Is he come, Tag? Don't joke with me.

Tag. Not to keep you longer in suspense, you must know, the servant of your Strephon, by some unaccountable fate or other, is my lord and master; he has just been with me, and told me of his master's arrival and impatience—

Bid. Oh! my dear, dear Tag, you have put me out of my wits; I am all over in a flutter. I shall leap out of my skin—I don't know what to do with myself. Is he come, Tag? I am ready to faint. I'd give the world I had put on another dress to-day.

Tag. I assure you, miss, you look charmingly.

Bid. Do I, indeed, though? I'll alter my hair immediately.

Tag. We'll go to dinner first, and then I'll assist you.

Bid. Dinner! I can't eat a morsel. I don't know what's the matter with me; my ears tingle, my heart beats, my face flushes, and I tremble every joint of me. I must run in and look at myself in the glass this moment. [*Erit.*]

Tag. Yes, she has it, and deeply, too; this is no hypocrisy.

*Not art but nature now performs her part,
And every word's the language of the heart.* [*Erit.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Chamber..

Enter CAPTAIN LOVEIT, BIDDY, TAG, and PUFF.

Capt. L. To find you still constant, and to arrive at such a critical juncture, is the height of fortune and happiness.

Bid. Nothing shall force me from you; and if I am secure of your affections—

Puff. I'll be bound for him, madam, and give you any security you can ask.

Tag. Everything goes on to our wish, sir; I just now had a second conference with my old lady, and she was so convinced by my arguments, that she returned instantly to the lawyer to forbid the drawing out of any writings at all; and she is determined never to thwart miss's inclinations, and left it to us to give the old gentleman his discharge at the next visit.

Capt. L. Shall I undertake the old dragon?

Tag. If we have occasion for help, we shall call for you.

Bid. I expect him every moment; therefore, I'll tell you what, Rhodophil, you and your man shall be locked up in my bed-chamber till we have settled matters with the old gentleman.

Capt. L. Do what you please with me.

Bid. You must not be impatient, though.

Capt. L. I can undergo anything with such a reward in view; one kiss, and I'll be quite resigned. And now, shew me the way. [*Erit with Biddy.*]

Tag. Come, sirrah, when I have got you under lock and key I shall bring you to reason.

Puff. Are your wedding clothes ready, my dove? The certificate's come.

Tag. Go follow your captain, sirrah: march. You may thank heaven I had patience to stay so long.

[*Erit with Puff.*]

Re-enter BIDDY.

Bid. I was very much alarmed for fear my two gallants should come in upon us unawares; we should have had sad work if they had; I find I love Rhodophil vastly; for though my other sparks flatter me more, I can't abide the thoughts of them now. I have business upon my hands enough to turn my little head; but, egad! my heart's good, and a fig for dangers! Let me see:—what shall I do with my two gallants? I must, at least, part with them decently. Suppose I set them together by the ears? The luckiest thought in the world! For if they won't quarrel, (as I believe they won't,) I can break with them for cowards, and very justly dismiss them my service; and if they will fight, and one of them should be killed, the other will certainly be hanged or run away; and so I shall very handsomely get rid of them both.

Re-enter TAG.

Well, Tag, are they safe?

Tag. I think so; the door's double-locked, and I have the key in my pocket.

Bid. That's pure; but have you given them anything to divert them?

Tag. I have given the Captain one of your old gloves to mumble: but my Strephon is diverting himself with the more substantial comforts of a cold venison pasty.

Bid. What shall we do with the next that comes?

Tag. If Mr. Fribble comes first, I'll clap him up into my lady's store room; I suppose he is a great

maker of marmalade himself, and will have an opportunity of making some critical remarks upon our pastry and sweetmeats.

Bid. When one of 'em comes, do you go and watch for the other; and as soon as you see him, run in to us and pretend it is my aunt, and so we shall have an excuse to lock him up till we want him.

Tag. You may depend upon me. Here is one of 'em.

Enter FRIBBLE.

Bid. Mr. Fribble, your servant.

Frib. Miss Biddy, your slave. I hope I have not come upon you abruptly; I should have waited upon you sooner, but an accident happened that discomposed me so, that I was obliged to go home again to take drops.

Bid. Indeed you don't look well, sir. Go, Tag, and do as I bid you.

Tag. I will, madam.

[*Exit.*]

Bid. I have set my maid to watch my aunt, that we mayn't be surprised by her.

Frib. Your prudence is equal to your beauty, miss; and I hope your permitting me to kiss your hands will be no impeachment to your understanding.

Bid. I hate the sight of him. [*Aside.*] I was afraid I should not have had the pleasure of seeing you; pray let me know what accident you met with, and what's the matter with your hand? I sha'n't be easy till I know.

Frib. Well, I vow, Miss Biddy, you're a good creeter: I'll endeavour to muster up what little spirits I have, and tell you the whole affair. Hem! But, first, you must give me leave to make you a present of a small pot of my lip-salve; my servant made it this morning; the ingredients are innocent, I assure you; nothing but the best virgin-wax, conserve of roses, and lily of the valley water.

Bid. I thank you, sir, but my lips are generally red, and when they a'n't, I bite 'em.

Frib. I bite my own sometimes, to pout 'em a little; but this will give them a softness, colour, and an agreeable moister. Thus let me make an humble offering at that shrine where I have already sacrificed my heart.

[*Kneels, and gives the lip-salve.*]

Bid. Upon my word, that's very prettily expressed; you are positively the best company in the world. I wish he were out of the house. [*Aside.*]

Frib. But to return to my accident, and the reason why my hand is in this condition,—I beg you'll excuse the appearance of it, and be satisfied that nothing but mere necessity could have forced me to appear thus muffled before you.

Bid. I am very willing to excuse any misfortune that happens to you, sir.

[*Curtseys.*]

Frib. You are vastly good, indeed. Thus it was:—Hem! You must know, miss, there is not an animal in the creation I have so great an aversion to, as those hackney-coach fellows. As I was coming out of my lodgings, says one of 'em to me, "Would your honour have a coach?" "No, man," said I, "not now," with all the civility imaginable. "I'll carry you and your doll, too," said he, "Miss Margery—for the same price." Upon which, the masculine boasts about us fell a laughing; then I turned round in a great passion, "Curse me," says I, "fellow, but I'll trounce thee." And as I was holding out my hand in a threatening poster, thus, he makes a cut at me with his whip, and striking me over the nail of my little finger, it gave me such exquisite torter that I fainted away; and while I was in this condition, the mob picked my pocket of my purse,

my Mecca smelling-bottle, and my huswife.

Bid. I shall laugh in his face. [*Aside.*] I am afraid you are in great pain; pray sit down, Mr. Fribble; but I hope your hand is in no danger? [*They sit.*]

Frib. Not in the least, ma'am; pray don't be apprehensive; a milk poultice, and a gentle sudorific to-night, with a little manna in the morning, I am confident will relieve me entirely.

Bid. But pray, Mr. Fribble, do you make use of a huswife?

Frib. I cau't do without it, ma'am: there is a club of us, all young bachelors, the sweetest society in the world; and we meet three times a-week at each others lodgings, where we drink tea, hear the chat of the day, invent fashions for the ladies, make models of 'em, and cut out patterns in paper. We were the first inventors of knotting, and this fringe is the original produce and joint labour of our little community.

Bid. And who are your pretty set, pray?

Frib. There's Phil Whiffle, Jacky Wagtail, my Lord Trip, Billy Dimple, Sir Dilberry Diddle, and your humble:—

Bid. What a sweet collection of happy creatures!

Frib. Indeed, and so we are miss; but a prodigious *fracas* disconcerted us some time ago, at Billy Dimple's—three drunken naughty women of the town burst into our club-room, curst us all, threw down the china, broke six looking-glasses, scalded us with the slop-basin, and scratched poor Phil Whiffle's cheek in such a manner, that he has kept his bed his bed these three weeks.

Bid. Indeed, Mr. Fribble, I think all our sex have great reason to be angry; for if you are so happy now you are bachelors, the ladies may wish and sigh to very little purpose.

Frib. You are mistaken, I assure you; I am prodigiously rallied about my passion for you, I can tell you that, and am looked upon as lost to our society already. He, he, he!

Bid. Pray, Mr. Fribble, now you have gone so far, don't think me impudent if I long to know how you intend to use the lady who has been honoured with your affections?

Frib. Not as most other wives are used, I assure you; all the domestic business will be taken off her hands; I shall make the tea, comb the dogs, and dress the children myself; so that, though I'm a commoner, Mrs. Fribble will lead the life of a woman of quality; for she will have nothing to do, but lie in bed, play at cards, and scold the servants.

Bid. What a happy creature she must be!

Frib. Do you really think so? Then pray let me have a little serious talk with you: though my passion is not of a long standing, I hope the sincerity of my intentions—

Bid. Ha, ha, ha!

Frib. Go, you wild thing. [*Pats her.*] The devil take me, but there is no talking to you. How can you use me in this barbarous manner? if I had the constitution of an alderman it would sink under my sufferings. Hooman nater can't support it.

Bid. Why, what would you do with me, Mr. Fribble?

Frib. Well, I vow I'll beat you if you talk so. Don't look at me in that manner—flesh and blood can't bear it. I could—but I won't grow indecent.

Bid. But, pray, sir, where are the verses you were to write upon me? I find, if a young lady depends too much upon such fine gentlemen as you, she'll certainly be disappointed.

Frib. I vow, the flutter I was put into this after

noon has quite turned my senses; here they are, though, and I believe you'll like 'em.

Bid. There can be no doubt of it. [*Curtisies.*]

Frib. I protest, miss, I don't like that curtsy. Look at me, and always rise in this manner. [*Rises.*] But, my dear creature, who put on your cap to-day? They have made a fright of you, and it is as yellow as old Lady Crowfoot's neck. When we are settled, I'll dress your head myself.

Bid. Pray read the verses to me, Mr. Fribble.

Frib. I obey.—Hem! William Fribble, Esq. to Miss Biddy Bellair. Greeting:

*No ice so hard, so cold as I,
'Till warm'd and soften'd by your eye;
And now my heart dissolves away
In dreams by night, in sighs by day;
No brutal passion fires my breast,
Which loaths the object when possess'd;
But one of harmless, gentle kind,
Whose joys are center'd—in the mind;
Then take with me love's better part,
His downy wing, but not his dart.*

How do you like 'em?

Bid. Ha, ha, ha! I swear they are very pretty; but I don't quite understand 'em.

Frib. These light pieces are never so well understood in reading, as in singing; I have set 'em myself, and will endeavour to give 'em you. La, la! I have an abominable cold, and can't sing a note; however, the tune's nothing; the manner's all. [*Sings.*]

No ice so hard, &c.

Enter TAG, running.

Tag. Your aunt, your aunt, your aunt, madam!

Frib. What's the matter?

Bid. Hide, hide Mr. Fribble, Tag, or we are ruined.

Frib. Oh! for heaven's sake, put me anywhere, so I don't dirty my clothes.

Bid. Put him into the store-room, Tag, this moment.

Frib. Is it a damp place, Mrs. Tag? The floor is boarded, I hope?

Tag. Indeed it is not, sir.

Frib. What shall I do? I shall certainly catch my death! Where's my cambric handkerchief, and my salts? I shall certainly have my hysterics.

[*Runs in.*]

Bid. In, in, in. So now let the other come as soon as he will; I did not care if I had twenty of 'em, so they would but come one after another.

Re-enter TAG.

Was my aunt coming?

Tag. No, 'twas Mr. Flash, I suppose, by the length of his stride, and the cock of his hat. He'll be here this minute. What we shall do with him?

Bid. I'll manage him, I warrant you, and try his courage: be sure you are ready to second me; we shall have pure sport.

Tag. Hush! here he comes.

Enter FLASH, singing.

Flash. Well, my blossom, here am I! What hopes for a poor dog, eh? How! the maid here! then I've lost the town, d—e! Not a shilling to bribe the governor; she'll spring a mine, and I shall be blown to the devil.

Bid. Don't be ashamed, Mr. Flash; I have told Tag the whole affair, and she's my friend, I can assure you.

Flash. Is she? then she won't be mine, I am certain. [*Aside.*] Well, Mrs. Tag, you know, I suppose, what's to be done: this young lady and I have contracted ourselves; and so, if you please to stand bridemaid, why we'll fix the wedding-day directly.

Tag. The wedding-day, sir?

Flash. The wedding-day, sir! Ay, sir, the wedding-day, sir; what have you to say to that, sir?

Bid. My dear Captain Flash, don't make such a noise; you'll wake my aunt.

Flash. And suppose I did, child, what then?

Bid. She'd be frightened out of her wits.

Flash. At me, miss! frightened at me? *Tout au contraire*, I assure you; you mistake the thing, child; I have some reason to believe I am not quite so shocking. [*Affectedly.*]

Tag. Indeed, sir, you flatter yourself; but pray, sir, what are your pretensions?

Flash. The lady's promises, my own passion, and the best-mounted blade in the three kingdoms. If any man can produce a better title, let him take her; if not, the devil mince me, if I give up an atom of her.

Bid. He's in a fine passion, if he would but hold it. [*Aside.*]

Tag. Pray, sir, hear reason a little.

Flash. I never do, madam; it is not my method of proceeding; here is my logic. [*Draws his sword.*] Sa, sa—my best argument is carte over arm, madam, ha, ha! [*Lunges.*] and if he answers that, madam, through my small guts, my breath, blood, and mistress, are all at his service. Nothing more, madam.

Bid. This 'll do, this 'll do.

Tag. But, sir, sir, sir!

Flash. But, madam, madam, madam! I profess blood, madam! I was bred up to it from a child; I study the book of fate, and the camp is my university. I have attended the lectures of prince Charles upon the Rhine, and Bathiani upon the Po, and have extracted knowledge from the mouth of a cannon: I'm not to be frightened with squibs, madam, no, no.

Bid. Pray, dear sir, don't mind her; but let me prevail with you to go away this time. Your passion is very fine, to be sure; and when my aunt and Tag are out of the way, I'll let you know when I'd have you come again.

Flash. When you'd have me come again, child? And suppose I never would come again, what do you think of that now, eh? You pretend to be afraid of your aunt; your aunt knows what's what too well to refuse a good match when 'tis offered. Lookye miss, I am a man of honour; glory is my aim; I have told you the road I am in; and do you see here, child? [*Shewing his sword.*] No tricks upon travellers.

Bid. But pray, sir, hear me.

Flash. No, no, no; I know the world, madam; I am as well known at Covent-garden as the dial, madam; I'll break a lamp, bully a constable, bam a justice, or bilk a box-keeper, with any man in the liberties of Westminster. What do you think of me now, madam?

Bid. Pray don't be so furious, sir.

Flash. Come, come, come, few words are best; somebody's happier than somebody, and I am a poor, silly fellow, ha, ha! That's all. Lookye, child, to be short, (for I'm a man of reflection,) I have but a bagatelle to say to you: I am in love with you up to hell and desperation; may the sky crush me if I am not. But since there is another more fortunate than I, adieu Biddy! Prosperity to the happy rival, patience to poor Flash; but the first time we meet,

gunpowder be my perdition, but I'll have the honour to cut a throat with him.

Bid. [Stopping him.] You may meet with him now, if you please.

Flash. Now may I?—Where is he?—I'll sacrifice the villain! [*Aloud.*]

Tag. Hush! he's but in the next room.

Flash. Is he? Ram me [*low*] into a mortar-piece, but I'll have vengeance; my blood boils to be at him. Don't be frightened, miss!

Bid. No, sir, I never was better pleased, I assure you.

Flash. I shall soon do his business.

Bid. As soon as you please; take your own time.

Tag. I'll fetch the gentleman to you immediately.

[*Going.*]

Flash. [Stopping her.] Stay, stay a little; what a passion I am in! Are you sure he is in the next room? I shall certainly tear him to pieces; I would fain murder him like a gentleman, too; besides, this family sha'n't be brought into trouble upon my account. I have it—I'll watch for him in the street, and mix his blood with the puddle of the next kennel. [*Going.*]

Bid. [Stopping him.] No, pray, Mr. Flash, let me see the battle; I shall be glad to see you fight for me; you sha'n't go, indeed. [*Holding him.*]

Tag. [Holding him.] Oh! pray let me see you fight; there were two gentlemen fought yesterday, and my mistress was never so diverted in her life. I'll fetch him out. [*Exit.*]

Bid. Do; stick him, stick him, Captain Flash; I shall love you the better for it.

Flash. D—n your love; I wish I were out of the house. [*Aside.*]

Bid. Here he is; now speak some of your hard words, and run him through—

Flash. Don't be in fits now. [*Aside to Biddy.*]

Bid. Never fear me.

Re-enter TAG, with FRIBBLE.

Tag. [To Fribble.] Take it on my word, sir, he is a bully, and nothing else.

Frib. [Frightened.] I know you are my good friend; but, perhaps, you don't know his disposition.

Tag. I am confident he is a coward.

Frib. Is he? Nay, then, I'm his man.

Flash. I like his looks; but I'll not venture too far at first.

Tag. Speak to him, sir.

Frib. I will. I understand, sir—hem!—that you—by Mrs. Tag, here—sir—who has informed me—hem!—that you would be glad to speak with me—D—e! [*Turns off.*]

Flash. I can speak to you, sir, or to anybody, sir; or I can let it alone, and hold my tongue, if I see occasion, sir—D—e! [*Turns off.*]

Bid. Well said, Mr. Flash, be in a passion.

Tag. [To Fribble.] Don't mind his looks; he changes colour already; to him, to him. [*Pushes him.*]

Frib. Don't hurry me, Mrs. Tag, for heaven's sake! I shall be out of breath before I begin, if you do.—Sir, [*to Flash.*] if you can't speak to a gentleman in another manner, sir, why then I'll venture to say, you had better hold your tongue. Oons!

Flash. Sir, you and I are of different opinions.

Frib. You and your opinion may go to the devil. Take that. [*Turns off to Tag.*]

Tag. Well said, sir, the day's your own.

Bid. What's the matter, Mr. Flash? Is all your fury gone? Do you give me up?

Frib. I have done his business. [*Struts about.*]

Flash. Give you up, madam! No, madam, when

I am determined in my resolutions I am always calm; 'tis our way, madam; and now I shall proceed to business. Sir, I beg to say a word to you in private.

Frib. Keep your distance, fellow, and I'll answer you. That lady has confessed a passion for me; and as she has delivered up her heart into my keeping, nothing but my heart's blood shall purchase it. D—n!

Tag. Bravo! bravo!

Flash. If those are the conditions, I'll give you earnest for it directly. [*Draws.*] Now, villain, renounce all right and title this minute, or the torrent of my rage will overflow my reason, and I shall annihilate the nothingness of your soul and body in an instant.

Frib. I wish there was a constable at hand to take us both up; we shall certainly do one another a prejudice.

Tag. No, you won't indeed, sir; pray bear up to him; if you would but draw your sword, and be in a passion, he would run away directly.

Frib. Will he? [*Draws his sword.*] Then—I can no longer contain myself.—Hell and the furies! Come on, thou savage brute!

Tag. Go on, sir. [*Here they stand in fighting postures, while Biddy and Tag push them forward.*]

Flash. Come on.

Bid. Go on.

Frib. Come on, rascal.

Tag. Go on, sir.

Enter Captain LOVEIT and PUFF.

Capt. L. What's the matter, my dear?

Bid. If you won't fight, here's one that will. Oh! Rhodophil, these two sparks are your rivals, and have pestered me these two months with their addresses; they forced themselves into the house, and have been quarrelling about me, and disturbing the family; if they won't fight, pray kick them out of the house.

Capt. L. What's the matter, gentlemen? [*They both keep their fencing posture.*]

Flash. Don't part us, sir.

Frib. No, pray, sir, don't part us; we shall do you a mischief.

Capt. L. Puff, look to the other gentleman, and call a surgeon.

Bid and Tag. Ha, ha, ha!

Puff. Bless me! how can you stand under your wounds, sir?

Frib. Am I hurt, sir?

Puff. Hurt, sir! why you have—let me see—pray stand in the light—one, two, three, through the heart; and let me see—hum!—eight through the small-guts! Come, sir, make it up the round dozen, and then we'll part you.

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Capt. L. Come here, Puff. [*Whispers, and looks at Flash.*]

Puff. 'Tis the very same, sir.

Capt. L. [*to Flash.*] Pray sir, have I not had the pleasure of seeing you abroad?

Flash. I have served abroad.

Capt. L. Had not you the misfortune, sir, to be missing at the last engagement in Flanders?

Flash. I was found among the dead in the field of battle.

Puff. He was the first that fell, sir; the wind of a cannon-ball struck him flat upon his face; he had just strength enough to creep into a ditch, and there he was found after the battle in a most deplorable condition.

Capt. L. Pray, sir, what advancement did you get by the service of that day?

Flash. My wounds rendered me unfit for service, and I sold out.

Puff. Stole out, you mean. We hunted him by scent to the water side; thence he took shipping for England; and, taking the advantage of my master's absence, has attacked the citadel which we are luckily come to relieve, and drive his honour into the ditch again.

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Frib. He, he, he!

Capt. L. And now, sir, how have you dared to shew your face in open day, or wear even the outside of a profession you have so much scandalized by your behaviour? I honour the name of a soldier, and as a party concerned, am bound not to see it disgraced. As you have forfeited your title to honour, deliver up your sword this instant.

Flash. Nay, good Captain—

Capt. L. No words, sir. [*Takes his sword.*]

Frib. He's a sad scoundrel; I wish I had kicked him.

Capt. L. The next thing I command, leave this house, change the colour of your clothes and fierceness of your looks; appear from top to toe the wretch, the very wretch thou art. If e'er I meet thee in the military dress again, or if you put on looks that belie the native baseness of thy heart, be it where it will, this shall be the reward of thy impudence and disobedience. [*Kicks him, he runs off.*]

Bid. Oh! my dear Rhodophil!

Frib. What an infamous rascal it is! I thank you, sir, for this favour; but I must after and cane him.

[*Going, he is stopped by the Captain.*]

Capt. L. One word with you, too, sir

Frib. With me, sir?

Capt. L. You need not tremble; I won't use you roughly.

Frib. I am certain of that, sir; but I am sadly troubled with weak nerves.

Capt. L. Thou art a species too despicable for correction; therefore, begone; and if I see you here again, your insignificance sha'n't protect you.

Frib. I am obliged to you for your kindnesses: well, if ever I have any thing to do with intrigues again!— [*Exit.*]

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Puff. Shall I ease you of your trophy, sir?

Capt. L. Take it, Puff, as a small recompense for thy fidelity; thou canst better use it than its owner.

Puff. I wish your honour had a patent to take such trifles from every pretty gentleman that could spare 'em; I would set up the largest cutler's shop in the kingdom.

Capt. L. Well said, Puff.

Bid. But pray, Mr. Fox, how did you get out of your hole? I thought you were locked in.

Capt. L. I shot the bolt back when I heard a noise; and, thinking you were in danger, I broke my confinement without any other consideration than your safety. [*Kisses her hand.*]

Bid. I'm afraid the town will be ill-natured enough to think I have been a little coquettish in my behaviour; but I hope, as I have been constant to the Captain, I shall be excused diverting myself with pretenders.

*Ladies, to fops and braggarts ne'er be kind,
No charms can warm 'em, and no virtues bind;*

Each lover's merit by his conduct prove;

Who fails in honour, will be false in love. [*Exeunt.*]

THE DESERTED DAUGHTER;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS,

BY THOMAS HOLCROFT.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MR. MORDENT
CHEVERIL
LENNOX
DONALD
ITEM
GRIME
CLEMENT.

LADY ANNE
JOANNA
MRS. SARNET
MRS. ENFIELD
SERVANTS.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The House of Mr. Mordent.*

Enter MORDENT and DONALD.

Don. Gin the black de'il glower at me, I'ze tell ye my mind! Discharge me, an ye wull: I ha' been nae mair but thirty years i' the family. I care nae for yeer cankered girns! An ye wad nae hear fashus tales, ye munna be guilty o' fou' deeds!

Mor. Will you speak in a lower key? Earth is wholly inhabited by harpies, and I am eternally haunted by the most malignant of them!

Don. An I get nae tidings of her to-day, I'ze advertize for her i' the public papers: ay, and I'ze gar yeer name be imprinted at full length.

Mor. [Terrified.] Print my name?

Don. The de'il hike me on his horns, gin I dunna!

Mor. Demon! I'll blow your brains out!

Don. Fiz, wi' your flash i' the pan! I dunna fear ye! Yeer rash and mad enoch! Sham betide ye! a father abandon his child!

Mor. Leprosy seize your licentious tongue! will you speak lower? Did I abandon her?

Don. Ye wad nae acknowledge her; wad nae see her; never frae the time that she war a wee tot at the knee. Gin ye had a hairt ye wad nae aixpose her tul—

Mor. What?

Don. Tramp the streets! Aixpald the warld of onesty by her ain father! And why, trow? she is a naitural child! To beget children, and then turn them adrift to bag, steal, or stairve, is a d—d un-naitural deed!

Mor. Prophet of evil! would you tell all the family? Expose me to my wife?

Don. I'ze aixpose ye tul the whole warld, gin I dunna find her. And what the muckle better shall I be gin I do? A thrawart poverty maun be her lot! Ye ha' diced, and drabbed, and squandered, and mortgaged, till ye wull nae ha' a bawbee tul yeersal.

Mor. Cease your croaking, raven! Do you govern this house, or I?

Don. Govern, trow! Balzebub himsal is the governor! There is yeer pet steward—an auld whilly wha! Tak warning! I ha' tould ye aforetime, and I tell ye again, he's a rascal!

Mor. Viper, 'tis false! If the earth holds an honest man, Mr. Item is he.

Don. Onest? A juggling loon o' hell! He feigns to borrow the siller for ye, wetch he lends himsel; and the walthy possessions ye lang syne held, wull, eftsoon, be aw his ain.

Mor. I say 'tis false! His truth, integrity, and zeal are unexampled.

Don. Marcy o' God! ye're bewitched!

Mor. What a den of misery is this world! Swarming with one set of fiends that raise the whirlwind of the passions, and with another that beset and tantalize the bewildered wretch for having been overtaken by the storm!

Don. Poor Joanna! winsom lassy! I'ze keep my ward!

Mor. Can nothing stop your pestiferous tongue? Have I not fifty times descended to explanation, and shewn you that I must not, cannot own her?

Don. Dare not! Ye hanna the hairt to be onest! Ye bogle at shadows!

Mor. Pertinacious devil! The public clamour and disgrace, the affected sufferings and insulting forbearance of Lady Anne, the resentment of her imperious family, are these shadows?

Enter Mrs. SARNET.

Mrs. S. What is it you are pleased to be talking, pray, about my lady, Mr. Scotch Donald?

Don. Troth, Mrs. English Sarsnet, nae ward o' ill.

Mrs. S. Ill, truly! No, sir; my lady may defy her worst enemies; though there are folks, who ought to adore the very ground she treads upon, that use her like a Turk.

Mor. How now?

Mrs. S. I name no names.

Mor. Who sent for you here, mistress?

Mrs. S. My lady sent me here, sir.

Mor. And did she bid you behave with impertinence?

Mrs. S. She, indeed! A dear suffering saint! She bid me always behave with affability and decorum; and so I would, if I could. But it would provoke an angel!

Mor. And what is it your wisdom thinks so provoking?

Mrs. S. To see a sweet lady sit for hours, and pine and grieve; and, then, when some folks are in sight, pretend to smile, and be all contentment, when all the while her poor heart is ready to break.

Mor. Then she complains to you?

Mrs. S. I said no such thing, sir! No; she complains to no christian soul! I wish some folks had a little of my spirit; other folks, mayhap, mut find the difference.

Don. Troth, an yee wad nae be speaking o' that, *Mrs. Sarsnet.*

Mrs. S. A poor, weak woman, who can only take her own part by crying and fainting.

Don. Yee forget, *Mrs. Sarsnet*, there are some poor, weak women that ha' tongues and nails.

Mrs. S. Have they, *Mr. Snapshort*? Why, then, if I had you for a husband, mayhap, I would let you see that I could use them.

Don. The muckle de'il may doubt yee!

Mrs. S. It's a shame, *Mr. Donald*, for you to be getting into corners, and whispering, and peering, and plotting to my lady's dishonour!

Don. I plotting? How dare yee, *Mrs. Sarsnet*—

Mrs. S. You ought to be ashamed of making yourself a spy, and a skip-jack go-between!

Don. I a skip-jack? Varra weel! Yee hear, sir, what are my thanks. 'Tis unco well! I ha' but my desarts! True enoch, I am a go-between!

Mrs. S. Yes; we know that well, *Mr. Donald*.

Don. But nae sic go-between as yee, *Mrs. Malapert*, may think me. I ha' been a trust-worthy caterer tul the family; [*to MORDENT*] a slave tul yeer revels, and yeer roots, and yeer banquetings. 'Tis lang syne ye made me yeer purveyor; but nae man ever yet made me his pander.

Mor. Begone! See if *Mr. Item* is returned.

Don. Skip-jack! Go-between! Mag's malison o' yeer spitefu' tongue-gab! [*Exit.*]

Mor. Did your lady, I say, instruct you to behave with this insolence?

Mrs. S. You know very well, sir, my lady is the best of wives! she sent me on a civil message, and bid me speak with propriety; and so, if speaking one's mind and telling the truth be a fault, it's all my own.

Mor. I'll put an end to this.

Mrs. S. Oh! to be sure; you may tell my lady and get me turned away, if you please. Because, I know very well, if you bid her, she will do it.

Mor. Prometheus and his vulture is no fault!

Mrs. S. But, as it is all for love of my lady, I am sure the Earl of Oldcrest, her father, will give me a situation. He knows, mayhap, more than you may think; so does the viscount, her brother, too; her aunt, Lady Mary, and her uncle, the bishop: and everybody is not obliged to be so blind and so tame as my lady.

Mor. What is it they know?

Mrs. S. That's more than I can say; but they have all been here, and my lady desires to speak with you.

Mor. [*Aside.*] Indeed!—I have no leisure.

Mrs. S. Ah! I told my lady so.

Mor. Begone! inform your lady I have tormentors enough, and have no inclination to increase the number. [*Erit.*]

Mrs. S. I prognostified the answer! A good-for-nothing chap! I know very well what is becoming of a husband. He should love his wife dearly, by day and by night: he should wait upon her; and give her her own way; and keep her from the cold and the wet; and provide her with everything comfortable; and if she happen to be in an ill-humour, should coax her, and bear a little snubbing patiently. The fellows! what are they good for? [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*The Steward's Room.*

Enter ITEM and GRIME meeting.

Item. [*Eagerly.*] My dear Grime, I am glad you are come. Well, is the deed prepared?

Grime. Ready for sealing. *Mr. Mordent* never examines what he signs; he trusts all to you.

Item. We cannot be too safe. But this other affair, this Joanna; what have you done? Have you decoyed her to *Mrs. Enfield's*?

Grime. Really, *Mr. Item*, she is so fine a creature that, when I consigned her over, I am not a true Christian, if I did not feel such a twinge here—

Item. Curse your twinges! Is she safe? Did she suspect nothing?

Grime. No, no! The poor innocent blessed herself to think what a kind protectress Providence had sent her.

Item. That is well! that is well!

Grime. But I do not yet understand why you should seek the ruin of this lovely creature?

Item. I? You mistake; 'tis *Mr. Mordent*.

Grime. What! wish destruction to his child?

Item. No, no: we neither of us seek her harm, but our own safety.

Grime. Which way?

Item. He has various tormentors: his wife, or rather her proud relations, are among the chief; and he dreads they should come to the knowledge of this secret. But his strongest terror is of being detected in having for years disowned a child, who, if now produced would be his everlasting disgrace.

Grime. Then he does not know that his daughter is now in the house of *Mrs. Enfield*?

Item. Not a word. His plan, for the present, is to settle her in some profession; for this he will bestow a thousand pounds, which—ha, ha, ha!—I am to expend.

Grime. Or keep?

Item. [*Aside.*] Plague! I have said too much.

Grime. [*Aside.*] Oh, oh! A thousand pounds?

Item. That, my dear Grime, would be a paltry motive.

Grime. [*Aside.*] I'll have my share.

Item. *Mr. Mordent* has been all his life squandering, like a blockhead, what I have been prudently picking up.

Grime. And pretty pickings you have had, *Mr. Item.*

Item. [*Exulting.*] I have him in the toils! Interest accumulating upon interest, and all in arrear. I can foreclose upon him, when I please, for all except the Berkshire estate; and by this second mortgage, agreeably to the deed you have brought, equity of re-

demption will be forfeited, and that as well as the rest will then be mine.

Grime. If he had but signed and sealed—

Item. Which he shall do this very day.

Grime. Still, why are you the enemy of Joanna? What have you to fear from her?

Item. Much! An action of recovery.

Grime. How so? She has no title: she is illegitimate.

Item. Would she were! No, no; a lawful daughter, born in wedlock: her mother, poor but virtuous, and died in childbed. Fearful it should injure his second marriage with Lady Anne, he never produced the infant; but told his man, Donald, it was a natural daughter, and by his intermission, secretly maintained and had her educated.

Grime. Why not employ the same agent still?

Item. Because this Donald has got the fool's disease—pity; and threatens to make Mordent own his daughter, or impeach.

Grime. And was it prudent to place her beyond Donald's knowledge?

Item. It was.

Grime. Ah! 'tis a strange world! Well, now, Mr. Item, give me leave to say a word or two on my own affairs.

Item. To be sure, my dear friend. Speak, and spare not.

Grime. There is the thousand pounds you mentioned.

Item. [Aside.] Hem!

Grime. Then the premium on this mortgage.—In short, Mr. Item, I do all your business, stand in your shoes—

Item. You are my right hand, the apple of my eyes!

Grime. Ay, but—

Item. The dearest friend I have on earth!

Grime. The division of profits—

Item. Don't mention it. Am not I your friend? I shall not live for ever.

Grime. No, nor I neither. Friendship—

Item. Don't think of it. You can't distrust me! the first and best friend you ever had!

Grime. Fine words—

Item. [Evading.] Yonder is my nephew. [Calls.] Clement!

Enter CLEMENT.

Clem. Sir?

Item. Fetch the title-deeds of the Berkshire estate from my good friend, Mr. Grime's.

Grime. Well, but—

Item. Any time to-day.

Clem. Very well, sir.

Grime. Once again, Mr. Item—

Item. And, Clement—

Grime. I say, the division—

Item. [Listens.] Hark! I hear Mr. Mordent!

Grime. [Aside.] It shall not pass off thus. I begin to know you.

Item. I would not have you seen just now. My dear Grime! my kind friend! Through this door!—Some other opportunity—Pray oblige me.

Grime. Well, well! [Aside.] The next time we meet, you shall know more of my mind. [Exit.]

Item. The rascal begins to grow troublesome. Take care of the steps, good Mr. Grime! [Exit.]

Enter MORDENT.

Mor. What is life? a continual cloud, pregnant with mischief, malignity, disease, and death. Happiness? an ignis-fatuus. Pleasure? a non-entity. Existence? a misfortune, a burthen. None but fools

condescend to live. Men exert their whole faculties to torture one another: animals are the prey of animals: flowers bloom to be plucked and perish: the very grass grows to be torn and eaten; trees to be mangled, sawed, rooted up, and burned. The whole is a system of exquisite misery, and I have my full proportion. Oh! this girl! Why am I thus perturbed concerning her? She can but be wretched; and wretchedness is the certain fate of all!

Re-enter ITEM.

Well, my good Mr. Item, this poor Joanna! What have you done? Can you secure her happiness? Psha! fool! Can you lighten her misery? I can think of nothing but her; though distraction is in every thought.

Item. 'Tis a serious affair: you ought to do nothing lightly.

Mor. Turned adrift! rejected of all! no relation, no friend! never acknowledged, never!

Item. My advice, you know, sir, was, at once boldly to produce her as your daughter. No matter for the impertinent clamours and questions of who her mother was, and what became of her? why the child was never owned? where she had been concealed, and for what purposes?

Mor. Ay, ay, ay! The malignant sneers of friends, the cutting calumny of enemies, the reproaches of Lady Anne, the insults of her pompous family!

Item. For my part, I obey your commands, but I cannot approve them.

Mor. My late ward, Mr. Cheveril, should he hear of it, what would he think? Then this Berkshire mortgage!

Item. Ay, there again! Totally opposite to my advice.

Mor. Can you shew me any other possible way of paying my debts?

Item. The danger of signing it is extreme.

Mor. 'Tis ruin! But what matter? Is not the whole one mass of wretchedness?

Item. Young Cheveril, I own, has demands.

Mor. Which must be paid.

Item. Then the out-standing bills—tradesmen are very insolent.

Mor. Ay, ay! They, like the rest, have their appointed office to torture.

Item. Well, remember I have given you fair warning.

Mor. Certainly: you do your part, and with the best intentions; goad and sting, and add your quantum to the sum of suffering. The consistency of evil is amazing: good and bad all concur. Is the deed ready?

Item. I must first read it through.

Mor. Do so: I leave it all to you.

Item. But that will not take ten minutes.

Mor. I will be back presently. The gulph is before me; plunge I must, and to plunge blindfold will be to cheat the devil of some part of the pain.

Item. Nay, if you will not be warned, it is not my fault. [Exit.]

SCENE III.—The Dressing-room of Lady Anne.

Lady ANNE and Mrs. SARNET discovered.

Mrs. S. I told your ladyship he would refuse.

Lady A. What reason did he give?

Mrs. S. Reason, forsooth! Husbands never have any reason.

Lady A. [Aside.] Unkind man! Why does he thus wish to avoid me?

Mrs. S. He keeps his distance both day and night: but I would teach him to sleep in two beds! A pretty fashion, truly! I would tell him I was afraid of ghosts; and so I married because I could not, nor I would not, lie alone. So let him remember that.

Lady A. Why were you so long in bringing the message back?

Mrs. S. Why, that is what I have to tell your ladyship. If there is not bad doings, say I am no witch.

Lady A. What do you mean?

Mrs. S. Your ladyship must not be angry; but you know I can't help having a sharp eye and a quick ear of my own.

Lady A. What have you been doing now?

Mrs. S. So, I saw my master go into the steward's room—

Lady A. Psha! folly! What of that?

Mrs. S. So I had all my seven senses and my eye-teeth about me—

Lady A. Pray, have done!

Mrs. S. So, I clapped my ear to the key-hole; and, then, I heard a—whuz, buz—

Lady A. This was very improper.

Mrs. S. So, I could only catch up a word here and there; and the first was summut about—of a child—

Lady A. A child?

Mrs. S. And a mother, my lady! Though for the matter of that, where there is a child, one's own natural penetrality will tell one there must be a mother.

Lady A. Of what weakness am I guilty?

Mrs. S. And I thought I caught the sound of Mr. Item of a fathering the child; and I'm posituve he said it wuz against his conscience.

Lady A. Who said so?

Mrs. S. Mr. Item, my lady. And so, a little bit after, my master called somebody a poor injurious girl, and a prodigality of wit and beauty. So, then, I heard somebody's foot on the stairs, and I wuz fain to scamper.

Lady A. I know not why I listen to this indecent prattle. My over-anxious curiosity betrays me, and you are much too forward to profit by my weakness.

Mrs. S. Because you know, my lady, I love you in my heart; and it is all for your own good.

Lady A. A child! an injured child! Yet why do I feel agitation? His infidelities have been too open for me to be ignorant of them. And who has been to blame; he or I? Oh! doubtful and difficult question!

Mrs. S. But I'll come at the truth, I warrant me, in all its particlers.

Lady A. Suffering, perhaps, under the consciousness of error, which the sight of me might increase, he flies from additional anguish. Oh! that I had the power to sooth and reconcile him to himself! Why will he not receive consolation from me?

Mrs. S. I'll rummage about!

Lady A. If I am unhappy, how must I be certain that it is not my own fault? Where there is unhappiness, neither party can be wholly blameless.

Mrs. S. He ought to love and adore such a lady; and clothe her in satin and gold.

Lady A. Shall I tyrannize over the affections that I cannot win? If I want the power to please, let me correct my own defects, and not accuse my husband of insensibility. Oh! nothing is so killing to a husband's love, as a discontented, irksome, wailing wife! let me be anything but that.

Mrs. S. He is a barbarian Turk; and so I as good as told him. If any fellow was to use me so, I know what I would do.

Lady A. Yet have I not lost his love? Dreadful doubt! My family advise a separation; and, if this

fatal loss be real, how is it to be avoided? Yet I will not lightly yield: let me hope my efforts will not all be ineffectual. Would this agonizing contest were ended. *[Exit.]*

Mrs. S. She may say what she will, but I know very well she is the most miserablest lady alive, and I could tear his eyes out. Husband, indeed! And so, because I listened to the fellow's love, and non-sense-stuff, and took pity on him when he was going to hang or drown himself, he must think, as soon as he has got me safe, to be my lord and master: I'd tell him another story. My lord and master, truly! *[Exit.]*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—The House of Mrs. Enfield.

Mrs. ENFIELD and BETTY discovered.

Mrs. E. And, mind me, treat her with great kindness and deference.

Betty. I'll be careful.

Mrs. E. Keep her in continual good-humour; don't let her ask for anything twice; and, above all things, listen to her complaints, and pity them.

Betty. My white handkerchief shall be at her service.

Mrs. E. Is the messenger returned?

Betty. Yes, madam; and there is no answer from Mr. Mordent; but Mr. Lennox sent word he will soon be here.

Mrs. E. Send her to me.

Betty. Yes, madam. *[Exit.]*

Mrs. E. She is young, and ignorant of the town; but I can see she has a quick and courageous spirit.

Enter JOANNA.

Well, my sweet Joanna, do you think you can love me, and follow my advice?

Joanna. Are you not my benevolent protectress? and will it not be my duty?

Mrs. E. Why, that's a precious! Ay, ay; do but as I desire you, darling, and then—

Joanna. Oh! that I will. Come, set me to work.

Mrs. E. Ah! I won't kill you with work. Pretty dear! those delicate arms were not made for work!

Joanna. Fie! You must not tell me that. My mother is dead, and my father—But I must bear my fate with fortitude. Labour is no punishment.

Mrs. E. Labour! Oh! the beauty! Chicken-gloves, my lamb, for those white hands! A noble looking-glass, to see that sweet form! a fine chariot, to shew off your charms! These you ought to have, and a thousand other fine things; ay, and if you will take my advice, have them you shall.

Joanna. Fine things! chariots! No, no; not for me. To work, to work! But I'll willingly take your advice; for you are so kind, it cannot be ill.

Mrs. E. Ill! Heaven protect me! I advise a dear, sweet, handsome creature to ill!

Joanna. Handsome! Fie! an orphan! fatherless!

Mrs. E. Ay, very true. Ill! No, no; think me your parent.

Joanna. Dear lady!

Mrs. E. Ah! my tender lamb! Think of joy; think of pleasure.

Joanna. Be not so kind. You should not soften, but steel my heart: teach it to have neither fear nor feeling of wrong; to laugh when others weep.

Mrs. E. Do not think of it.

Joanna. Did you never see your father?

Mrs. E. Anan, dear!

Joanna. I never saw mine; do not even know his name. I had a strange desire to see him once, but once, and I was denied. I am a high-spirited girl, but I would have kneeled to him; would have kissed his feet; and was refused. No matter.

Mrs. E. Forget it.

Joanna. Well, well! Courage! You must let me work: I'll earn what I eat. I love you for your kindness, but I will not be dependent.

Mrs. E. Since you will—You say you can draw?

Joanna. It has been my delight. I have studied the human countenance; have read Lavater.

Mrs. E. Will you copy the engraving I shewed you?

Joanna. What, the portrait of that strange—

Mrs. E. Mr. Mordent. [*Handing down a frame.*]

Joanna. Mordent?

Mrs. E. Of Portland-place.

Joanna. He's a wicked man.

Mrs. E. Nay—

Joanna. A wild eye. I hope he is not your relation?

Mrs. E. No; but has been a very good friend.

Joanna. Take care of him.

Mrs. E. Can you judge so certainly?

Joanna. Looking at such a face, who can fail? [*Examining Mrs. E.*] You are a worthy lady; a kind lady; your actions bespeak it: and yet—don't be angry—there is something about your features that I don't like.

Mrs. E. Bless me, dear!

Joanna. I must be wrong, because you are good: but you have not a good countenance. That's strange; I never saw such a thing before. And the more I look, the less I like.

Mrs. E. [*Aside.*] Does she suspect me?

Joanna. If ever I draw your face, I'll alter some of the lines. I'll make them such as I think virtue ought to have made them; open, honest, undaunted. You have such a number of little artful wrinkles at the corners of your eyes—You are very cunning.

Mrs. E. [*Aside.*] What does she mean?

Joanna. But what of that? You are kind to me; and I fear no cunning, not I. You found me friendless, have given me work, and I would die to serve you; so I'll copy that wild man's portrait.

Mrs. E. Wild!

Joanna. Nay, for that matter, you need not fear him: but if you know any vain, foolish, young girls, that love flaunting, and will listen to fine promises, bid them beware of him.

Mrs. E. [*Aside.*] A little witch.

Enter BETTY.

Betty. Mr. LENOX is below, madam. [*Exit.*]

Mrs. E. I am glad of that. My sweet Joanna, I'll introduce you to him.

Joanna. Me, madam?

Mrs. E. Ay, child, that I will. Everybody shall know what an angel my dear young friend is.

Joanna. Consider, madam—

Mrs. E. Nay, I am sure you will not refuse me this pleasure.

Joanna. You are too kind.

Mrs. E. Come, my precious!

Joanna. Well, I commit myself to your trust. Friendless and fatherless, you will be my guardian. You are too generous to injure the helpless and the forlorn; and the lines in your face are false. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*An Ante-chamber in Mordent's House.*

MORDENT and CHEVERIL discovered.

Chev. Grumble no more, guardy! I have done with

prognosticating evil. 'Tis all in vain: your gloomy reign is ended: I am of age!—

Mor. To play the fool.

Chev. I'm free! I'm alive! I'm beginning to exist!—

Mor. Like a wretch at the stake, when the flames first reach him!

Chev. The whole world is before me; its pleasures are spread out, and I long to fall on. The golden apples of delight hang inviting me to pluck, eat, and—

Mor. Be poisoned.

Chev. Ha, ha, ha!

Mor. As your guardian, I—

Chev. D—n guardianship! I have been guarded too long. Years out of number have I been fed with lean Latin, crabbed Greek, and an abominable olio of the four faculties: served up with the jargon of Aristotle, the quirks of Thomas Aquinas, and the quibbles and quodlibets of Doctor Duns Scotus—

Mor. Take warning—

Chev. Fined for Horace; horsed for Homer; and plucked because I could not parrot over their premises and predicates, majors and minors, antecedents and consequents. My brain was a broker's shop; the little good furniture it contained all hid by lumber.

Mor. Let me tell you, young sir—

Chev. Not now: your day is done. I am my own man! I breathe! I am abroad! I am on the wing to visit the regions of fruition and Paradise; to banquet with the gods, and sip ambrosia from the lips of Venus and Hebe, the loves, and the graces!

Mor. You are a lunatic!

Chev. No; I am just come to my senses—for I am just come to my estate. High health, high spirits, eight thousand a-year, and one-and-twenty.

Mor. Youth! riches! Poor idiot! Health, too! What is man but a walking hospital? You, boy! you, little as you suspect it, include within yourself a whole pharmacopœia of malady and mischief!

Chev. Zounds! he'll persuade me presently I am Pandora's box.

Mor. So you are.

Chev. Why, guardy, you are mad!

Mor. True, or I should take the shortest way to get rid of misery, and instantly go hang myself.

Chev. What a picture!

Mor. Equal it in accuracy, if you can.

Chev. Why, I am but a young artist; however, I can dash my brush at the canvass as daringly as you have done. So, what think you of mirth, songs, and smiles; youth, beauty, and kisses; friendship, liberty, and love; with a large, capacious soul of benevolence, that can sooth the afflicted, succour the poor, heal the sick, instruct the ignorant, honour the wise, reform the bad, adore the good, and hug genius and virtue to the heart?

Mor. Every feature a lie!

Chev. Curse me, but I say the likeness is, at least, as good as your's: and I am sure the colouring is infinitely more delightful.—[*Enter DONALD.*]

Don. I've ganging about the business of the poor lassy, ken ye me? Gin ye want me, I've be back in a blink.

Mor. Go to the devil, if you will; so that you do not torment me.

Chev. Ah! friend Donald, don't you know that I'm of age? Won't you revel and roar, my boy? Why do you look so glum, old honesty?

Don. Troth, ye mistake the maitter, young gentleman; I am an auld go-between.

Chev. Ha, ha, ha!

Don. It's varra true; wetch makes me unco blate
A helpless bairn has been cast upo' the wide warld
by a hairless faither, and I am a pairt o' the cause.

Mor. Again, imp?

Chèv. A child deserted by the father!

Don. Ye well may shew the gogle o' yer eyn.

Chèv. Is he poor? is he penniless?

Don. Much thereabout, an I dunna miss my ken.

Chèv. Bring the child to me; bring it to me, old
rueful! I'll be its father. I never fathered a child
in my life, and I long to begin.

Don. Ye seem, truly, to ha' mair human affection
than some fathers.

Mor. Begone! Leave us, blood-sucker! goblin!
vampire!

Don. Yas; I'ze gang where I tow'd ye; and, gin
I dunna hear o' her, ye'ze hear o' me. [*Erit.*]

Chèv. Bring me the baby, Donald. Zounds! how
it would delight me to father all the fatherless chil-
dren in the world. Poor little dears! I should have
a plentiful brood. And so, guardian, I want money.

Mor. What, to purchase destruction wholesale?

Chèv. I have five hundred good, wicked, spirited,
famous projects on hand. You have seventeen thou-
sand pounds of mine, hard cash: I want it—

Mor. Seventeen thousand plagues!

Chèv. Every farthing.

Mor. Your money, sir, is locked up in mortgages.

Chèv. Locked up? Oh, d—e! I'll unlock it. I'll
send honest Grime to ye; he carries a master-key.

Mor. Have you no regard to my convenience?

Chèv. I'll pay the premium; and, if you want se-
curity, you may have mine. I must have money!
The world must hear of me; I'll be a patron, and
a subscriber, and a collector, and an amateur, and
a connoisseur, and a dilettante! I'll hunt, I'll race,
I'll disse! I'll grub, plant, plan, and improve! I'll
buy a stud, fell a forest, build a palace, and pull
down a church! [*Erit.*]

Mor. Mr. Cheveril! He is flown! Why, ay, with
spirits equally wild, wanton, and ignorant of evil,
I began my career. I have now lived long enough
to discover that universal nature is universal agony.
Oh! this rejected Joanna! Miserable girl! Well,
am not I miserable too? Who is not? The dangers
to which she may be exposed! the cruelty of ut-
terly abandoning her! Never shall I again be at
peace with myself!

Lady A. [*Without.*] Where is your master?

Mor. Hark! my wife! She tortures me with her
silent sufferings and her stifled sighs. Passion,
bitter reproach, and violent menace, would be in-
finitely more supportable. In short, I have not de-
served her kindness, and cannot endure it. [*Erit.*]

Enter Lady ANNE.

Lady A. Mr. Mordent! Thus does he continually
shun me. Why, then, do I haunt him? why intrude
myself upon him? Must this have no end? Fond,
foolish heart, these aches and pains are fruitless:
sleep in forgetfulness, cease to feel, and be at peace!

Mrs. S. [*Without.*] I tell you, I can't stay.

Lady A. The stories, too, with which this kind
but officious creature torments me—

Enter Mrs. SARNSET, hastily.

Mrs. S. I've got it, my lady! I've got it!

Lady A. What is the matter now?

Mrs. S. Why, I'll tell your ladyship. A queer,
quandary kind of person brought my master a let-
ter, which I knew was suspicious. So, my master's
coat was all powder, over here: how he came by it,

I don't know.

Lady A. Psha! Pray don't tease me.

Mrs. S. So, my lady, he took it off, and ordered
one of the fellows to give it a brush. So, making
a pretence, I was close at his heels—

Lady A. At whose heels?

Mrs. S. The footman's, my lady. So, while he
was brushing, he had a wrangulation with the cook;
and turned about to gabble footman's gibberish
with she; so I, having a hawk's-eye, twirled my
hand behind me, so; and felt in the pocket, and
there I found this written letter, which I slyly
slipped under my apron, so.

Lady A. Take a letter out of your master's pocket?

Mrs. S. Yes, my lady; because, being broke
open, I read the contents, and found that it was
from one Mrs. Enfield, to appoint an assassination
between my master and a young girl.

Lady A. Give it me.

Mrs. S. Yes, my lady; I was sure you could not
but wish to see it.

Lady A. Mistress Sarnset, I have frequently cau-
tioned you against practices like these; which are
mean and dishonest.

Mrs. S. My lady!

Lady A. To have robbed your master of his money
would have been less culpable than to steal from
him the knowledge of transactions which, because
of their impropriety, he has not the courage to avow.

Mrs. S. It's very hard, because I can't bear your
lady—ladyship's ill usage; and—and—and always
feel as if my very stays were a-bursting, to see your
—your treatment, time after time, that I should get
myself ill—ill—ill—will, because I love you from
the very bottom of my heart.

Lady A. I have winked at these liberties too
often; I'll suffer them no longer.

Mrs. S. Very—very well. Since your ladyship
is so angry, you may turn—turn me away, if you
please, and quite break—break—break my heart.

Lady A. No; the fault is more than half my own:
but, from this time, I seriously warn you against
such improper, such base actions.

Mrs. S. Very—very well, my lady, I'll be deaf,
and dumb, and blind; and when I see you treated
worse than a savage, I'll burst twenty laces a-day
before I'll speak a word.

Lady A. [*With great kindness.*] What you have
done has been affectionately meant. I am sorry to
have given you pain, and to have excited your tears;
but I must earnestly desire you will commit no more
such mistakes. They are wrong in themselves, and
every way fatal to my peace.

Mrs. S. [*Kisses her hand.*] You are the tenderest
and best of ladies! and I know who is an unfeeling
brute! [*Erit Lady A.*]

Enter LENNOX and CHEVERIL.

Len. Pray, Mrs. Sarnset, is Mr. Mordent within?

Mrs. S. Indeed, sir, I don't know. [*Muttering.*]
Mr. Mordent is a good-for-nothing chap! [*Erit.*]

Len. I'll bet you a thousand, Cheveril, your
charmer does not equal the girl I have this moment
left.

Chèn. Done, for ten thousand.

Len. You would lose.

Chèv. You never beheld so peerless a beauty!

Len. How did you become acquainted with her?

Chèv. We are not yet acquainted; and I fear we
never shall be.

Len. Oh, oh!

Chèv. I met her three times in the Green Park.

The first moment I gazed at her with admiration—as soon as she was gone by!

Len. Gone by?

Chev. Good manners, you know, would not let me stare her in the face. Such a shape! such elegance! The next time I determined to speak to her, and approached as resolutely as Hercules to the Hydra.

Len. A good simile for a beauty.

Chev. I had studied a speech; but, somehow, there was such a sweet severity in her looks, I—I had not the power to utter a word.

Len. Courageous lover!

Chev. The third time, however, it being alittle darker, (for it was always in the evening,) I was more undaunted: so, fully determined to throw myself at her feet, and declare my passion, up I marched; but, as the devil would have it, she turned and looked me full in the face; and her beauty, and—and virtue, and—and modesty, were so awful, that my heart sank within me.

Len. Ha, ha, ha!

Chev. It is now a fortnight since; and although I have walked the Green Park, morning, noon, and night, every day, I could never once again set eyes on her. Intolerable booby that I was, to lose three such precious opportunities—

Len. Of making love to a lady's-maid.

Chev. Oh! for one momentary glance, that I might give vent to the passion that devours me!

Len. Ha, ha, ha!

Chev. What, you think I dare not?

Len. Ha, ha, ha! Look you, Cheveril; I know you: a lighted match and the mouth of a cannon could not cow you like the approach of a petticoat.

Chev. I afraid of women! D—me! I don't understand having my character attacked and traduced. Make a Master Jackey of me? I am a wicked one.

Len. Ha, ha, ha! Wicked! you are as conscientious as a drunken methodist, or a dying miser. You are not only afraid of the woman, but of the sin.

Chev. Why, if—no, d—me! 'tis not true. I have no more conscience than yourself.

Len. Me! I have a deal of conscience. Pleasure, I own, can tempt me; but I make no pretensions, like you, to the sin for the sake of reputation.

Chev. Sir, I make no such pretensions. I am, indeed, resolved to be a fellow of enterprise, pith, and soul; but not by vile, rascally methods. I'll love all the women, and, perhaps, trick some of the men; but not seduce wives, ruin daughters, and murder husbands and fathers. No; if I cannot be wicked without being criminal, d—me, if I do not live and die an honest, dull dog! [*Exit.*]

Enter MORDENT, searching his pockets.

Mor. Curse the letter! it's gone! Careless booby!

Len. What's the matter?

Mor. A thousand to one but it has fallen into the hands of Lady Anne.

Len. What have you lost?

Mor. A d—d epistle from—

Enter LADY ANNE

Lady A. Mr. Mordent, I am glad to meet with you.

Mor. Glad! Is the thing so difficult?

Lady A. I did not say so; I meant nothing unkind.

Mor. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady A. Indeed, I did not. I wish to speak to you.

Mor. [*To Lennox retiring.*] Stay where you are, Lennox. What, man, you are in no fear of soothing insult! You are not married.

Len. I'll return in five minutes.

[*Exit.*]

Lady A. Pray, Mr. Mordent—

Mor. Psha! I know I am a bear at the stake: don't shorten my tether.

Lady A. I have a paper— [*Shewing the letter.*]

Mor. Ay, ay; I know it. Come, I am prepared.

Lady A. It fell into my hands by the reprehensible but unauthorized curiosity of my woman.

Mor. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady A. Indeed, I have never opened it.

Mor. Nor she either?

Lady A. Yes; but that is not my fault.

Mor. Your's, indeed! Impossible!

Lady A. The heart, which I cannot secure by affection, I will not alienate by suspecting.

Mor. Psha! Meekness is but mockery; forbearance, insult.

Lady A. How shall I behave? Which way frame my words and looks, so as not to offend? Would I could discover!

Mor. You never complain! You have no jealousy!

Lady A. Indeed, I've been very obstinately blind.

Mor. Ay, ay! "Patience on a monument!"

Lady A. Reproach has never escaped my lips.

Mor. Ha, ha, ha! As if lips were the only instruments of upbraiding! No deep-fetched sighs? no pale, melancholy glances? no obvious hiding of the ever-ready tear?

Lady A. I fear I have been to blame. Indeed, I am sorry that my sensations have been so acute.

Mor. You accuse! You give a husband pain! Insolent supposition!

Lady A. I sincerely wish, my dear, you gave no more than I intend to give.

Mor. There! Did not I say so? Ha, ha, ha! You accuse!

Lady A. I am wrong; I forgot myself. Pray, forgive me. Why am I subject to these mistakes?

Mor. You are all angel—

Lady A. Would I were!

Mor. And I all demon!

Lady A. Do not, Mr. Mordent, by the dear affection you once bore—

Mor. There there! The affection I once bore!

Lady A. Heavens! must I ever be fated to wound, when it is most the wish of my soul to heal?

Mor. Why was the Earl of Oldcrest here this morning? Why are these family consultations held?

Lady A. They are contrary to my wish.

Mor. A separation, I hear, is the subject of them.

Lady A. But not countenanced by me.

Mor. Pretending in pity to spare me yourself, they are to be set upon me.

Lady A. Never! Heaven be my judge, never!

Mor. I am to be subjected to their imperious dictates.

Lady A. I own they have lately been very urgent with me to return to my father; but, were you only kind, their solicitations would be vain, indeed. Oh! take pity on yourself and me, and teach me to regain your lost affections! or, if that be too great a blessing to hope, there is still one evil which I would suffer any other torture to escape: think, if you can, that I no longer love; treat me with unkindness; neglect, accuse, do any thing—but hate me! Let me not endure that last stage of misery! But, oh, heavens! if our former endearments must end in that, have mercy, and retard or conceal it as long as you can. [*Exit.*]

Mor. Ha, ha, ha! What are barbs, and stings, and poisoned arrows? Pitiful instruments! Thou, triumphant wretchedness, usest these but on small occasions; they want pungency.

Enter LENNOX.

Len. May I come in?

Mor. Ay, ay! Now am I ripe for mischief.

Len. You seem out of temper. What has happened?

Mor. Trifles, trifles! She has got the letter.

Len. From whom?

Mor. Mrs. Enfield.

Len. Zounds!

Mor. An invitation to a new sample of beauty. She has seen it; returned it; has graciously forgiven; has racked, has driven me mad!

Len. And do you mean to go?

Mor. Ay, will I! Since devil I am, devil let me be! It will be some, though but a petty vengeance for prying.

Len. You must not.

Mor. Indeed but I will.

Len. We have long been friends, and fellow-sinners; but, in these affairs, we have always behaved honourably.

Mor. What then?

Len. I have seen the girl.

Mor. Where?

Len. At Enfield's.

Mor. Did she write to you, too?

Len. She did. An angel, Mordent!

Mor. Ha, ha, ha! Marry her, and make wretchedness secure.

Len. No! but I am fixed for life. Such animation! such soul! The finest creature my eyes ever beheld!

Mor. I'll see her.

Len. No; I cannot consent.

Mor. Why so? I'll aid you to carry her off.

Len. Are you serious?

Mor. As malice can make me. The sex have been worse to me than plague, pestilence, and famine.

Len. And what have you been to them?

Mor. No matter; I'll have my revenge.

Len. And you will aid me in this business?

Mor. I will.

Len. Solemnly? on your word and honour?

Mor. I tell you I will!

Len. Why, then, see her you shall; but in my company, observe.

Mor. Ha, ha, ha! Right; anticipate your tortments!

Len. On this condition, I shall thank you for your assistance and advice.

Mor. Why, ay! Advice! I, too, fool that I am—knowing the impotence of man to avert mischief, I wish for advice! I—[*Aside*.]—There may be danger in telling him.

Len. Well?

Mor. A—a friend of mine has a child; suppose it a—a natural child, that he knows not how properly to dispose of.

Len. A natural child, that he knows not how properly to dispose of?

Mor. Yes.

Len. Could not he sell it to the kidnappers?

Mor. Psha!

Len. There are honest overseers that will take it, fifty pounds down.

Mor. Not an infant; twenty years of age.

Len. Oh! then, indeed—there are crimp sergeants.

Mor. When I put a serious question, I expect a serious answer.

Len. Serious! And ask what a man is to do with his child!

Mor. Suppose he should have legitimate offspring?

Len. Oh, oh! Legitimate! Ah! Made of other metal! a different manufacture!

Mor. You won't hear. He provided for her—

Len. A female, too?

Mor. Would have continued to provide, but she rejected his assistance—

Len. How so?

Mor. Unless he would see her, embrace her; that is, whine over, acknowledge her, and bestow his blessing.

Len. And he refused?

Mor. Why not? Of what benefit are blessings? Where all is evil, why torment conscience concerning the mode?

Len. He is a monster!

Mor. But, sir, appearances—

Len. D—n appearances!

Mor. Friends—

Len. D—n his friends!

Mor. A wife—

Len. D—n his wife! He has friends, appearances, and a wife; but he has no heart.

Enter DONALD, in great agitation.

Don. She is gone! she is lost for aye! I've e'en red wud!

Mor. [*Aside to Don.*] How now, herald of malice and mischief?

Don. I canna forgether her! Fair fa' yeer hairt! I've ne'er set eyes o' her mair.

Mor. Peace, hound!

Don. I tell you I wunna! Misca' me an ye wull, the de'il ma' care! A father turn his back o' his bairn!

Len. Oh, oh! What, it was yourself, your own daughter, you were talking of?

Don. Gin earth haud her, I've ha' her yet; ay, and I've gar ye do her recht. She laft a message for ye.

Mor. What message?

Don. Tell him, gin he wunna gi' his child ane kess, ane scrimpet blessing, that child wull wark, stairve, and die, ore she wull leve like a parish pauper on scraps and alms. Tell him she has a pridefool spirit, that wunna bag, gin she canna win: and, gif he scorn his dochtor, she scorn's aksap his charity. [*Going*.]

Len. So, you commit crime, and then invent a system for its justification? Excellent philosopher!

Don. Why dunna ye spier a'ter her yeersal? Eh, waesucks! Ye dunna ken yeer ain bairn!

Len. How?

Don. Ye never saw the face o' her, sin she lung a wee giglet at the breast. Weel, weel! Nothing comes more surely tul licht than that which is long hidden. An ill life, an ill end! [*Erit*.]

Mor. Wolves, tigers, serpents, were first created, and then man.

Len. You are truly a high fellow, Mordent; and you spend your fortune, wrong your wife, and disown your child: that is, you inflict misery, and then tell us all are miserable.

Mor. I act and I am acted upon: the precept and the proof go together.

Len. You are incorrigible! But come; we must about this business. My heart is deeply interested.

Mor. My affairs are at a crisis; and, if I augur rightly, it will soon be all over with me.

Len. Hope better. Come, come with me to Enfield's.

Mor. I'll meet you there in half an hour.

Len. Do not fail. I am all impatience. [*Erit*.]

Mor. Just so are curs fighting, and thieves in the

act of plundering. Man is ever eager on mischief. With what infernal ardour do two armies prepare in the morning to exterminate each other before noon! Are they not wise? What is it but compressing the sum of evil within an hour, which trembling cowardice would protract through an age? [*Exit.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The House of Mordent.*

CHEVERIL and GRIME discovered.

Chev. You must let me have the cash directly

Grime. That is impossible.

Chev. I say, you must. When I have wants and wishes, nothing shall be impossible.

Grime. [*Aside.*] What if I were to tell him of Joanna? He would pay well.

Chev. Twelve hours have I been free, and have not had a taste of pleasure yet. If I do not make haste, I shall grow old before I begin.

Grime. [*Aside.*] I shall make him my friend: 'tis a rare thought!

Chev. Why do you ruminate? Do you doubt me?

Grime. Mr. Cheveril!

Chev. Well, sir?

Grime. Do you love innocence, youth, and beauty?

Chev. Do I? 'Sdeath! I am dying for them.

Grime. I know where they are to be found.

Chev. You?

Grime. The rarest creature!

Chev. Where, where?

Grime. Such pure white and red!

Chev. Ay!

Grime. Such moist, ripe, ruddy lips!

Chev. 'Sdeath! don't drive me mad. Tell me where, where?

Grime. At a certain convenient—

Chev. No, no; I have no taste for beauties of that kind.

Grime. See her, and then judge.

Chev. [*Aside.*] Besides, I'll not be unfaithful to my angelic incognita of the Green Park.

Grime. She is a young, untutored thing.

Chev. Untutored?

Grime. That I can assure you.

Chev. Then depend upon it I'll not be her instructor. How came she in such a place?

Grime. She knows nothing of the place, nor in the least suspects she is in bad company.

Chev. Poor, dear soul! What rascals sent her there?

Grime. Hem! Why, that is—it—it—it was a kind of accident.

Chev. She is not for me. I want to be a famous wicked fellow, but not by ensnaring the helpless.

Grime. Nay, if you will neither ensnare nor accept the already ensnared, you must e'en marry, or starve.

Chev. That is d——d hard!

Grime. Eusnared she will be.

Chev. Curse me, but she shall not!

Grime. What will you do?

Chev. Snatch her from danger; provide for her, cherish her.

Grime. Ay, now you say something.

Chev. Zounds! Here have I been an age in the possession of eight thousand a-year, and have not done one famous, good, wicked thing yet. It's a d——d shame!

Grime. You will fall in love with her the moment you see her.

Chev. To be sure I shall. No; on recollection, I can't love two at a time. Then, if she should tempt me to be wicked—I mean vicious? I love wickedness, but I hate vice. 'Tis a dirty whirlpool, in which, if once a man set his foot, he is soon up to his chin.

Grime. 'Tis in Dover-street. I'll furnish you with an introduction.

Chev. You are abundantly civil. An introduction from an usurer to a—Hem! I shall come to preferment.

Grime. This is the address. [*Gives a card.*]

Chev. Dover-street?

Grime. Yes; Mrs. Enfield.

Chev. [*Reads.*] "Number!"—'Sblood! Why do I stand prating here? I, who have been kept fasting from happiness and pleasure so long? Another day will be over, and I shall not get a taste of pleasure.

Grime. Nay, I am telling you of a banquet.

Chev. Are you? Why, then, I have a keen appetite, and a most devouring wish to fall to: so here goes! [*Exit.*]

Enter MORDENT.

Mor. So, Mr. Grime!

Grime. Every thing is prepared, sir: we wait your good leisure.

Mor. You will find Mr. Item in his own room.

Grime. I shall attend you there: we can do no business till you come. [*Exit.*]

Enter CLEMENT.

Clem. My uncle desires me to inform you, sir, that he has examined the deed, and it is ready for signing.

Mor. I am coming.

Clem. Had I but any influence with you, sir, I would entreat, I would conjure you not to execute it.

Mor. Why?

Clem. A sudden demand may be made by the first mortgagee; you may be unprovided for payment; equity of redemption will be forfeited; he will foreclose, and the estate will be his, at a valuation made fifty years ago, at less than half its present worth.

Mor. Ha, ha, ha! 'Twill become his incumbrance, as it has been mine.

Clem. Money-lenders neglect no advantage.

Mor. And, as for conscience or honour—

Clem. Some of them, I am afraid, sir, have very little of either.

Mor. 'Tis in the order of things. Your uncle, indeed, is a man of integrity; he knows them to be rogues, and warns me of them.

Clem. Sir, he—he may be a mistaken man, like others. I once again conjure you, sir, to re-consider the consequence. It's a very serious affair.

Mor. Mr. Clement, you are young: you cherish the fond hope of alleviating misery. Ah!

Clem. Sir, I—My situation is a painful one; but every feeling of honesty and duty compel me to inform you, that when once you have signed this deed, you will be wholly in the grasp of mercenary men, who will pay no respect to former profits, the benefits they have received, or the feelings and disinterests of him by whom they have acquired wealth, power, and pride. [*Exit.*]

Mor. The nephew and the uncle, poor fools! have the misfortune to be honest. Grime is more cunning, and will not forfeit his hope of cutting evil short at the gallows. The deed must be signed; for the money must be had. Yet these cautionings do but strengthen an aversion, which, in spite of necessity, I have always felt against this last act of despair.

Enter ITEM.

Mr. Item, you are right: this mortgage is a d—d affair. Delay is dangerous; thought is vain; yet I am inclined to think again before I sign.

Item. By all means, sir. I like that; I approve of that. Act with your eyes open; take no rash step. 'Tis what I always say—But mine is a thankless office. Like other officious fools, I can give counsel, but no help. I'm sorry to tell you, the upholsterer is below, who is very insolent, and declares, if he be not paid immediately, he will have an execution in the house before night.

Mor. Could not you put him off for a week?

Item. He has been put off too often.

Mor. Are there no means by which you might advance me that sum yourself?

Item. Oh! that I could; it would make me the happiest man on earth!

Mor. Affectionate soul!

Item. Riches would now, indeed, be welcome!

Mor. Mr. Item, you make me as great a fool as yourself.

Item. As to the deed, again and again I warn you not to sign it.

Mor. Then I will not. Ruin and wretchedness are certain; but the mode of being wretched is in my own choice, and I will not.

Item. Yet, what the devil I shall say to all your other tradesmen, I don't know: they are every man of them as clamorous as the upholsterer. I don't believe one of them will wait two days.

Mor. Was ever man so pestered?

Item. Here, too, is a long account I have just received from your groom at Newmarket; who says he shall soon want even a wisp of hay. For my part, I have not a guinea in hand: I wish I had. Then the impatience of Cheveril! and what the malignant world will say of the defalcation of a guardian, there is no foreseeing! Sign you must not!

Mor. At least I will take an hour or two to think of it. Misfortune, disgrace, and approaching infamy, sit mocking at me; and I shall soon attain the acme of misery. *[Ereunt.]*

SCENE II.—The Street.

Enter CHEVERIL.

Chev. This is the street! it must be somewhere hereabout! What a fatiguing affair pleasure-hunting is! Oh! that I could once more meet my lovely angel! my Green-park deity! This is the number.

Enter LENNOX from Mrs. Enfield's House.

Heyday! Lennox coming from—You, who preach refinement of pursuit and delicacy of enjoyment?

Len. Oh! we preach one thing, and practice another. Beside, were you but to see her—

Chev. Her! who?

Len. The girl I told you of. The divinest creature—

Chev. What, here? In this house?

Len. Yes; but she shall not remain there half-an-hour. I am going to prepare every thing. I am determined to secure her.

Chev. *[Aside.]* Honest Grime has given him an introduction, too.

Len. Hush! there she is! *[Pointing to a window.]*

Chev. Where? I see nobody.

Len. Ah! she is gone again.

Chev. Oh! but I'll— *[Preparing to run.]*

Len. *[Seizing him.]* Where are you going?

Chev. To leap through the window.

Len. No, Cheveril; that must not be.

Chev. Why not?

Len. She is mine!

Chev. Your's?

Len. I have bought an exclusive right to her; paid a hundred pounds down.

Chev. Pooh!

Len. I tell you she is, and shall be mine!

Chev. Well, well; if so—

[Going.]

Len. *[Preventing him.]* Come with me.

Chev. No; I can't.

Len. Why not?

Chev. Good b'ye!

[Exit in haste.]

Len. Zounds! my d—d blabbing tongue—*[Looking after him.]* There he flies, the whirligig! Ah! he is out of sight, and all is safe. I must have Mordent's assistance. Where the devil does he loiter? I'll soon be back, though, for fear of accidents. *[Exit.]*

SCENE III.—The House of Mrs. Enfield.

Enter MRS. ENFIELD.

Mrs. E. *[Calling]* Betty!

Betty. *[Without.]* Ma'am?

Mrs. E. Who is that bounced through the back-door in such haste?

Enter BETTY.

Betty. I don't know, ma'am: a young—Hem! *[Exit.]*

Enter CHEVERIL.

Chev. I am safe here: I have tricked him! Your humble servant, madam. Your name is—

Mrs. E. Mrs. Enfield, at your service, sir.

Chev. You keep a—modish magazine, I think?

Mrs. E. Magazine!

Chev. Of ready-made beauty?

Mrs. E. Well, sir?

Chev. Your acquaintance, honest Mr. Grime, informed me you have a sample of a fine sort.

Mrs. E. Ah! you are too late.

Chev. My friend, Lennox, has paid you one hundred pounds. Don't stare! I know the whole. Bring me to the lady, and, if I like her—

Mrs. E. I am very sorry, sir, but I cannot; my honour won't let me.

Chev. Prodigious virtue! Come, come! Lennox is cunning forty; I am foolish one-and-twenty. He is too old to be a lavish paymaster.

Mrs. E. Ah! sir, that is your mistake! He is too young. He will pay better as he grows older.

Chev. I have eight thousand a-year, and am determined to be a—a—a wicked dog.

Mrs. E. Ah! lord love you.

Chev. So, see her I must. This is my proof.

[Shows a bank-bill.]

Mrs. E. As Mr. Lennox is your friend, perhaps you have his permission?

Chev. Permission! Oh! yes—No! I'll be wicked, but not unprincipled: I won't lie; that is a paltry scoundrel vice; no soul in it. Lookye! if that sum will not content you, tell me what will?

Mrs. E. Why, sir, you are such a handsome, charming, pleasant young gentleman, that—if you could spare me another such—

Chev. To settle accounts with your honour. Well, there.

Mrs. E. Observe, sir; it is only a short conversation.

Chev. Nothing more.

Mrs. E. No injury to Mr. Lennox?

Chev. Never fear.

Mrs. E. But you must be wary: young as she is, I never saw so acute a one.

Chev. Never fear! I tell you, I understand such affairs; or soon shall do, at least. I'm a young beginner, but a devilish apt scholar. [*Exit Mrs. E.*] Now, if she be worth carrying off, and I could outwit Lennox—I—Oh! I should establish my character for spirit, soul, and intrepidity for ever. I'll not be out of countenance. No, d—e, I am determined! I'll—P'll speak, and to the purpose, too! I'll be a d—d forward, prating, impudent, wicked dog.

Re-enter Mrs. ENFIELD, leading JOANNA.

Mrs. E. Ah! my lamb, pray oblige me! He is one of my best friends.

Joanna. What then?

Mrs. E. You are so sweet a cherub, I must procure my friends the pleasure of your acquaintance. Ah! there's a dove! there's a beauty! Dear! I forgot my knotting. I'll be back in a moment. [*Exit.*]

Chev. [*Calls.*] Mrs. Enfield! She is gone. I should have felt bolder, had she been present.

Joanna. It is very strange.

[*Aside.*]

Chev. What does she say?

Joanna. First one man, and then another—

Chev. [*Listening.*] Eh! Hem!

Joanna. Her friends, too, are all men—

Chev. Where the devil, now, is all my impudence flown?

Joanna. But she is so kind, so winning, that I have not the power to deny.

Chev. If I could but turn round—One plunge, and it would be over! [*Turns by degrees.*] Ma—Heavens! [*Stands astonished.*]

Joanna. [*Aside.*] Mercy! It is he!

Chev. [*Aside.*] The very beauty of the Green-park!

Joanna. [*Aside, and sighs.*] I had almost hoped never to have seen him more.

Chev. [*Aside.*] This is the luckiest—Lucky!—To find her here!

Joanna. [*Aside.*] I have thought of him much too often.

Chev. [*Aside.*] A creature so divine! Looks of such conscious modesty! And in this place!

Joanna. Sir—

Chev. Madam—[*Aside.*] Oh! that I might but touch her lips—

Joanna. Mrs. Enfield informs me you are one of her best friends.

Chev. Me, madam?

Joanna. Yes, sir.

Chev. Why—That is—[*Aside.*]—No; I'll not deceive her. [*Aloud.*] I—I never saw Mrs. Enfield before in my life.

Joanna. Never?

Chev. Never: and I don't care if I never see her again.

Joanna. Bless me!

Chev. Very true, madam. And I—

Joanna. [*Calling.*] Mrs. Enfield!

Chev. Stop, madam! Pardon my presumption, but—I—you—you have so much beauty, and modesty, and merit, and I am such a faltering, bashful booby, that, if you leave me, I shall run mad!

Joanna. Mad, sir?

Chev. Upon my soul I shall, madam. I can't help it. I never was so enchanted, enraptured, and ravished in all my life; and I am very sorry to find you—

Joanna. Sorry to find me?

Chev. No, no, no, madam! Glad to find you; in finitely glad; but not in this house.

Joanna. And why, sir?

Chev. I was frantic to think I had lost you.

Joanna. How so, sir? We are not acquainted.

Chev. I am sorry for it, madam; b—b—but I hope we shall be. I have been a very Bedlamite! I could neither eat, drink, nor sleep! I have dreamed of you every night! You have been in my head, in my heart, in my arms—

Joanna. Your arms, sir?

Chev. Oh, lord! no, madam; no, no; I—I am talking in my sleep now. I mean—that is—I would not offend you, madam, no, not for ten thousand thrones. Though to find you here is the greatest torment—

Joanna. Torment?

Chev. B—b—bliss! I—I—I would say bliss, madam; bliss ineffable! And if you would but leave this wicked place—

Joanna. I do not understand you, sir.

Chev. Purity of heart is the characteristic of your countenance; I am sure you are innocent; or, if not, I would give worlds that you were.

Joanna. This, sir, is the first time we have ever spoken together: what have you heard or seen of me, that should authorize you to doubt?

Chev. Nothing, madam; on my soul, nothing! Every motion, word, and look, speak virtue void of blemish. I would lay down my life to prove it, and to rescue you from this bad woman.

Joanna. From Mrs. Enfield?

Chev. An odious, vile—

Joanna. You make me half suspect you are as frantic as you describe yourself. She is the most benevolent of women.

Chev. Forgive me if I appear intruding; indeed my intention is good; but how long have you been in this house?

Joanna. Not four hours.

Chev. And how long acquainted with this woman?

Joanna. To-day was the first time I ever saw her.

Chev. She's innocent! she's innocent!

Mor. [*Without.*] I tell you, I will see her!

Chev. [*Alarmed.*] 'Sdeath! I hear my guardian.

Mor. [*Without.*] Lennox will be here presently.

Chev. [*Looking round.*] I must not be seen; but, for heaven's sake, let me speak to you once more.

[*Retires into a closet, from which he occasionally speaks.*]

Enter MORDENT.

Mor. [*Surveying JOANNA.*] Your humble servant, madam. [*Aside.*] She is, indeed, beautiful.

Joanna. [*Aside.*] This is the man of the portrait.

Mor. You are acquainted, I believe, with my friend, Mr. Lennox?

Joanna. I, sir? Not to my knowledge.

Mor. Did he not converse with you this morning?

Joanna. I have conversed with two gentlemen this morning: you are the third.

Mor. [*Aside.*] Lovely creature! Can she, too, be an instrument of malevolence? [*Aloud.*] I mean a fair gentleman, about forty.

Joanna. Well, sir, what of him?

Mor. Did he not make proposals?

Joanna. To me?

Mor. Ay, madam; on the common subject, the promoting of ill?

Joanna. You speak riddles. He talked idly; and, perhaps, was more unprincipled and insulting than I supposed.

Mor. [*Aside.*] By heavens, she is an innocent! Nay, her countenance would half persuade me there are beings capable of happiness.

Chev. [*From the closet.*] Zounds! He looks as if he, too, would fall in love with her.

Mor. Pardon my intrusion, madam; I am a stranger to you, but—

Joanna. Not entirely.

Mor. Not?

Joanna. I have been studying you all the morning.

Mor. Me? You never saw me before?

Joanna. Yes, I have.

Mor. When? where?

Joanna. [*Pointing to the picture.*] Here! in effigy.

Chev. What are they about?

Mor. My portrait! [*Aside.*] How dare the old beldam hang it up in her house?

Joanna. It speaks volumes; yet not so much as the original.

Chev. Oh! that I could hear them!

Mor. Indeed! And what does it say, madam? If it speak good, it lies.

Joanna. Either it indicates falsely, or you have flattered, promised, deceived, and betrayed—

Mor. [*Aside.*] Astonishing! Who?

Joanna. More poor girls than one.

Mor. [*Aside.*] Her eyes penetrate to the heart. [*Aloud.*] Evil is everywhere, therefore in me.

Chev. How she gazes at him! 'Sdeath!

Joanna. There is a mixture; traits that struggle to be just and good; occasional marks of virtue, but more of moody remorse.

Mor. [*Aside.*] Is this real? You judge and speak freely, madam: I applaud your sincerity.

Joanna. What should I fear? Besides, you have not the features of revenge.

Mor. [*Aside.*] Her understanding and discernment surpass her beauty.

Chev. Will they never have done?

Joanna. This eye, how often must it have assumed the same deceiving form and meaning, to have impressed these deep lines of artful seduction! How frequently must health, wealth, and principle, have been sacrificed, to gratify dishonest passions!

Mor. [*Aside.*] Amazing! So young, too!

Joanna. You are an unhappy man: for you have not the apathy of folly; you have a sense, a feeling of what you have done.

Chev. I shall go mad!

Mor. I have never had faith in sorcery: is it your profession?

Joanna. I have no profession. I am nobody; the child of nobody; a branch lopped off and cast away, that might have grown, but that could find no root. Misfortune and an active spirit, struggling to shake off oppression, have quickened me a little. Other than this, I am but a simple girl; and my whole art is to note what I see, and to speak what I think.

Mor. Whoever you are, come but with me; and, while I have a morsel, a home, or a heart, you shall share them!

Chev. [*Runs from the closet.*] D—e if she shall!

Mor. Why, Mr.—

Chev. She shall have my morsel, my home, and my heart!

Mor. You in this house, sir?

Chev. Nay, sir; you in this house, sir! Madam, put no faith in him. You are very right, he is a seducer. I love you, heart, body, and soul. I'll offer you no wrong. Every proof that the most ardent, purest passion can give, feel, or imagine, shall be your's.

Joanna. This house! What is it you mean, gentlemen? Is there contamination in this house?

Chev. Vile! detestable! A place of intrigue!

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Joanna. Heavens!

[*Exit in haste.*]

Mor. How came I, sir, to find you here?

Chev. Zounds! sir, how came I to find you here?

Enter Mrs. ENFIELD.

Mrs E. What have you done, gentlemen, to alarm the young creature in this manner? A little more, and she had escaped us all.

Mor. Hark you, Mrs. Enfield! at your peril, keep her safe and free from insult till my return. [*Exit.*]

Chev. Insult! If you breathe impurity in her presence, I'll make a general massacre. Let any one take her away, speak to her, or even look at her, while I am gone, and I'll grind you all to powder. [*Goes, and hastily returns.*] Here, here are all the bills I have; I'll be back in five minutes; keep her safe, and I'll give you a thousand pounds. My name is Cheveril—ten thousand! [*Returns.*] Cheveril—I say, my whole estate! [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—The House of Mordent.

ITEM and GRIME discovered.

Grime. [*Enraged.*] Once for all, Mr. Item, it will not do; so be of a sweet temper.

Item. Why, you grumbling old blockhead, what would you have? May you not thank me for every shilling you are worth in the world?

Grime. Don't tell me, Mr. Item, I am but your scavenger, and you put me to a deal of dirty work.

Item. Here's gratitude! Why, Mr. Grime—

Grime. Well, Mr. Item?

Item. Did I not first find you in a miserable garret in Fullwood's Rents, where you was starving in rags and wretchedness?

Grime. Well!

Item. Did I not take you to Monmouth-street make you cast your beggar's skin; transform you into something almost human; hire you apartments in the Temple; and pass you on my master for a rich usurer?—a d—d rogue!

Grime. Very true: but you would not let me act my part. You took care to be the d—d rogue yourself.

Item. Have I not trusted you, tutored you, taught you your trade, and furnished the tools?

Grime. What then?

Item. And do you pretend to bargain, wrangle, and prescribe terms to me?

Grime. Yes; I do.

Item. You do?

Grime. I do. Help yourself how you can.

Item. Here's a villain!

Grime. You tutored me, you know; you taught me my trade, and furnished the tools.

Item. You viper! Sting the bosom that fostered you?

Grime. I follow your own example: Mr. Mordent fostered you! There's morality in it.

Item. Oh! d—n your morality!

Grime. Be of a sweet temper! Time was I was your slave; you now are mine.

Item. Oh! the rascal!

Grime. I am too deep in your secrets for you to dare to discard me; so, I'll have my share.

Item. Your—

Grime. Ay, my—my full share. So, be sweet tempered.

Item. And who is to find the money?

Grime. You.

Item. And who is to run the risk?

Grime. You.

Item. And who is to be prosecuted for usury and collusion—

Grime. Cast, perhaps, for perjury, whipped, imprisoned, and put in the pillory? You.

Item. And you to run away with half the profits?

Grime. Yes.

Item. Here's justice! Oh! what a d—d world do we live in!

Grime. Your fortune is made; you must now help to make mine.

Enter DONALD, unperceived.

Item. Here's a villain!

Grime. You must, or I tell.

Item. What will you tell?

Grime. All; all the usurious tricks you have practised on Mordent: the arts by which you have cheated him of his estates, pretending that I am the man; your intention to foreclose; your neglect in not paying yourself interest, purposely to rob according to law; your plots to ruin Cheveril; all, all!

Item. You will tell all this?

Grime. I will.

Item. Why, you fiend! you superlative villain! you cut-throat!

Grime. [Seeing DONALD.] Hem! [Pause.]

Don. What the hornie de'el do ye stop at? What gars ye swither? I'ze haud my whisht! Yeer confabulation is unco entertaining.

Item. Ah! good Mr. Donald! here is my old friend, Mr. Grime, has—has—[*Aside to Grime.*]—You see what your villainy has done! [*Aloud.*] He is a good-natured soul, as you know—Scoundrel! [*aside to Grime*] and he—I—I—

Don. Ye! yas; yeer a sweet nut, gin ye war well crackt.

Item. I—I—I was bantering him: trying to—to—Villain! [*aside to Grime*] but nothing can put him in a passion—Oh! curse you! [*aside to Grime.*] nothing!

Don. The fient! Wow! but yeer a pauky Gilligapus!

Item. Do you want our good master, Mr. Donald?

Don. Aiblins yeer right, auld Clottie.

Item. He is gone out. Nothing but a joke, Mr. Donald: nothing else.

Don. [*Aside.*] Noo could I gi' him sic an a gowf o' the haffet!

Item. Can I—can my dear friend Mr. Grime—O, you thief! [*aside to Grime*] do you any service?

Don. Haud yeer blether, mon.

Item. Can we oblige you any way in the world?

Don. Yas.

Item. [*Fawning.*] How? how?

Don. Tak compassion o' the boodels o' yeer brother, Jack Ketch, and be yeer ain hangman! [*Exit.*]

Item. There, villain! you see what you have done.

Grime. Is it my fault? I tell you again, you had better be sweet-tempered. I shall say no more: you know my mind. [*Going.*]

Item. [*Aside.*] Oh! that I could poison him. [*Aloud.*]

Mr. Grime, Mr. Grime!

Grime. Well, Mr. Item?

Item. This quarrelling is very foolish.

Grime. Oh, ho!

Item. We are necessary to each other.

Grime. I know it.

Item. Your hand?

Grime. There.

Item. We are friends?

Grime. If you please.

Item. Well, well—[*Aside.*] D—n him! How I hate the dog—Concerning this Berkshire mortgage—

Grime. Ay?

Item. You shall have twenty per cent. on the premium.

Grime. That won't do.

Item. Thirty?

Grime. It won't do. Half; the full half.

Item. [*Aside.*] Hell take him! Well, my dear Grime, the half be it.

Grime. Together with my moiety of the thousand given with Joanna.

Item. Your—Hem! [*Sighs.*] You shall, you shall! Are you satisfied?

Grime. On those conditions.

Item. Where is the deed?

Grime. In that bag.

Item. Mordent is coming. I know he will, for I know he shall, sign. But that is not all.

Grime. What more?

Item. This d—d Scotchman will assuredly betray us to him; and Lady Anne's jointure prevents his being so entirely destitute as is necessary.

Grime. But how is that to be helped?

Item. Easily enough. You must convey information to her father and relations that he has a daughter.

Grime. Nay, but—

Item. Hush! Here he comes! I will give you my reasons and instructions when we are alone. Where is the deed?

Grime. Here, ready.—

Enter MORDENT.

Mor. [*In anger.*] What is the meaning, Mr. Item, that I see that upholsterer, and two other ill-looking followers with him, below?

Item. Nay, why ask me? why knit your brows at me? Can I coin?

Mor. Excuse me; I am a hunted bull, and butt at friends and foes.

Item. The insolent fellow insisted on taking possession; so, thinking you would not wish Lady Anne to know, I prevailed on him and the officer to remain in the hall, till I could speak to you. If I have done amiss, shew me in what.

Mor. No, no; I know your zeal. Why will you not advance two thousand pounds, for that and other immediate purposes, and delay signing, Mr. Grime? I ask only a day.

Item. Ay, Mr. Grime, why will you not?

Grime. [*With great gravity.*] Impossible

Item. Don't tell me; impossible, indeed! You ought to consent; it is your duty; nay, you shall consent.

Grime. I cannot; must have security.

Mor. Ha, ha, ha! Villain! Where is the deed?

Item. So, you will not, Mr. Grime? you will not?

Grime. I wish I could. But I am myself a borrower: the money is not my own.

Item. Hem!

Mor. Ha, ha, ha! D—n your rascally hypocrisy! Give me the pen.

Item. [*Holding his arm.*] Why, you will not sign, sir, will you?

Mor. Peace, fool! Cannot you see a wretch on the wheel, but that your bones too, must ache?

Item. [*Mor. signs.*] Ah! it is always thus: I may advise, but my advice is never followed.

Mor. [*Seals.*] "I deliver this as my act and deed." Here, implement of hell! I know your thirst, blood-hound! 'Tis ready-mixed destruction: take, quaff, and burst! Begone!

Item. [*Seizing the deed.*] Come, sir. My good master has sufficient reason to be angry with you. It was very unfriendly, sir, to refuse. You teach Mr. Mordent what he has to expect. [*Aside.*] All is now secure. [*Exeunt Item and Grime.*]

Enter DONALD, looking earnestly after them.

Don. Ha' ye signed? ha' ye signed?

Mor. Ask no question; yes.

Don. Weel, weel! Stark deed has nae remed. Twa wolves may worry ane sheep. I kam to tal ye that year glib gabbit steward, and his compeer, Grime, are two scoondrels.

Mor. Psha! Fool!

Don. I tell ye, they are twa d—d villains!

Mor. Grime, fellow—Grime—a paltry, gold-loving, ravenous rascal! But Item, a worthy man!

Don. He wordy! that fient! Marcy o' my soul! he is the prime cock deel o' the blackest pit o' hell! The malison curse catch 'em aw! 'Tis nae stick and stow sax minutes sin I heard aw their murgulied gab.

Mor. Hear?

Don. Yas, hear!

Mor. What did you hear?

Don. Item himsal confess that he had fletthered ye of aw yer estates; that Grime is nae nair but his flunkie; that it is his intantion to foreclose; that he has willfully neglected to pay himsal interest, for that he may claw ye according tul law; that there ha' been sham deeds; and that a plot is laid to felch Maister Cheveril of aw his walth.

Mor. Ha, ha, ha! You heard all this?

Don. Wi' my ain ears.

Mor. Ha, ha, ha! Item! Are you sure you heard this precious mischief?

Don. When did Donald tell ye a lie?

Mor. Ha, ha, ha! Item! I am glad on't! 'Tis right! 'tis consistent! 'tis delightful! Ha, ha, ha! Abraham's rejected prayer: not one honest man.

Don. Hoot awa! Nae onst? Nor ye nor the black clawed Lucifer himsal canna deny but that Donald is onest.

Mor. Item! Ha, ha, ha! Inestimable villain! And, I, too, thought him just and good! Oh! gull, gull, gull! Ha, ha, ha! [*Recollecting.*] Tell Mr. Clement I wish to speak with him.

Don. Noo the steed is stolen, ye wad steck the door. [*Exit.*]

Mor. Oh! the sharp-fanged wolf! Ha, ha, ha!

Enter LENNOX.

Len. Mordent! How now? How you look.

Mor. I am an ass; a most ineffable ass!

Len. What is the matter?

Mor. Ha, ha, ha! 'Tis proved upon me!

Len. Your mirth is of a strange kind.

Mor. The man whom I have trusted through life, ha, ha, ha! he whose rigid honesty—do you mark me? Ha, ha, ha! Honesty!

Len. Well?

Mor. Ha, ha, ha! whose honesty made me sometimes doubt the truth of the self-evident system of evil—ha, ha!—He's a rascal! A double-leagued hell-dog!

Len. Your steward?

Mor. Item. A deep, d—d, thorough-paced villain; that can bully, cajole, and curse—fawn, flatter, and felch. Ha, ha, ha!

Len. Be patient.

Mor. Oh, I am delighted! Ha, ha, ha!

Len. Be calm. You knew yourself to be in the power of a villain, and tis little matter whether his name be Grime or Item.

Mor. How? Ha, ha, ha! In a world of rascality, are not two rascals better than one?

Len. Nay, but attend to me. I want your help instantly, in Dover-street.

Mor. Dover-street?

Len. Yes.

Mor. It must not be.

Len. Eh! What's the freak now?

Mor. You can have no help of mine.

Len. Indeed, but I must!

Mor. I would not commit an injury on that girl, for worlds.

Len. Why, what conscientious mummery is this? You neglect your own child, and pretend to interest yourself for a stranger.

Mor. If the stranger be an angel of light, a beneficent being, why not?

Len. Beneficent! What, in this system of evil?

Mor. An exception to the rule. A rare exception.

Len. Like Item?

Mor. Psha! Hell!

Len. And may not your deserted daughter be equally an angel?

Mor. May she? If she should—I'll have no concern in the ruin of that girl.

Len. Harkye! Mordent, you are plotting.

Mor. I?

Len. No distress can cure you of your old propensities. You mean to trick me of her.

Mor. Ha, ha!

Len. 'Tis evident. Do you not affirm she cannot remain innocent in the house into which she is decoyed?

Mor. Granted.

Len. Marriage excepted, which would be madness, am I a man to treat her vilely?

Mor. Not worse than the malignity of fate ordains.

Len. Pooh! Cant! Cheveril, in the fervour of youth, is lunatic enough rather to marry than lose her.

Mor. Ay, ay; he is horn-mad to begin his career of wretchedness.

Len. And you, his guardian, from pretended pity to a stranger, will guide and spur him to the course?

Mor. Even so it is. Mischief here, mischief there; turn which way you will, mischief.

Len. Your word and honour are solemnly pledged. If you really wish the lovely creature's welfare, would preserve your ward, and prove your friendship and honest intentions, you will aid me.

Mor. Well, well, I am blind; I am but the tool of destiny; so be it.

Len. Your authority will oblige Mrs. Enfield to yield her to me.

Mor. No; my credit there is on the decline. Stratagem, stratagem!

Len. But how? What?

Mor. Convey a disguise to the girl.

Len. And so she will escape us all.

Mor. Escape! No, no; malevolence is the element of man, and I have an apt alacrity: I will instruct you. Come this way. Having her safe, you may post away with her to my commodious house in Park-lane. Fear not me. When Belial is busy, shall his progeny be idle?

Re-enter DONALD.

Don. Maister Clement is nae i' the hoose.

Mor. No matter!

Len. Come, come!

Mor. Oh! what an excellent gull is this image of the gods, this thing called man! [*Exit with Len.*]

Don. Ah! Wae's me! This poor lassy! I canna rest. I hirlie here, and gang hilyching there, till I'ze e'en ramfzeezled wi' the ripples. I wist nae where tul spier niest. My dool and thole will be my deeth! I' Gode's name, and wi' aw my hairt; for I'ze recht weary o' life!

Enter CHEVERIL in great haste, searching.

Don. Hoot, man! what is the bang?

Chev. My dear Donald, can you direct me where Mr. Item or Mr. Grime may be found?

Don. Donald diract ye tul sic an a pair o' scoondrels? Father Balzebub! but I wad at anes gar ye o'er-catch plague, pastilence, and famine.

Chev. 'Sdeath! they are both dead and buried, I believe; for they are neither here, nor there, nor anywhere else. Can you tell me where I can borrow a few thousands?

Don. Sir! Do ye tak me for a thief, or a steward?

Chev. I shall go mad. Oh! Donald, I left the most angelic girl your eyes ever beheld, at a wicked house. She must be friendless and fatherless, or she could not have been there.

Don. What's that ye red of angil and fatherless?

Chev. I am sure she is innocent. Vile as the house is, she is innocent.

Don. Wha? what she? what hoose?

Chev. I can't stay—I saw her first in the Green Park.

Don. Green Pairk?

Chev. She is now at Enfield's. A divine girl!

Don. What? Hoo? A menzfou' maikless lass?

Chev. Not twenty; yet with the penetration, wit, and understanding of the seven sages.

Don. The Green Pairk? Maircy misgi' me! Enfield's?

Chev. In Dover-street.

Don. I ken the place! A hoose o' hell! Gin it be—Quick, Donald, quick! [*Exit, hastily.*]

Chev. What is the matter with the honest soul? I don't know what sum that old harridan will require, but I can do nothing without money. I must have enough too, for I must make sure. I'll place her in safety and splendour: she shall be my queen.

Enter ITEM.

Ah! my dear, dear Item! I am the luckiest fellow on earth. I am in instant want of money.

Item. So am I: I have been in want of it all my life.

Chev. You must furnish me with ten thousand pounds.

Item. Ah! I wish I could.

Chev. 'Sblood! don't stand wishing, but give me the money.

Item. If my friend Grime were but here—

Chev. 'Sdeath and the devil, give me the money! I shall lose her! She'll be gone! I'll make over the seventeen thousand that is in Mordent's hands. I will, by heaven!—on the word and honour of a gentleman.

Item. The seventeen thousand?

Chev. I will.

Item. It is true, I have cash in hand; but not my own.

Chev. Zounds! never mind whose it is: let me have it.

Item. Why, if I could but manage the matter—I am but a poor old man, and it would be a little lift.

Chev. D—n your poverty and your cant!

Item. You are sure you understand—the seventeen thousand?

Chev. I tell you, yes.

Item. The risk will be very great.

Chev. Do you doubt my word?

Item. No, no; but—

Chev. But what?

Item. Your hand-writing on a stamp would be a memorandum.

Chev. You shall have it. Write a receipt for seventeen thousand; I'll sign it.

Item. [*Takes out an account book, lays it down; then takes out another book, finds a stamp, and writes.*] Ay, this is the thing. You remember the risk? otherwise, it might be thought—

Chev. Give it me, give it me! I have no time for thinking. [*Signs.*]

Item. I must borrow to replace it.

Chev. Will you come away, and let me have the money? Come, come, man. 'Sdeath! will you de-spach?

Enter CLEMENT.

Clem. Do you know where Mr. Mordent is, sir?

Item. No, sir. [*Cheveril hurries Item off; who puts up his receipt in one book, but forgets the other.*]

Clem. Mr. Mordent has asked for me; and, unfortunately, I cannot find him. I fear he has signed the mortgage. Oh, this uncle! Never was situation so excruciating as mine. Must I cast off all ties of blood, become his accuser, and, as the world would call it, betray my benefactor? Beside, what have I to reveal? my fears and my suspicions: unconnected facts, that can alarm, but not relieve. And who is it that I should thus impotently accuse? my own uncle. [*Sees the book.*] Ah! what have we here? As I live, his private account-book! The very thing he so carefully has concealed from all inspection. What shall I do? Deliver it to Mordent? What may be the consequences? Disgrace, infamy, and—Dreadful thought! I must not be rash. Hark! he's here. I must consider well. [*Exit.*]

Re-enter ITEM and CHEVERIL.—ITEM searches every place for his account-book.

Chev. You see there is no book here.

Item. I am certain I had it in my hand.

Chev. We have not quitted the room a minute; nobody can have been here since.

Item. We left my nephew here.

Chev. Well, if he has it, it is safe enough.

Item. I don't know that! If I have lost it, I shall never sleep again.

Chev. Come away; you have it somewhere, locked up safe.

Item. No; I laid it down here: I am positive of it.

Chev. Nay, but you see that is impossible. Come!

Item. If it be gone, I shall go mad.

Chev. Is it so valuable?

Item. I would not lose it for all I am worth in the world.

Chev. Come, come. What did it contain?

Item. My soul! my secrets!

Chev. Well, it certainly is not here. You must go! you shall go! I'll indemnify you.

Item. You can't.

Chev. I tell you, I will. [*Pushing him off.*] It is in your own room.

Item. [*Turning back.*] I hope so, I hope so! But my heart misgives me. Oh, lord! I'm undone!

Chev. [*Pushing him.*] Will you go?

Item. [*Turning.*] I am wretched!

Chev. [*Pushing him again.*] You won't?

Item. [Turning.] I'm ruined!

Chev. [Still pushing him.] Will you, or—

Item. [Turning.] I'm lost! I'm dead! I'm—

Chev. [Pushes him with more violence.] Furies and fire, begone. [Exeunt.

Enter MORDENT.

Mor. [Calls.] Mr. Cheveril! Mr. Cheveril! 'Tis impossible to stop him; but no matter, the plan cannot fail: Lennox, by this time, has her safe. Why, ay; I have advised, I have plotted, I have aided! And in what? why the ruin of an innocent; who, while I looked and listened to her, I would have lost my life to defend.

Enter Mrs. SARNET.

Mrs. S. My lady, sir, desires to know if she may have the honour to see you?

Mor. What is the matter now?

Mrs. S. Oh! as to that, let my lady speak; I have got ill-blood enough, because I would not take somebody's part. But that is all over.

Mor. What is over?

Mrs. S. I have told my lady, often and often, how a gentleman's proud spirit might be brought down; but she would never listen to my consultation before.

Mor. Before?

Mrs. S. "For, (said I,) my lady, you would be as merry as May, if you would but pluck up a spirit to take the earl's advice, and leave all base seducers to their own course."

Mor. You said so?

Mrs. S. Yes, I did! I should be no woman, if I would not take part with my sect! So we are all ready for moving; seeing as we are resolved. "For, (said I,) if he should fall at my feet, and cry his eyes out, I would not hear a word."

Mor. Indeed!

Mrs. S. Not but I have as tender a heart as another; but, then, I would sooner break his heart than my own.

Mor. What does this insolent gabble mean?

Mrs. S. Why, it means that my lady is coming to take her leave; and that, then, we shall be gone; and, then, it will be seen who will have most cause to repent.

Mor. [Aside.] Is it possible?

Mrs. S. I am sure, if I could have made folks happy, I would have done it with all my heart and soul: but the secret is out at last, and all is settled. Not but, for all I'm so glad, I can't say but I'm sorry in the main; for I'm sure some folks will be miserable enough; and, though they richly deserve it, one can't help feeling for them in one's heart. And so, sir, as, perhaps, I shall never see you no more, God bless you, and mend you [Exit.

Enter Lady ANNE.

Lady A. Mr. Mordent, I am driven upon an agonizing task, which a too painful sense of duty only could oblige me to execute.

Mor. Proceed, madam; apologies for feeling, or for inflicting pain, are quite unnecessary.

Lady A. Forgive me. Would it were to be avoided—You have a daughter?

Mor. Whence gain you that intelligence?

Lady A. From the Earl of Olderse.

Mor. And what is his authority?

Lady A. I know not: but I, it seems, have innocently been the cause that she is disowned and abandoned. Of such an act I cannot knowingly consent to be a moment guilty. The fatal period is come;

that separation which I so much have dreaded, is inevitable.

Mor. And you support your fate with patience.

Lady A. Cruel man! do I deserve this parting reproach?

Mor. You deserve! Who shall dare insinuate it?

Lady A. Happy days and past endearments rush upon my mind with sensations unutterable!

Mor. I know, I know I am the vilest of men!

Lady A. Far from saying, far from thinking so, I take my full share of blame. How do I know that the fault is not wholly mine?

Mor. [Agitated.] Madam, I—I—I request I may be tortured by anything but your candour.

Lady A. I know I have lost the envied art of making myself intelligible to your feelings: and how? you once were happy, tender, and prone to smile at every look and word of mine. Of what fatal errors have I been guilty, that should have wrought this change?

Mor. Oh, exquisite! Continue! my nerves are strung.

Lady A. To despair of recovering those inestimable blessings was quite sufficient; but to be the cause of banishing a child from a father's arms and heart—to cast it an orphan on a tempestuous world! No; whatever my other mistakes may have been, of that no tongue shall accuse me.

Mor. Right; let the guilt be all my own.

Lady A. And now, I have one last request to make, which I conjure you, by all our former affection, not to deny.

Mor. To ask favours, where there is neither the power to grant, nor the desire to be thanked, is fruitless.

Lady A. I am but too well acquainted with the state of your affairs—

Mor. A humane motive for parting. [Aside.

Lady A. The settlements you made on me, in our early days of love, were ample. In the sincerity of affection, I vowed, if ever they should be necessary to your happiness, that moment they should again be your's.

Mor. [Greatly agitated.] Madam!

Lady A. Pardon and endure this proof of my fidelity. The deeds are now in Mr. Clement's possession: he will restore them to you.

Mor. [Indignantly.] Never!

Lady A. Stop! Beware of rashness! You are a father, and have a father's sacred duties to fulfil. Take home your daughter: make her what amends you can for the desertion of a parent's love.

Mor. 'Tis too much! Scorpions could not sting like this!

Lady A. On this last occasion, suffer a gleam of former kindness once more to warm your bosom. Money is a poor vehicle for the affections of the soul—a contemptible token of the love I have borne you; but, such as it is, for that love's sake, give it welcome. A cold adieu I cannot take. It freezes my very heart. From my soul, I ever have loved, and ever shall love. Had I a heaven of happiness to bestow, would you but deign to accept it from me, it should be your's. [Exit.

Mor. Why, so, so, so! It rages! it bursts! it is complete! Let fate or fiends increase the misery, if they can.

Enter DONALD.

Don. It's past! it's aw o'er! My forebodings are fulfilled!

Mor. [Alarmed.] Have you not found her yet?

Don. Yes, yes; I ha' found her.

Mor. Have you? Where?
Don. I've noo, indeed, a rasca' go-between! But what are ye?

Mor. You say you have found her?

Don. She is gone! she is ruined! Ye're a wratch; the most meeserable o' wratches!

Mor. Tormenting demon! What? who? where have you been?

Don. To Dover-street.

Mor. [*Alarmed.*] Dover—

Don. Tul the elritch limmer Enfield.

Mor. [*With terror.*] What do you say?

Don. I was too late. A maister secondrel, ee'n as wecked as her ain father, had decoyed her intul his net.

Mor. Decoyed?

Don. Lennox, yeer friend, yeer crony!

Mor. From Enfield's?

Don. Ha' not I toud ye?

Mor. Lennox? Dover-street? Joanna?

Don. Hear it, gin ye can and live: Joanna! yeer child! yeer guileless Joanna!

Mor. [*Distractedly.*] Misery of hell! And was that Joanna? that my child? Celestial creature! and I the pit-digger! [*Pause.*]

Don. Sir!—Sir!—Maister!

Mor. [*Starting.*] I the pander! I cast her shrieking on the bed of infamy, and chain her in the arms of lust! Her father do this? [*Pause.*]

Don. Maister!—Dear maister!—Maister Mordent!—Dear maister Mordent! Speak! I've forgi' ye! Why, maister! I've pray for ye! I've die for ye! I've forgi' ye!

Mor. Fly! Summon the servants! Arm yourselves! follow me to Park-lane. [*Exit.*]

Don. William! Sandy! Jock! [*Exit, calling.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—The Green Park.

Enter MORDENT and LENNOX.

Mor. We are now in private.

Len. I am glad we are.

Mor. And now, sir, I insist on a clear and explicit answer. Where have you lodged Joanna?

Len. Nay, sir, where have you lodged Joanna?

Mor. Mr. Lennox, I will not be trifled with: where is she?

Len. Nor will I be trifled with, Mr. Mordent: I say where is she? The contrivance was your own. I know you. The moment you set your eyes on her, you began your cursed plots to secure her for yourself; and, when you found I would not give her up at your persuasion, you put them in practice, while you treacherously pretended to secure her to me. I tell you, I know you.

Mor. This will not serve, sir; it is all evasion.

Len. Ay, sir, it is evasion! cunning, base, d—d evasion! and I affirm she is in your possession.

Mor. Mr. Lennox, I am at this moment a determined and desperate man, and must be answered. Where is she?

Len. Sir, I am as determined and as desperate as yourself, and I say where is she? For you alone can tell.

Mor. 'Tis false!

Len. False?

Mor. Ay, false!

Len. [*Going up to him.*] He is the falsest of the false that dares whisper such a word.

Mor. Harkye, sir! I understand your meaning, and came purposely provided. [*Draws a pair of pistols.*] Take your choice: they are loaded.

Len. Oh! with all my heart! Come, sir!

Mor. [*Approaching sternly.*] Nigher!

Len. As high as you please.

Mor. [*Placing himself.*] Foot to foot!

Len. [*Both presenting.*] Muzzle to muzzle!

Mor. Why don't you fire?

Len. Why don't you unlock your pistol?

Mor. [*After unlocking it.*] There!

Len. Why do you turn it out of the line? [*Pause.*] I see your intention, Mordent; you are tired of life, and want me to murder you. D—n it, man, that is not treating your friend like a friend. Kill me if you will, but don't make me your assassin.

Mor. Nay, kill me, or tell me where you have lodged the wretched girl!

Len. Fiends seize me if I have lodged her anywhere, or know what is become of her.

Mor. Your behaviour tells me you are sincere; and to convince you at once that I am no less so, know—she is my daughter!

Len. Your daughter!

Mor. The honest, indefatigable Donald discovered her at Enfield's.

Len. Murder my friend, and debauch his daughter!

Mor. We are sad fellows. Again and again, it is a vile world!

Len. I'll seek it through with you to find her. Forgive me!

Mor. Would I could forgive myself!

Len. But it seems, then, she has escaped, and is, perhaps, in safety.

Mor. Oh! that she were! Donald used to meet her here, in the Green Park, about this time of the evening. [*Listens.*] I hear the sound of feet. 'Tis not a woman. Let us retire among the trees, and keep on the watch.

Enter CHEVERIL.

Chev. She is not here! she is gone! for ever gone! I shall never more set eyes on her! I'll fire that infernal Dover-street! I'll pistol Lennox! I may perambulate here till doomsday, and to no purpose. She would have been here, had she been free. Ay, ay; she is in thralldom; perhaps in the very gripe of vice. Furies!—Lennox is a liar! I'll cut his throat! I'll hack him piecemeal! I'll have her, or I'll have his heart! [*Walks among the trees.*]

Enter JOANNA, in man's clothes.

Joanna. Whither shall I run? where shall I hide? How fly the pursuits of wicked men, and women still more depraved? I have neither house, home, nor friend on earth; and the fortitude that can patiently endure is my only resource. What then? Have I not escaped the dens of vice? Oh, happiness! I have, I have! And rather than venture in them again, welcome hunger, welcome cold, welcome the bare ground, the biting air and the society of brute beasts.

Chev. [*Advancing.*] What can that youth want? Why is he watching here? [*Walks round JOANNA.*]

Joanna. As I live, the young gentleman I saw this morning. What reason can he have for being in this place? [*Aside.*]

Chev. He eyes me with curiosity. [*Aside.*]

Joanna. His intentions seemed good, for he first warned me against that wicked woman. [*Aside.*]

Chev. Who can say?—he may know her. He is a smart, handsome, dapper fellow: I don't like him.

Joanna. I am not now confined by walls and bolts:

there can be no danger. I'll speak. [*Aside.*] Pray, sir—

Chev. Well, sir?

Joanna. Have you seen a young person—

Chev. A lady?

Joanna. Yes.

Chev. With blue eyes, auburn hair, aquiline nose, ivory teeth, carnation lips, ravishing mouth, enchanting neck, a form divine, and an angel face?

Joanna. Have you seen her?

Chev. Are you acquainted with that lady?

Joanna. I am acquainted with a lady, but not an angel.

Chev. Ah! then it is not her. Perhaps you are her—her lover?

Joanna. Humpf! I—I love her.

Chev. You do? [*Aside.*] I'll be the death of him. And she loves you?

Joanna. Why—yes.

Chev. [*Aside.*] I'll put an end to him. Are you married?

Joanna. No.

Chev. You—you mean to marry her?

Joanna. No.

Chev. Is she, then, lost to virtue?

Joanna. Who dare suppose it?

Chev. Ay, who dare? I'll cut the villain's throat that dares.

Joanna. She has endured insult, constraint, and violence; but not guilt.

Chev. Guilt! no; not wilful guilt. Impossible! But, then, is she safe? is she safe?

Joanna. Dismayed by her family, exposed to the snares of vice, hopeless, helpless, not daring to approach the wicked haunts of men, she wanders forlorn and desolate, willing to suffer, disdaining to complain.

Chev. Tell me where! I will rescue, defend, protect, cherish, love, adore, die for her!

Joanna. Is your heart pure? Have you no selfish, dishonest purposes?

Chev. How came you to imagine, sir, that I, or any man, durst couple her and dishonesty, even in a thought?

Joanna. Meet me here to-morrow at ten.

Chev. You?

Joanna. You shall see her.

Chev. See her? Shall I?

Joanna. You shall.

Chev. My dear friend! I'll make your fortune! At nine?

Joanna. Ten.

Chev. Could not I see her to-night?

Joanna. To-morrow Joanna will meet you.

Chev. Joanna! Is that her dear name?

Joanna. It is.

Chev. Delightful sound! The sweet Joanna! the divine Joanna! My heart's best blood is not so precious as Joanna!

Joanna. But, pray, where do you live?

Chev. Joanna—In Portland-place.

Joanna. Your name?

Chev. Joanna—Cheveril: Hans Cheveril. Joanna—Be sure you don't forget.

Joanna. I'll be punctual. Who's here?

[*Hides behind a tree.*]

Chev. Joanna!—At eight did you say?—Where is he gone? Sir! Sir!

[*Exit.*]

Mor. [*Appearing.*] I heard the name repeated. [*Aloud.*] Who is it here that knows Joanna?

Joanna. [*Appearing.*] I do.

Mor. Sir! Do you? Well, and what? where? Is she safe?

Joanna. I hope so.

Mor. But where, sir, where?

Joanna. [*Aside.*] 'Tis Mr. Mordent. Why do you inquire?

Mor. For heaven's sake, sir, do not torment me by delay, but tell me where she is.

Joanna. I must not.

Mor. [*Seizes her.*] But, sir, I say you must, and shall.

Joanna. Sir, you mistake, if you suppose menaces can prevail.

Mor. Excuse me; I would give my right hand to know what it appears you can tell.

Joanna. I can tell nothing till I am first made acquainted with your true motives.

Mor. And will you inform me, then?

Joanna. Provided I am certain of their purity.

Mor. Know, then, that I pant for a sight of her once more, to do her the little justice that is yet in my power. Know, the wrongs she has received from me are irreparable, vile; such as could not have happened but in this worst of worlds. Know that I, her natural guardian, have been her actual persecutor; that I drove her to the abode of infamy; that I became the agent of her ruin, the plotter against her chastity, and that, when I had set the engines of darkness and hell at work to ensure her everlasting wretchedness, I then discovered—she was my daughter!

Joanna. Sir!—Your daughter? You—you my father?

Mor. How!

Joanna. [*Falling at his feet.*] Oh!

Mor. Can it be? My child? my Joanna? It is! it is!

Joanna. My father!

Mor. My child! And innocent?

Joanna. As your own wishes; or the word father should never have escaped my lips. This dress was the disguise conveyed to me, by which I effected my escape. I can suffer anything but dishonour.

Mor. A father! Oh! I do not deserve thee! Once again let me fold thee to my heart.

Len. [*Without.*] Zounds! sir!

Chev. [*Without.*] I insist, sir!

Joanna. I hear voices.

[*They retire.*]

Enter CHEVERIL and LENNOX.

Chev. Oh! for swords, daggers, pistols—

Mor. [*To Joanna.*] This way. [*Exit with JOANNA.*]

Len. Confound your impertinent freaks; they have stopped my mouth this half hour. I would have told you all I knew instantly, but for your insulting passion.

Chev. Did not you say you would not tell me where she is?

Len. I said I could not.

Chev. Why, then now!

Len. But I suspect I can tell more at present, if you will but hear.

Chev. 'Sdeath! then why don't you?

Len. Will you be silent? I had a glimpse of Mordent, this moment, in conversation with a youth.

Chev. Well?

Len. It was the identical dress I sent as a disguise to Joanna.

Chev. How!

Len. And I suspect that very youth to be Joanna herself.

Chev. [*Recollecting.*] By heaven, and so it is! In the possession of Mordent?

Len. Be patient; there is a secret. His claims supersede all others.

Chev. His claims! By every power of heaven and hell—

Len. Be patient, I tell you—she is his daughter!

Chev. Joanna! my sweet Joanna! his daughter?

Len. Even so.

Chev. His daughter! Huzza! My dear Lennox! [In ecstasy.] Huzza! Oh, lord! oh, lord! Huzza! His daughter! Huzza, huzza, huzza! [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—The House of Mordent.

CLEMENT and Mrs. SARNET discovered.

Clem. Are you sure it was Mr. Mordent?

Mrs. S. I tell you, sir, I was on the watch, and opened the door myself. Take care, my dear, said he, to the sham gentleman-lady; and handed her in as lovingly—The monster! My lady is bewitched! she is fabricated! she can't quit the house. I am sure he must have nailed an invisible horse-shoe to the threshold.

Clem. But how do you know this pretended youth to be a woman?

Mrs. S. Did not I hear? I held the candle full flare in her face; it was a perfect picter! I never saw the like. So she is to brought home, truly! Such maguanimous impudence! But I'll go to my lady.

Clem. Be cautious; you may do mischief.

Mrs. S. I don't care; I am resolved to stabilate and confound facts. So, then, having a sufficient dearth of proofs, we shall sail off in the charut, and be properly received by the earl, the viscount, and the bishop; and be squired into the hall; and be kissed for joy; and shall swim up stairs into the bosom of the family. [Exit.]

Enter CHEVERIL, hastily.

Chev. Dear Clement, have you seen Mr. Mordent?

Clem. No; I am in search of him, on affairs of the utmost importance.

Chev. So am I.

Clem. No less than the recovery or total loss of his mortgaged lands.

Chev. How?

Clem. I am in great need of advice, and should be glad to consult you.

Chev. Consult! 'Sdeath! man, I am in a hurry. I cannot rest till I have found him.

Clem. Nay, but on the decision of the moment his ruin or safety depends.

Chev. Indeed! If so, my impatience must wait. What is it?

Clem. I hear footsteps. This way. [Exeunt.]

Enter MORDENT and JOANNA.

Mor. Yes, dear girl, your rare endowments surpass my hopes; and, convinced as I am, that beauty is destructive, and wisdom impotent, I joy to find you thus adorned.

Joanna. Wait to know me better. I fear you should prize me above my worth.

Mor. How shall I reward it? Fool that I am, madman that I have been!

Joanna. This is my rich reward. [Kissing him.]

Mor. I have told you, in part, my desperate situation. If Grime would but give honest evidence—But of that there is little hope.

Joanna. My greatest fear arises from what you have said of Lady Anne. I must not, will not be the cause of separation.

Mor. Let me do her justice; she is a miracle of forbearance. I have hated and spurned at the kindness I did not deserve. Her perseverance in good has been my astonishment and my torture.

Joanna. Oh! that I could see you reconciled! Oh! that I could gain the love of such a lady.

Mor. Of that, sweet girl, you are certain. Lennox is with her; and by this, she knows your story; and I am sure adores your virtue.

Lady A. [Without.] Where is she?

Mor. I hear her.

Enter LADY ANNE.

Lady A. Oh! noble girl! [Embraces Joanna.] Forgive this rude tumult of affection, which I cannot restrain.

Joanna. Is it possible?

Lady A. Mr. Mordent, you are now a millionfold more dear to me.

Mor. I cannot bear it!

Lady A. Will you be my daughter?

Joanna. Oh, madam!

Lady A. Will you?

Joanna. Adversity I could endure, but this unhopd-for tide of blessings overpowers me.

Mor. Oh! how I hate myself.

Lady A. And why? Can you be ignorant of the virtuous struggles which have caused the conflict you have felt? The strength of these sensations shew how fitted you are to be great and good.

Mor. To be a—I dare not think!

Lady A. Indeed you are wrong. Had I not been guilty of a thousand errors, you never would have had occasion for this self-reproach. Like cowards, we both have shunned inquiry. Let us be more courageous; let us affectionately communicate our mutual mistakes, and while we examine we shall correct the mind, expand the heart, and render ourselves dear to each other, and beneficent to the whole world.

Mor. Oh! shame, shame!

Lady A. Nay, my love—

Joanna. My dear father!

Mor. Well, well, I will endure existence a little longer, if it be but to hate myself.

Enter CHEVERIL, who runs to JOANNA.

Chev. My life! my soul! my precious Joanna!

Mor. They will persuade me presently that happiness is possible. [Aside.] You have cause, child, to thank Mr. Cheveril.

Joanna. Oh! yes; he has a heart of the noblest stamp.

Mor. Ay, all angels except myself! I am cast into the shade; a kind of demon, grinning in the dark.

Chev. Come, guardian, dismiss those sombre familiars; they have plagued you long enough. Clement is in eager search of you, to communicate secrets of the utmost importance concerning his uncle.

Mor. The villain!

Chev. Yes; he is below, foaming with rage, and accusing every servant in the house with having stolen his book. I hear him: pray, keep back, my sweet Joanna! but for a moment. [Exeunt.]

Enter ITEM

Item. 'Tis gone! 'tis lost! I am undone! I am murdered! I am betrayed! I shall be prosecuted, pilloried, fined, cast in damages, obliged to pay all, to refund all! All, all, all! I'll hang myself! I'll drown myself! I'll cut my throat! Mordent has got it! All my secrets, all my projects, all my rogueries

—past, present, and to come! Oh! that I had never been born! Oh!

Enter CLEMENT.

Have you seen my book? Give it me! Where is my book?

Clem. What book?

Item. My account-book! my secrets! my soul! [*Feels CLEMENT's coat pocket.*] 'Tis here! I feel it!

Clem. Yes, sir; 'tis here! be pacified.

Item. I won't, I won't! I'll have it! Give it me! I'll swear a robbery! I'll have you hanged!

Clem. [*Shews a book.*] This book, sir, I consider as a sacred trust; part with it to you I must not.

Item. You shall part with it, villain! I'll have your soul! 'Tis mine! I'll have your heart! 'Tis mine! I will have it! [*Striking CLEMENT.*

Clem. You shall have heart, life and soul, first.

Item. [*Kneels.*] My dear nephew! my kind Clement! I'll supply all your wants; I'll pay all your debts; I'll never deny anything you ask; I'll make you my heir!

Clem. You are the agent of Mr. Mordent, whom, I fear, you've deeply wronged. I've a painful duty to perform; but justice must he obeyed: nothing must or shall bribe me to betray an injured man.

Item. I'll give you ten thousand pounds! I'll give you twenty! I'll give you fifty! Would you rob and ruin your uncle? would you see him hanged? [*Seizes him.*] Villain, I will have it! 'Tis mine! I will, I will!

Enter MORDENT, LADY ANNE, LENNOX, CLEMENT, GRIME, DONALD, CHEVERIL and JOANNA.

Mor. [*With the book.*] I am glad, Mr. Item, that your inattention, and your nephew's inflexible honesty, have afforded me the means of doing myself justice: that is all I require.

Len. Here is double testimony; your hand-writing and your agent.

Item. [*To GRIME.*] Have you impeached, then?

Grime. I am a villain, a rascal, a cut-throat!

Mor. Mr. Clement, your worth and virtue are beyond my praise.

Clem. If my conduct escape censure, it is more than I expect.

Mor. If it meet not retribution, all sense of justice is lost.

Joanna. [*To DONALD.*] My watchful guide! my never-failing friend!

Chev. Your hand, old boy! you and I must settle accounts. I am I know not how many score pounds a-year in your debt.

Mor. What, then, am I?

Joanna. And I?

Don. Hoot awa! Gin ye wad pay Donald, it mun nae be wi' yeer dirty siller; it mun be wi' yeer affactions.

Joanna. True, my noble protector!

[*Kisses his hand.*

Don. Why, ay, noo, that's a receipt in foo! It makes my hairt gi' sic an a bang!

Mor. Honest, worthy soul! and now to reconcile—

Chev. Come, come! make no speeches: I'll settle the business: I am the proper person. I have eight thousand a-year, and ten thousand in my pocket—Ten!—[*to ITEM.*] Is it ten or seventeen?

Item. Seventeen.

Chev. Joanna shall be queen of joy, pleasure, and happiness. Honesty, here, shall settle all his ill-gotten gains on his nephew; Lennox, as a bachelor's penance, shall marry his housemaid; you, guardian, shall change your system of evil for practical good; Lady Anne shall become more patient and kind—if she knows how; and old Moloch [*to GRIME.*] shall go and hang himself.

Len. Spoken like an oracle.

Chev. Why, then, toss up your caps! farewell to folly! long life to one and twenty! and mirth, health, and happiness to all!

Lady A. How strange are the vicissitudes of fortune! How have the storms of this memorable day risen, and increased even to horror! and now how bright the prospect, and how glowing the hope that it excites! Cherish it, kind friends, with your smiles; and, in the gentle slumbers of the night, let us joyfully dream that we still merit, and still obtain, your willing favour. [*Exeunt.*

THE END.

HE'S MUCH TO BLAME;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS,

BY THOMAS HOLCROFT.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

LORD VIBRATE
SIR GEORGE VERSATILE
DR. GOSTERMAN
DELAVAL
THOMPSON
WILLIAMS
HARRY
SERVANTS.

LADY VIBRATE
LADY JANE
MARIA
LUCY.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Hall of an hotel, with a spacious staircase.*

Enter the Master and JENKINS meeting.

Master. Why, where are all the fellows, Jenkins? Don't you hear the bell No. 9?

Jenk. Tom is gone up to answer it, sir.

Master. Who occupies that apartment?

Jenk. The handsome youth and girl, that arrived late last night.

Master. Just as I was going to bed?

Jenk. Yes, sir.

Master. He is quite a boy.

Jenk. Razor has never robbed him of a hair.

Master. Some stripling, perhaps, that has run away with his mother's maid.

Jenk. They ordered separate beds.

Master. Well, see what they want.

Jenk. Yes, sir.

Master. And, harkye! be attentive the moment you hear Lord and Lady Vibrate, or their daughter, stirring. People of quality must never be neglected.

Jenk. Oh! no, sir. Here is Doctor Gosterman.

[Exit.

Enter Doctor GOSTERMAN.

Master. Good morrow, Doctor.

Doctor. Coot morgen, my tear friend. Is de Fiprate family fisible to see?

Master. Not yet.

Doctor. My lordtship und my latyship was sharge me to mit dem betime.

Master. You are a great favourite there, Doctor.

Doctor. Ya, sair. Dat I am eferyvere.

Master. You act in a double capacity: physician and privy-counsellor.

Doctor. Und I am as better in de von as in de oder.

Master. Why, ay, Doctor, you have a smooth pleasant manner.

Doctor. Ya, sair. Dat is my vay. I mix de syrup mit all my prescription.

Master. Ay, ay, you are a useful person.

Doctor. Ya, sair. Dat is my vay. I leave Yarmany, and com at Englandt mit little money, und great cunning in de art und de science. I shall af de essence, und de cream, und de balsam, und de syrup, und de electric, un de magnetic, und de mineral, und de vegefable, und de air, und de carse, und de sea, and all dat vas subject under my command. So I make de nation benefit, und myself rich. Dat is my vay.

Master. Yes; you can tickle the guineas into your pocket.

Doctor. Ya, sair. Dat is my vay.

Master. You have had many patients?

Doctor. Ya, sair. I af cure tousand und tousand. Dat is my vay.

Master. And how many have you killed, Doctor?

Doctor. Der teufel, sair! Kill! Ven my patient vas die, dat vas nature dat vas kill. Ven dey vas cure, dat vas Doctor Von Gostermans. Dat is my vay. No sair; Doctor Von Gostermans vas kill himself, dat oder people may live.

Master. How do you mean kill yourself, Doctor?

Doctor. Der teufel, sair! Vas I not be call here? Vas I not be call dere? Vas I not be call eferywhere? I af hundred und tousand patient dat die efery day till I vas com. So I vas drive to de city; und dere I vas meet my besten friend, de gout, de apoplexy, und de asthmatica: und den I vas drive to de inn of court, und de lawyer; und dere I vas find more of my besten friend; de hydropica, de rheumatica, und de paralytica.

Master. What, Doctor, the lawyers and inns of court paralytic?

Doctor. Ya, sair.

Master. I wish they were, with all my soul!

Doctor. Und den I vas drive und make my reverence mit de Lordt, und mit de Duke, und mit de Grandee; und dere I vas meet mosh oder of my besten friend; de hypochondriaca, de spasmodica, de hysteric, de marasma, de morbid affection, de tremor, und de mist before de eye.

Master. Morbid affections, tremors, und mists before de eyes, de diseases of the great?

Doctor. Ya, sair. Und dey vas grow vorse und vorse efery day.

Master. Well, well, they have chosen a skilful doctor.

Doctor. Ya, sair. I shall do all deir business, efery von. Dat is my vay. I shall af de essence, und de cream, und de balsam, und de syrup, und de electric, und de magnetic, und de mineral, und de vegetable, und de air, und de earse, und de sea, und all dat vas subject under my command. Dat is my vay. Bote dat is as noting at all. Ah! sair, my liebste; you vas my besten friend. You make me acquaint myself mit all de patient dat vas come to your house; and so I vas your besten friend, und I vas gif de physic for yourself, und de physic for your shile, und de physic for your vife.

Master. For which my wife will never more thank you, Doctor.

Doctor. No; your vife vas die, und you vas tank me yourself. So now you tell me: af you any new customer dat vas com?

Master. Yes; a youth, and a girl that looks like a waiting-maid, arrived late last night.

Doctor. Which it vas a person of grandeur?

Master. Oh! no; wholly unattended.

Doctor. Ah, ha! Which it vas a lofing couple, den?

Master. It seems not.

Doctor. A poy and a vaiting-vomans! Dere shall be someting mystery in dat.

Master. So I think. Here comes de girl.

Doctor. Ah, ha! Let me do. I shall talk to her. I shall begin by make acquaintance mit her.

Enter Lucy.

Lucy. Pray, sir, desire de waiter to make haste with breakfast.

Master. Here, Jenkins! Breakfast to No. 9. Be quick.

Jenk. [Without.] Yes, sir.

Master. Tea or coffee, madam?

Lucy. Tea.

Doctor. How do you do, my tear? You vas pretty young frau; fery pretty girl, my tear. Perhaps you vas stranger, my tear?

Lucy. Perhaps I am.

Doctor. Ah! Vat is your name, my tear?

Lucy. That which my godmother gave me.

Doctor. Your mastair af made de long journey, my tear.

Lucy. Has he?

Doctor. From vat country you com, my tear?

Lucy. Hem!

Doctor. I ask, from vat country you com, my tear?

Lucy. Ask again.

Doctor. From de town of—eh!

Lucy. Ay. How do you call it?

Doctor. Dat is vat I vant you shall tell.

Lucy. I see you do.

Doctor. Your mastair is fery young, my tear.

Lucy. Thank you, sir.

Doctor. For vat you tank me?

Lucy. For your news.

Doctor. Ah, ha! You are fery vitty and pretty, my tear.

Lucy. More news. Thank you again.

Doctor. Vat vas you call de young yentleman's name?

Lucy. I will ask, and send you word.

Doctor. How long shall he be stay in town?

Lucy. Till he goes into de country.

Doctor. Vat is your capacity, my tear?

Lucy. Like your's, little enough.

Doctor. You not understandt me, my tear. Vat is your post, your office?

Lucy. To answer rude questions.

Doctor. Your mastair is a man of family?

Lucy. Yes. He had a father and mother, and uncles and aunts.

Doctor. Und tey vas tead?

Lucy. I am not a tombstone.

Doctor. Com, com, my tear, let you make me answer.

Lucy. Anan!

Enter Waiter.

Waiter. Here is the breakfast, madam.

Lucy. Take it up stairs. [Exit with Waiter.]

Doctor. Der teufel! A cunning yipsey! She has make me raise my curiosity. My tear! My tear! Com pack, my tear!

Re-enter Lucy.

Do my compliment to your mastair, und I shall make me mosh happy if I shall af de honneur to make me acquaintance mit him. My name is call Docteur Von Gostermans. I shall af de essence, und de cream, und de balsam, und de syrup, und de electric, und de magnetic, und de mineral, und de vegetable, und de air, und de earse, und de sea, und all dat vas subject under my command. I shall af de best recommendation for de honest docteur dat vas possible. My Lordt und my Laty Fiprate vas my besten friend. I vas practice mit all de piggest family in de uniferse. Docteur Von Gostermans vas know eferypody; und eferypody vas know Docteur Von Gostermans. You tell him dat, my tear.

Lucy. Tell him that! I cannot remember half of it. Are you, sir, acquainted with Lord Vibrate's family?

Doctor. Ya, my tear. I vas make friendship mit dem more as many year.

Lucy. And do you know where they are?

Master. To be sure he does. They are in this—

Doctor. Hush! Silence your tongue! Dere is something mystery. [Aside to Master.] If you shall make me introduce to your mastair, my tear, I shall tell him eferyting und more as dat, my tear. Vill you, my tear?

Lucy. I will go and enquire.

Doctor. Thank you, my tear. You are fery pretty girl, my tear; fery vitty, pretty—Ah! you are so sly, cunning, little yipsey, my tear. Ah, ha!

[Exit.]

SCENE II.—A Chamber.

MARIA discovered, in man's clothes, with a letter in her hand, and walking with anxiety. The Waiter enters and leaves breakfast.

Maria. [Reading the letter.] "Dear sister,—The letter I now write is almost needless, for I shall leave Italy and follow it immediately; having at last obtained intelligence of your faithless lover. I am sorry to inform you that, in addition to your unpardonable wrongs, I have my own to vindicate. But I have

threatened too long. You have heard of the Earl of Vibrate. He and his family are by this arrived in England; your betrayer accompanies them, and I am in close pursuit.—Paul Delaval.—In what will this end? Must they meet? Must they fight? Must one or both of them fall? Oh, horror! Shall I be the cause of murder? And whose blood is to be spilled? That of the most generous of brothers, or of the man on whom my first and last affections have been fixed. Is there no safety? no means?

Enter Lucy.

Lucy. Why, look here now, madam, you are letting the breakfast grow cold. You have been reading that letter again. I do believe I shall never get you to eat any more. Come now, pray, do take some of this French roll; and I'll pour out the tea. Do, pray do; pray do.

Maria. I cannot eat, Lucy; I am eaten. Terror and despair are devouring me.

Lucy. Dear, dear! What will all this come to? Did not you promise me that as soon as you had got safe to London in your disguise, you would be better?

Maria. Can it be? My kind, my gentle, my true-hearted George!

Lucy. True-hearted! No, no, madam, he was never true-hearted; or he could not so soon have changed, because his ill fortune changed to good. Everybody knows true love never changes.

Maria. What have I done? How have I offended? His caresses, his protestations, his tender endearments! Is then the man in whom my soul was wrapt, a vil—Oh!

Lucy. I declare, madam, if you take on this way, you will break my heart as well as your own. Besides, you forget all the while what you put on this dress and came up to London for.

Maria. Oh! no. It was, if possible, to prevent mischief—murder! They have never met; they do not know each other. But how shall I discover Sir George? Of whom shall I inquire?

Lucy. If you would but eat your breakfast, I do think I could put you in the way.

Maria. You?

Lucy. Yes.

Maria. By what means?

Lucy. Will you eat your breakfast, then?

Maria. I cannot eat. Speak.

Lucy. Why, I have just been talking to an outlandish comical Doctor, that says he is acquainted with Lord Vibrate.

Maria. Indeed! Where is this Doctor?

Lucy. He is waiting without; for I knew you would wish to speak to him.

Maria. Shew him in immediately.

Lucy. I'll tell him you are not well; which is but too true; though you must remember, madam, you are a man. So, dry your eyes, forget your misfortunes, and, there, cock your hat o' that fashion, and try to swagger a little, or you will be found out. You stand so like a statue, and look so pitiful! Lord! that's not the way. If you are timorous, and silent, and bashful, nobody on earth will take you for a youth of fortune and fashion. [Exit.]

Maria. If they should meet—Heavens! They must not.

Re-enter LUCY, with Doctor GOSTERMAN.

Lucy. My master is not very well: he eats neither breakfast, dinner, nor supper; and gets no sleep.

Doctor. He noder eat, noder drink, noder sleep! Dat is pad; fery pad. But dat is as noting at all,

my tear. Let me do. You shall see presently, py and py, vat is my vay.

Maria. Your servant, sir.

Doctor. Sair, I vas your mosh oblishe fery omple saifrant, sair. My name is call Docteur Von Gostermans. I shall af de best recommendation for de honest Docteur dat vas possible. I vas practice mit all de piggest family in de uniferse. Docteur Von Gostermans is know eferybody; and eferybody is know Docteur Von Gostermans. De pretty coquine young frau tell me dat you not fery fell. You not eat, you not drink, you not sleep. Dat is pad; fery pad. Bote dat is as noting at all. You tell me de diagnostic and de prognostic of all vat you vill ail; and I shall make you prescribe for de anodyne, oder de epipastic, oder de balsanic, oder de narcotic, oder de diaphoretic, oder de expectoratic, oder de restoratif, oder de emulsif, oder de incisif; which is eferyting so shveet and so delectable as all vat is possible.

Maria. Your pardon, sir, but I wish to see you on business of another nature.

Doctor. Ah, ha! Something of de prifate affair? Dat is coot. I shall be as better for dat as for de oder. I vas know de vorl. I vas know eferybody, and eferybody vas know me. Dat is my vay.

Maria. Perhaps, then, you happen to know Sir George Versatile?

Doctor. Oh! der teufel, sair! Ya, ya. Sair Shorge is my besten friend. Which it vas six month dat he vas succeed to his title and estate; und den I vas make acquaintance mit him. Dat is my vay.

Maria. But he has been abroad since.

Doctor. Ya, sair. Ven he vas poor, he vas fall in lofe mit fery pretty young frau. Bote so soon as he vas become rish paronet, dat vas anoder ting. So, his relation und his friend vas sent him to make de gran tour.

Maria. And he was easily persuaded.

Doctor. Ya, sair. He vas vat you call fery coot nature; he vas alway comply.

Maria. Compliance with him is more than a weakness; I fear it is a vice.

Doctor. So, he vas make acquaintance mit Lordt and mit Lady Fiprate; und den he vas tink no more of de pretty young frau, because he vas fall in lofe mit anoder.

Maria. Sir! Another! What other?

Doctor. Vat you shall ail, sair? You shange couleur.

Maria. With whom has he fallen in love?

Doctor. Mit te taughter of Lordt Fiprate.

Maria. With Lady Jane?

Doctor. Ya, sair; mit Laty Shane. My Cot! sair, vat you shall ail? You not make fall in lofe yourself mit Laty Shane?

Maria. No, no. They are, no doubt, to be married.

Doctor. My Cot! sair, you so pale as death. My Cot! you shall faint.

Lucy. Faint, indeed! Bear up, madam. [Aside.] My master is too much of a man to faint. I'll run for a glass of water. [Exit.]

Maria. The charming Lady Jane! Where is she?

Doctor. My Lordt und my Laty Fiprate und my Laty Shane vas all in de house here.

Maria. In this house?

Doctor. Ya, sair.

Maria. And is Sir George here, too?

Doctor. He is cum und go alway sometime efery tay.

Maria. Are they to be married?

Doctor. My Cot! sair, you af de ague fit.

Maria. Are they to be married?

Doctor. My Laty Fiprate vas mosh incline to Sair Shorge; und my Lordt vas sometime mosh incline

too; und den he vas sometime not mosh incline; und den he vas doubt; und den he vas do me de bonneur to consult mit me.

Maria. And what is your advice?

Doctor. My Lord Fiprate vas my besten friends, und I vas adifice dat he shall do all as vat he please: und Sair Shorge vas my besten friends, too, und I vas adifice dat he shall do all as vat he please; und my Laty Fiprate vas petter as my besten friends, und den I vas more adifice dat she shall do all as vat she please.

Maria. But Lady Jane had another lover.

Doctor. Ya, sair. Mr. Delafal vas make lofe mit her. He vas com from de East Indie, und he vas lofe her fery mosh; und she vas go mit de family to Italy, und my Laty Fiprate vas make acquaintance mit Sair Shorge, because he vas so mosh pleasant und coot humeur, und he say all as vat she say; which vas de vay to alway make agreeable.

Maria. Could you do me the favour to introduce me to Lady Jane?

Doctor. Ya, sair, I shall do all as vat shall make agreeable. Dat is my vay.

Re-enter LUCY, hastily.

Lucy. [*Aside to MARIA.*] Oh! madam, don't be terrified, but I declare I have spilled almost all the water.

Maria. What is the matter?

Lucy. He is come.

Maria. Who? Sir George?

Lucy. No; don't be frightened: Mr. Delaval, from abroad.

Maria. My brother! Heavens! Did he see you?

Lucy. No. I had a glimpse of him, and whisked away just as he stepped out of the post-chaise.

Maria. Should he meet me in this disguise, what will he say?

Lucy. Send away the Doctor, and let us lock ourselves up.

Maria. [*To the Doctor.*] I must beg you will excuse me, sir; but it is necessary, at present, I should be alone. With your permission I will see you again in the afternoon; and, in the meantime—

[*Gives him money.*]

Doctor. Oh! sair, I vas your mosh oblishe fery omple sairfant, sair. I shall make you mosh more fit; und den you shall tell me de diagnostic und de prognostic of all vat you vill ail.

Lucy. Yes, yes; another time.

Doctor. Und I shall af de essence, und de cream, und de balsam, und de syrup, und de electric, und de magnetic, und de mineral, und de vegetable, und de air, und de earse, und de sea, und all dat vas subject under my command.

Lucy. You have told us all that before.

Doctor. Und I shall make you prescribe for de anodyne, oder de epipastie, oder de balsamic, oder de soporific, oder de narcotic, oder de diaphoretic, oder de expectoratif, oder de restoratif, oder de emulsif, oder de incisif, which is eferyinging so shweet und delectable as all vat is possible.

Lucy. Was ever anything so provoking? [*Aside.*] Pray, sir, make haste.

Doctor. You shall make remembrance of Docteur Von Gostermans. I am practice mit all de piggest family in de uniferse. Sair, I vas your mosh oblishe fery omple sairfant, sair. [*Ereunt.*]

SCENE III.—*The Hall of the Hotel.*

Enter DELAVAL, WILLIAMS, Master, and JENKINS.

Del. Is the portmanteau safe?

Wil. Yes, sir.

Del. And the trunks?

Wil. All right.

Del. Have you paid the postillions?

Wil. Yes, sir.

Master. [*To DEL.*] This way, if you please, sir.—
Jenkins!

Jenk. Coming, sir.

Master. Shew the damask room. What will you please to have for breakfast, sir?

Del. Nothing.

Master. Sir?

Del. Anything.

Master. Bring tea, coffee, and new-laid eggs.

Jenk. In a minute, sir.

Del. [*To WIL.*] Observe the directions I gave you. Inquire immediately, and find if the Vibrate family be in town.

Wil. I will be careful, sir. Eh! Sir, sir!

Del. Well?

Wil. Look! Here comes Lord Vibrate's secretary.

Enter THOMPSON.

Del. Mr. Thompson!

Thom. Ah! Mr. Delaval, I am heartily glad to see you in England.

Del. Thank you, my good friend. But how is this? Where is the family? Where is Lady Jane?

Thom. I thought that would be your question. They are all in this house.

Del. Indeed!

Thom. I knew, when Lady Jane left Italy, your stay there would be short.

Del. Ay, ay; the follies and frenzies of the madman are visible to all eyes except his own.

Thom. I see you are dissatisfied.

Del. Tortured, till my thoughts and temper are so changed that I am almost as odious to myself as the world is become hateful to me.

Thom. I own you have some cause.

Del. Would my injuries were all! But there are other and still deeper stabs. It is not yet ten months since I returned from India; my heart how light, my eye how cheerful, and my hand prompt at any commendable act. I could then be moved to joy, and sorrow, and every sympathising passion. Smiles and mock courtesy passed current on me; the word of man and woman was taken on trust, and I lived in the sunshine of an open, unsuspecting soul. But I am now otherwise taught. I am changed. My better part is brutalized; and the wrongs that lie ranking here have stripped me of human affections, and made me almost savage.

Thom. What can be said? Patience is the—

Del. Talk not of patience: I must act. I may then, perhaps, inquire whether I have acted rightly. But I must first see Lady Jane, and Lord Vibrate.

Thom. Shall I inform his lordship of your arrival?

Del. By no means. Having injured, he may wish not to see me; and I would not afford him time to invent excuses, and avoid giving me a hearing. Though my wrongs must be endured, they shall be told.

Thom. I own they are great.

Del. Those that you know are heavy; yet, severe as the struggle would be, 'tis possible they might be hushed to rest; but there are others which blood only can obliterate; which can only sleep in death. Such is the road I must travel. Not long since nature was jocund, the azure heavens were bright, and pleasure was in every path, but now darkness, fathomless gulphs, guilty terrors, and all the dreadful phantoms of meditated desolation, lie before me. [*Ereunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Lord VIBRATE discovered at a table, reading a book.

Lord V. The ancient sceptics doubted of everything, affirmed nothing, and kept the judgment always in suspense. All things, said they, are equally indifferent, uncertain, and indeterminate. The mind is never to assent to anything; that it may never be astonished, or disturbed, but enjoy a perfect calm. [*Rises, with important wisdom in his looks.*] Such were the maxims of Pyrrho, and his disciples; those renowned sages of antiquity! Well! And such, too, have been my maxims, practically. All my life have I been wavering, uncertain, and indeterminate. A sagacious sceptic without knowing it; and, as it were, by instinct. It was but lately I discovered what a wise man I am. And yet, it seems to me as if I were scarcely half wise enough, for I am told that I am to doubt of everything, which I find rather difficult. For example: that my wife Lady Vibrato is an extravagant, racketty, rantipole woman of fashion; can I doubt that? No. That she squanders my money, disturbs my peace, and contradicts for contradiction's sake; can I doubt that? No. Then, have I not a daughter to marry, a law-suit to begin, and a thousand perplexing affairs, so that I do not know which way to turn? Why, all this appears true to me; but the sceptics teach that appearances deceive, and that nothing is certain. I may be Lord Vibrato, or I may be the Grand Turk. These doctrines are prodigiously deep. [*Considers.*] But I must think of something else just now. I have a thousand things to do, and know as little where to begin as where they will end. Ay; all is uncertainty. [*Rings.*] Harry! Edward!

Enter JENKINS.

Jenk. Did your lordship call?

Lord V. Where are my servants? I want some of my plagues.

Jenk. They are ready at hand, my lord. Here is your lordship's secretary. [*Exit.*]

Enter MR. THOMPSON.

Lord V. What is the reason, Mr. Thompson, that nobody waits? Here am I, fretting myself to a mummy for the good of my family, while everybody about me is as drowsy as the court of common-council after dinner. Have they taken laudanum? Are they in a lethargy? Are they all dead?

Thom. If they were, your lordship would have the goodness to raise them.

Lord V. Don't you know how many people I have to see, and places I have to go to?

Thom. No, my lord.

Lord V. Why, did not I tell you?

Thom. Yes, my lord.

Lord V. Then how can you say you don't know?

Thom. Because I venture to presume, my lord, you do not know yourself.

Lord V. I am distracted with doubts. Harry!

Enter HARRY.

Harry. Did your lordship call?

Lord V. Where are you all? What are you about? I think you have lived long enough with me to know my way.

Harry. Yes, my lord; we know it very well.

Lord V. If you are not more attentive, I'll discharge you every one.

Harry. Oh! no; you will not do that. [*Aside.*]

Lord V. What are you muttering, sirrah?

Harry. Only, my lord, that we know your way.

Lord V. Order the coach at eleven.

Harry. Yes, my lord.

Lord V. No; order it at one.

Harry. Yes, my lord.

Lord V. Come back. Order it in ten minutes, and remember I am not at home. Come back. Don't order it at all.

Harry. Must visitors be admitted?

Lord V. Yes—No—I cannot tell. I will consider. Be within call. Thompson! [*Exit Harry.*]

Thom. My lord?

Lord V. Step to that picture-dealer. I will have the Guido. Yet, 'tis a great sum. No—it is a master-piece. I must have it. Why don't you go?

Thom. The picture is sold, my lord.

Lord V. Sold! Gone! Have I lost it? This is always the way. I am for ever disappointed. Harry!

Re-enter HARRY.

Harry. My lord.

Lord V. Did you go with the message to the stable-keeper, last night?

Harry. Yes, my lord.

Lord V. Let me know when he comes.

Harry. He will come no more, my lord.

Lord V. Come no more?

Harry. No, my lord.

Lord V. Why so?

Harry. He says you never know your own mind, my lord.

Lord V. Insolent fellow!

Harry. Doctor Gosterman is below.

Lord V. Admit him.—Stay.—I cannot see him yet. In half-an-hour. In ten minutes. By-and-by. [*Exit Harry.*] I must not waste my time in these trifles. I must attend to this law business. I wish I could determine. What am I to do, Thompson?

Thom. In what, my lord?

Lord V. The affair of the ejectment. If I once embroil myself in law, there will be no end; and if I do not, the consequences are still worse.

Thom. Then they are bad, indeed, my lord.

Lord V. 'Tis strange that I can come to no resolution on this subject.

Thom. [*Aside.*] Nor on any other.

Lord V. I must decide this very day, or the time will be elapsed.

Thom. A lawyer, I should suppose, my lord, would give you the best advice.

Lord V. How? Are you mad, Thompson? A lawyer give good advice?

Thom. The present possessor has held the estate twenty years.

Lord V. Not till to-morrow. I have time still to make my claim. How shall I act? Shall I never leave this hotel? Has the builder been here?

Thom. No, my lord.

Lord V. I can get nothing done. My whole life long I have been distracted with the multiplicity of my affairs.

Thom. And so, I am afraid, my lord, you always will be.

Lord V. Why so, sir?

Thom. Because your lordship undertakes so much, and does so little.

Lord V. So, he has not been here?

Thom. No, my lord.

Lord V. Nor the lawyers?

Thom. No, my lord.

Lord V. Nor my steward?

Thom. No, my lord.

Lord V. Nor Sir George?

Thom. No, my lord.

Lord V. Where is Lady Vibrate? Where is Lady Jane? Are they all in their graves? Have none of them shewn signs of life yet?

Thom. Not one. Your lordship is the only person in the family who begin your miseries so soon in a morning.

Lord V. The crosses and cares that prey upon me are enough to make any man on earth miserable.

Thom. Pardon me, my lord, but if you would care less, both yourself and your servants would sleep the more. My lady cares for nothing; and she can sleep when she is in bed; and sing, and dance, and laugh at your lordship's cares and fears when she is up.

Lord V. She will drive me mad.

Thom. Ah! here she is, as it were, for the purpose.

Lord V. Tell Harry to admit the Doctor—No; not just yet. Yes. In five minutes. I don't know when.

[*Exit Thompson.*]

Enter LADY VIBRATE.

Lady V. Upon my honour, my lord, you are the most insupportable person imaginable. You vociferate worse than the man who calls when my carriage stops the way. Is anybody dying? Is the house on fire? Is the world at an end?

Lord V. By the life your ladyship leads, I should suppose it is pretty near.

Lady V. You always give me such shocking headaches of a morning.

Lord V. You always give me such shocking heart-aches of an evening.

Lady V. Did not I send to you last night, to request your lordship would not disturb me?

Lord V. It has been your ladyship's amusement to disturb me all your life.

Lady V. Your lordship knows I love amusement.

Lord V. I have not slept a wink since.

Lady V. You had slept quite enough before. Pray, how long are we to remain in this hotel? Your lordship should remember, it is degrading for a man of rank to doze away life in the style of a colonel reduced to half-pay.

Lord V. Your ladyship should remember, it is degrading for a woman of rank to riot away life, and reduce her creditors to live without pay.

Lady V. Psha! That is the old story.

Lord V. But it is a very true story. It is a great misfortune that persons so opposite should pair.

Lady V. A terrible one, indeed. I am all gaiety and good humour; you are all turmoil and lamentation. I sing, laugh, and welcome pleasure wherever I find it; you take your lantern to look for misery which the sun itself cannot discover.

Lord V. I am overwhelmed by crosses and vexations; and you participate in none of them.

Lady V. No. Heaven be praised!

Lord V. Will you attend to me, my lady, for half-an-hour?

Lady V. Mercy! Attend to you for half-an-hour? You, my lord, may think proper to be as miserable as Job; but I am not Job's wife.

Lord V. I insist, Lady Vibrate, on a serious answer. How ought I to act? What should I do, in this law affair?

Lady V. I cannot tell what you ought to do; but I know what you will do.

Lord V. Do you? What?

Lady V. Nothing.

Lord V. The recovery of this property would enable me to give my daughter a portion suitable to

her rank. If it be lost, she will be almost destitute of fortune.

Lady V. You should have thought of that before, my lord.

Lord V. Before! Why, I have thought of nothing else for years. I have asked everybody's advice.

Lady V. And followed nobody's.

Lord V. It shall be so. The ejectment shall be served: proceedings shall commence.

Lady V. Ha, ha, ha!

Lord V. I say they shall. I am determined.

Lady V. Ha, ha, ha! I know you, my lord.

Lord V. You know! I say they shall, if it be only to prove that you know nothing of the matter.

Lady V. Ha, ha, ha! A pleasant motive! But even that will not be strong enough.

Lord V. But it will, my lady.

Lady V. But it won't, my lord.

Enter Doctor GOSTERMAN.

Lord V. I say it will, my lady.

Lady V. I say it won't, my lord.

Doctor. Coot morgen, to my coot lordt und my coot laty.

Lord V. For heaven's sake, Doctor, stop my lady's tongue.

Lady V. For heaven's sake, Doctor, give my lord a quieting draught.

Doctor. I shall do eferyting as vat you desire, my coot lordt und my coot laty.

Lord V. Can nothing silence you, Lady Vibrate? Shall I never have a quiet hearing? I wanted to talk with you and the Doctor on a thousand things.

Lady V. Yes; you wish to have all the talk to yourself.

Lord V. On the marriage of our daughter.

Lady V. Oh! with all my heart. A marriage, at least, begins with music, feasting, and dancing. So say on.

Lord V. I am not yet determined in favour of Sir George.

Lady V. But I am. [*While they speak, the Doctor gesticulates in favour of each.*]

Lord V. Mr. Delaval is an objectionable gentleman; and he was the first suitor.

Lady V. Sir George can sing; Sir George can dance; Sir George has air, grace, fashion, and fortune.

Lord V. Psha! His best qualities are prudence, and attention to his own concerns. Ask the Doctor.

Doctor. He has fery mosh prudence, my coot lordt.

Lady V. Ha, ha, ha! I vow, Sir George is the most airy, thoughtless, pleasant person living, except myself.

Doctor. Ya, Sir Shorge is fery mosh pleasant; und my latyship is fery mosh more pleasant.

Lord V. Absurd! His humour is calm, cold, and serious.

Doctor. Fery serious, inteed.

Lady V. Whimsical, animated, delightful.

Doctor. Fery animate, fery tightful, upon my vordt.

Lord V. I never met a more discreet, sensible man in my life.

Lady V. True: for he thinks of nothing but his pleasures.

Lord V. His affairs, you mean.

Lady V. I tell you, my lord, he is exactly what I wish: the very soul of levity, whim, and laughter.

Lord V. I tell you, my lady, he is exactly like myself; prudent, and full of sage hesitation. He considers before he acts. Does he not, Doctor?

Doctor. Dat vas all yust as vat you say, my coot lordt.

Lady V. He never considers at all. Does he, Doctor?

Doctor. Dat vas all yust as vat you say, my coot laty.

Lord V. How so? We cannot both be right.

Doctor. You shall please to make me parton, my coot lordt. Sair Shorge vas all as vat you say; und all as vat my coot laty say. Mit my laty, he vas merry; mit my lordt he vas sad. Mit my laty he vas laugh, und vas sing, und vas tance; und he vas make melancholy, und misery, und vas do all dat shall make agréable mit my lordt.

Lord V. Is he so variable?

Doctor. Ya, he vas fery mosh comply; fery mosh coot humeur. He vas alway make agréable. Bote vas my lordship und my latyship know dat Mr. Delafal vas com from Italy?

Lady V. Come where? To England?

Doctor. He vas in de house below. I vas see und speak mit his falet.

Lord V. In this hotel?

Doctor. He vas yust arrife, und vas demandt dat he shall see my lordship; oder my latyship.

Lady V. I am very sorry he is here. He is a dun of the most disagreeable kind, and shall not see me; and I hope, my lord, you will no longer permit his addresses to Lady Jane. My word is given to Sir George. Come with me, Doctor. *[Exit with the Doctor.]*

Enter MR. DELAVAL.

Del. Pardon me, my lord, if I intrude with too little ceremony. Something, I hope, will be allowed to a mind much disturbed, and a heart deeply wounded, and impatient to ease its pangs.

Lord V. Which way deeply wounded, Mr. Delaval?

Del. Can your lordship ask? Was it not with your permission I paid my addresses to Lady Jane? And was the ardour of my affection or the extent of my hopes unknown?

Lord V. Why, I did permit, and I did not. I had my doubts.

Del. My visits were daily, their purpose was declared, and I should imagine I spoke more respectfully to say, that you permitted, than that you con- vined at them.

Lord V. True: but still I had my doubts.

Del. Those doubts have stung me to the soul; and I could wish you had expressed them more decidedly.

Lord V. Impossible! Doubts here, doubts there, doubts everywhere. No rational man can be decided on any point whatever. My doubts are my continual plagues; my whole life is consumed by them.

Del. It appears, my lord, you have conquered them on one subject.

Lord V. Ay, indeed. I wish to heaven I had! What subject is that?

Del. You have affianced your daughter to Sir George Versatile.

Lord V. Humph! Yes, and no. I have and I have not. I cannot determine. Sir George is a prudent man, his estate is large, and the Versatiles are an ancient race. But your family is ancient, you are prudent, and the wealth left by your uncle is at least equal. What can I say? What can I do? I don't know which to take nor which to refuse. I am everlastingly in these difficulties. I am harassed night and day by them; they are the nightmare, they sit upon my bosom, oppress me, suffocate me. I cannot act. I cannot move.

Del. This, my lord, may be an apology to yourself, but the consequence to me is misery. Your daughter lived in my heart; with her I had promised myself ages of happiness; and had cherished a passion, impatient, perhaps, but ardent and pure as her own thoughts. This passion your conduct authorized. My fortune, my life, my soul, were devoted to her. Mine was no light or wanton dalliance; nor did I expect a light and wanton conduct from the noble family of which your lordship is the head.

Lord V. What do you mean, Mr. Delaval? I told you I was undecided; and so I am still. My lady, you know, was never much your friend. Sir George is her favourite.

Del. And is Lady Jane equally changeable?

Lord V. I don't know. She is my daughter; and, judging by myself, I should suppose she is perplexed and doubtful. She never, I believe, declared in your favour.

Del. Not expressly, my lord. She referred me to time and you. 'Tis true, I flattered myself her affections were wholly mine. Should she prefer Sir George, or any other man, be my feelings what they will, I am then silenced. My heart could not be satisfied with cold compliance; oh! no; 'tis of a different stamp. I am told she is not at home. I hope, however, she will not have the cruelty to deny me a last interview: till then I take my leave. Only suffer me to remark that, had you discovered in me any secret vice, any defects dangerous to the happiness of the woman I adore, you then were justified in your present conduct. But, if you have no such accusation to prefer, I must do my feeling the violence to declare, I cannot but think it highly unworthy of a man of honour. *[Exit.]*

Lord V. Mr. Delaval! Insolent! Highly unworthy of a man of honour! I will challenge him. He shall find whether I am a man of honour, or no. I will challenge him. Harry!

Enter HARRY.

Harry. My lord.

Lord V. Run, tell that Mr. Delaval—Hold—Yes, fly; tell him—Stay; get me pen, ink, and paper: I will teach him to insult—No; I will not do him the honour to write. Order him back.

Harry. Order who, my lord?

Lord V. He shall give me satisfaction. In that, at least, I am determined. He shall give—And yet, what is satisfaction? Is it to be run through the body? shot through the head? A man may then, indeed, be said to be satisfied. I had forgotten my doubts on duelling. Tell my lady I wish to speak to her. No—

Harry. She is here, my lord.

[Exit.]

Enter LADY VIBRATE and DOCTOR GOSTERMAN.

Lady V. What is the matter, my lord? You seem to be even in a worse humour than usual.

Lord V. Mr. Delaval has treated me disrespectfully.

Lady V. Have not I a thousand times told you he is a disagreeable impertinent person?

Lord V. Why, God forgive me, but I really find myself of your ladyship's opinion. 'Tis a thing, I believe, that never happened before.

Lady V. And a thing, I believe, that will never happen again. I hope, my lord, you are now determined in favour of Sir George.

Lord V. Positively. Finally. I pledge my honour.

Lady V. You hear, Doctor?

Doctor. Ya, my coot laty; I vas hear.

Lord V. I say, I pledge my honour. I authorise you, my lady, to deliver that message to the baronet; and, that I may not have time to begin to doubt, I will instantly begone. [*Exit.*]

Lady V. This is fortunate.

Doctor. Oh! fery mosh fortunate; fery mosh.

Lady V. Had Mr. Delaval married my daughter, we should have had a continual sermon on reason, common sense, and good order. And these and such like antediluvian notions must have been introduced to our family.

Doctor. Ah! dat shall be pad; fery pad, intee, my coot lady.

Lady V. Now that Sir George is the man, the danger is over.

Doctor. Dat is creat plessing.

Lady V. But what, think you, are my daughter's thoughts? I fear she has a kind of esteem for Delaval. He was her first lover.

Doctor. Ya; she vas fery mosh esteem Mr. Delaval, my coot lady.

Lady V. But I observe she listens with great pleasure to the gay prattle of Sir George.

Doctor. Oh! fery creat, intee, my coot lady.

Lady V. We must second the rising passion; for we must get rid of that solemn sir.

Doctor. Dat vas all just as vat you say, my coot lady.

Lady V. Go to her, Doctor; convince her how intolerable it will be to have a husband whom she cannot quarrel with nor reproach. Paint, in the most lively colours, the stupid life she must lead with so reasonable a man.

Doctor. I shall do eferyting as vat shall make agréable, my coot lady. Dat is my vay. My laty, I vas your mosh oblishe fery omple saifrant, my laty. *Ereunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The hall of the hotel.*

LUCY discovered, speaking to the Master of the hotel.

Enter WILLIAMS and HARRY.

Wil. All you say is very true, Mr. Harry. Our masters suppose we have neither sense nor feeling; yet exact every thing that requires the five senses in perfection. They expect we should know their meaning before they open their lips, yet won't allow we have common understanding.

Harry. More shame for them. I warrant, for all that, we can game, run in debt, get in drink, and be as proud and domineering as they are for their lives.

Wil. Yes, yes; let them but change places, and they would soon find out we could rise to their vices, and they could sink to ours, with all the ease imaginable.

Harry. They have no such notion though, Mr. Williams.

Wil. That is their vanity, Mr. Harry. I have lived with Mr. Delaval ever since he returned from India; and though he is a good—[*sees LUCY.*—Eh! surely it must be her. Do you know that young woman, Mr. Harry?

Harry. No; but I have heard a strange story about her.

Wil. Ay, it is—What—I am sure it is Lucy.—What strange story have you heard?

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Harry. Why, then she came here late last night with a young gentleman, now above, pretending to be his waiting-maid.

Wil. With a gentleman! [*Aside.*] Oh! the jilt! Waiting-maid to a man? I never heard of such a thing.

Harry. Nor anybody else.

Wil. [*Aside.*] The deceitful hussey!

Harry. [*Bell rings.*] That's my lord's bell: I told you he is never easy. I must go.

Wil. [*Aside.*] I am glad of it. By all means, Mr. Harry. Good day! [*Exit HARRY.*] Run away with a gentleman! Oh!

Lucy. [*Coming forward.*] I declare, there is Mr. Williams.

Wil. [*Aside.*] What a fool was I to believe she loved me!

Lucy. [*Aside.*] How my heart beats! Dear, dear! I could wish to speak to him; but then, if any harm should come of it!

Wil. [*Aside.*] She shall not escape me.

Lucy. [*Aside.*] I should like to ask him how he does. But I must not betray my dear lady. [*Going.*]

Wil. [*Placing himself in her way.*] I beg pardou, madam.

Lucy. [*Aside.*] Does not he know me?

Wil. I thought I had seen you before; but I find I am mistaken.

Lucy. [*Aside.*] What does he mean?

Wil. You are very like a young woman I once knew.

Lucy. [*Aside.*] How angry he looks!

Wil. But she was a modest, pretty-behaved person; and not an arrant jilt.

Lucy. Who is a jilt, Mr. Williams?

Wil. One Lucy Langford, that I courted and promised to marry, but I know better now.

Lucy. You do, Mr. Williams?

Wil. I do, madam.

Lucy. It is very well, Mr. Williams; it is very well. Pray, let me go about my business.

Wil. Oh! to be sure. I have no right to stop you. *Lucy.* You have no right to speak to me as you do, Mr. Williams.

Wil. No, no. Ha, ha, ha! I dare say, I have not.

Lucy. No, you have not; and so I beg you will let me pass. My mistress—I mean—

Wil. Ay, ay; you mean your master.

Lucy. Do I, sir? Well, since you please to think so, so be it.

Wil. All the servants know it is a man. Would you deny it?

Lucy. I deny nothing, Mr. Williams; and, if you are minded to make this an excuse for being as treacherous as the rest of your sex, you are very welcome, Mr. Williams. I shall neither die nor cry at parting.

Wil. I dare say not. The young gentleman above stairs will comfort you.

Lucy. [*Bursts into tears.*] It is a base, false story. I have no young gentleman above stairs, nor below stairs neither, to comfort me; and you ought to know me better.

Wil. Did you or did you not come here last night?

Lucy. What of that?

Wil. With a young gentleman?

Lucy. No—Yes. Don't ask me such questions.

Wil. No. You are ashamed to answer them.

MARIA appears above.

Maria. Lucy!

Lucy. Ma'am—Sir? Coming, sir.

Wil. There, there! I will see what sort of a spark it is, however.

Lucy. [*Struggling.*] Be quiet, then. Keep away. You sha'n't.

Maria [*Descending.*] What is the matter? Who's molesting you?

Lucy. [*To MARIA.*] Go back, sir; go back.

Wil. I will see, I am determined.

DELAVAL appears at a room-door.

Del. Williams!

Wil. I tell you I will. [*Looking at MARIA.*] Eh! Bless me!

Maria. Why, Lucy—Mr. Williams!

Wil. My young lady, as I live!

Del. Why do not you answer, Williams?

Wil. Coming, sir.

Maria. Mercy! It is my brother's voice: what shall I do?

Lucy. Hide your face with your handkerchief, madam. Pull down your hat.

Maria. Pray, do not betray me, Mr. Williams.

Lucy. If you do, I will never speak to you as long as I have breath to draw.

Wil. How betray?

Lucy. Don't say you know us. Mind! Not for the world. [*Erit with MARIA.*]

Del. What is it you are about, Williams?

Wil. Nothing, sir.

Del. What do you mean by nothing? Whom were you wrangling with?

Wil. Me, sir? Wrangling, sir?

Del. Why are you so confused?

Wil. Why, sir, I—I committed a small mistake. I was asking—asking after a gentleman—that proved not to be a gentleman—that is, not—not the gentleman that I supposed.

Del. Why did you not come back with your message? Have you learnt the address of Sir George?

Wil. Yes, sir; he lives in Upper Grosvenor-street; his name is on the door.

Del. Well, be in the way. The day shall not pass before I see him. My own wrongs I could forgive. He, it seems, is preferred; and, perhaps, I have no right to complain: but for his injuries to my sister he shall render me a dear account. [*Erit.*]

Wil. What can be the reason of Miss Delaval's disguise?

Lucy. [*Above.*] Hist, hist! Mr. Williams!

Wil. Is it you? Oh! now I shall know. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

Lady VIBRATE and Lady JANE discovered.

Lady V. Really, daughter, I cannot understand you.

Lady J. No wonder, madam; for I do not half understand myself.

Lady V. Is it possible you can hesitate? The good-humour and complaisance of Sir George might captivate any woman.

Lady J. They are very engaging, but they are dangerous.

Lady V. Which way?

Lady J. His character is too pliant. If others are merry, so is he; if they are sad, he is the same. Their joys and sorrows play upon his countenance; but, though they may slightly graze, they do not penetrate his heart. Even while he relieves, he scarcely feels them.

Lady V. Psha! He is a delightful man.

Lady J. I grant he does his utmost. But it is a folly to be the slave even of an endeavour to please.

Lady V. Ha, ha, ha! Upon my honour, you are a whimsical young lady. Afraid of marrying a man because of his assiduous endeavours to please! As if that were a husband's failing! You can prefer no such accusation against Mr. Delaval.

Lady J. I own he is of a very different character. Firm and inflexible, he imagines he makes virtue his rule and reason his guide.

Lady V. Firm, indeed! No, no: ferocious, obstinate, perverse. Sir George tries to be agreeable, and is successful; Mr. Delaval has no fear of offending, and does not miss his aim.

Lady J. Heaven help us! We all have faults and follies enough.

Lady V. Mr. Delaval never was approved by me; and this morning he has insulted your father.

Lady J. Insulted! How do you mean, madam? Mr. Delaval is abroad. Has he written?

Lady V. No. He is here.

Lady J. Here! And has he not thought proper to let me know of his arrival?

Lady V. No, no. The haughty gentleman has only thought proper to reproach Lord Vibrate for admitting the pretensions of Sir George. He is too proud to endure a competitor.

Lady J. Indeed! Such pride is the very way to ensure his competitor success. Insulted my father!

Lady V. I will leave you to judge how deeply, when I tell you that, fluctuating and undecided as Lord Vibrate always is, he was so offended that he pledged his honour in favour of Sir George.

Lady J. Insult my father, and not deign to let me know of his arrival?

Lady V. I hope, when Sir George comes, you will admit him.

Lady J. Certainly, madam; certainly.

Lady V. And that Mr. Delaval will be denied.

Lady J. It seems I need give myself no concern about that; the gentleman will not even take the trouble to send up his name.

Lady V. I am glad you feel it properly.

Lady J. Pardon me, madam, I will not condescend to feel it in the least. It shall not affect me; no, not for a moment. I had, indeed, conceived a very different opinion of Mr. Delaval. I am glad I have discovered my error before it is too late. I could not have believed it possible. But it shall not disturb me. It shall give me no uneasiness. I will keep myself perfectly cool and unconcerned, and—ungenerous, unfeeling man! [*Erit.*]

Lady V. She is delightfully piqued, and Sir George will succeed.

Sir G. [*Without.*] Are the ladies above?

Foot. [*Without.*] Yes, sir.

Lady V. I hear him. The very sound of his voice inspires mirth.

Enter SIR GEORGE VERSATILE.

Sir G. Ah! my dear lady.

Lady V. I am infinitely glad to see you, Sir George; you are come at a lucky moment.

Sir G. Is, then, my fate decided?

Lady V. It is, it is.

Sir G. Happy tidings!

Lady V. But first tell me—

Sir G. Anything—everything. Speak.

Lady V. Are you not of my opinion?

Sir G. To be sure I am. What is it?

Lady V. That pleasure is the business of life.

Sir G. Oh! beyond all doubt.

Lady V. That inspecting accounts—

Sir G. Is vulgar drudgery.

Lady V. And looking after our affairs—

Sir G. A vile loss of time.

Lady V. That care in the face denotes—

Sir G. The owner a foo.

Lady V. And that sorrow is a very ridiculous thing.

Sir G. Fit only to excite laughter.

Lady V. Why, then, Sir George, I am your friend.

Sir G. Ten thousand thousand thanks! But, what says my lord?

Lady V. Would you believe it? He consents, has pledged his honour, and sent the message by me.

Sir G. Rapture, enchantment!

Lady V. Yes. The reign of pleasure is about to begin.

Sir G. Light, free, and fantastic; dancing an eternal round.

Lady V. No domestic troubles—

Sir G. No grave looks!

Lady V. No serious thoughts—

Sir G. We will never think at all!

Lady V. No cares, no frowns—

Sir G. None, none, by heavens, none! It shall be spring and sunshine all the year.

Lady V. Then our appearance in public!

Sir G. Splendid, dazzling! Driving to the opera!

Lady V. Dressing for Ranelagh!

Sir G. A phaeton to-day.

Lady V. A curriole to-morrow.

Sir G. Dash over the downs of Piccadilly, descend the heights of St. James's, make the tour of Pall-mall, coast Whitehall—

Lady V. Back again to Bond-street—

Sir G. Scour the squares, thunder at the doors.

Lady V. How do you do? How do you do? How do you do?

Sir G. And away we rattle, till stone walls are but gliding shadows, and the whole world a galanty show.

Lady V. You are a charming man, Sir George; and Lady Jane is your's.

Sir G. My dear lady, your words inspire me: I am all air, spirit, soul! I tread the milky way, and step upon the stars.

Lady V. But you must not, before the marriage, talk thus to lord Vibrate. Silly man! He and you will never agree.

Sir G. Oh! yes, but we shall. I—I—I like his humour.

Lady V. Do you?

Sir G. Prodigiously. Whenever I am in his company, I am as grave as Good Friday.

Lady V. Indeed!

Sir G. He is full of sage reflection: so am I. Doubtful of everything: so am I. Anxious for the present, provident for the future: so am I. Overflowing with prudential maxims; sententious, sentimental, and solemn: so am I.

Lady V. You sentimental!

Sir G. As grace before meat in the mouth of an alderman.

Lady V. You solemn!

Sir G. As the black patch on a judge's wig.

Lady V. I must tell you, Sir George, I hate sentiment.

Sir G. Oh! so do I.

Lady V. Solemnity is all a farce.

Sir G. And those that act it buffoons. I know it.

Lady V. I love mirth, pleasantry—

Sir G. Humour, whim, wit, feasting, revelry, shout, song, dance, and joke. So do I, so do I, so do I!

Lady V. The very mention of duties and cares makes me splenetic.

Sir G. Curse catch duties! I hate them. Give me life, the wide world, the fair sun, and the free air.

Lady V. I say, give me midnight, the rattling of chariot-wheels, and the lighted flambeaux.

Sir G. Ay, a rout! A crash of coaches—a lane of footmen—a blazing staircase—a squeeze through the antichamber—card-tables—wax-lights—patent lamps—Bath stoves and suffocation! Oh, lord! oh, lord!

Lady V. Exquisite! You are a delightful man.

Sir G. Am I?

Lady V. You enter perfectly into all my ideas.

Sir G. Do I?

Lady V. And describe them even better than I myself can.

Sir G. Oh! my dear lady.

Lady V. Yes, you do.

Sir G. No, no.

Lady V. But, then—Ha, ha, ha!—That you should be able to fall in with my lord's absurdities so readily!

Sir G. Nothing more easy: I have one infallible rule to please all tempers. I learnt it of our friend the Doctor.

Lady V. Sure! What is that?

Sir G. I prove that everybody is always in the right.

Lady V. Prove my husband to be in the right. Do, if you can.

Sir G. My lord loves to be restless, and doubtful, and distressed; he delights in teasing and tormenting himself; and why should I interrupt his pleasures?

Lady V. Ha, ha, ha! Very true.

Sir G. I fall in with his humour. I shew him how rational it is; afford him new arguments of discontent, and encourage him to be miserable.

Lady V. Ha, ha, ha! Oh! you malicious devil!

Sir G. My dear lady, you mistake: I do it from pure compassion. It makes him happy. Every child delights in the squeaking of its own trumpet; and shall I have the cruelty to break the toy? A well-bred person is cautious never to contradict. It is become a very essential requisite to say ay and no in the most complying manner possible.

Lady V. Ah! Sir George, you are one of the dear inimitable few.

Sir G. Only a copy of your charming self.

Lady V. You and I must totally reform our stupid family. Amusement shall be our perpetual occupation.

Sir G. Day and night.

Lady V. We will commence with your marriage. It shall be a splendid one.

Sir G. A fête, a concert, a ball! The whole town shall ring with it.

Lady V. I hate a private wedding. A small select party is my aversion.

Sir G. Oh! nothing is so insipid! Pleasure cannot be calm.

Lady V. I wish to be seen and heard—

Sir G. And talked of, and paragraphed, and praised, and blamed, and admired, and envied, and laughed at, and imitated!

Lady V. I live but in a crowd.

Sir G. Give me hurry, noise, embarrassment—

Lady V. Confusion, disorder—

Sir G. Tumult, tempest, uproar, elbowing, squeezing, pressing, pushing, squeaking, squalling, fainting!

Lady V. Exquisite! transporting!

Sir G. You remember I receive masks this evening.

Lady V. Can I forget?

Sir G. You will be there?

Lady V. There! Ay; though I should come in my coffin.

Sir G. Ha, ha, ha! An excellent idea! I never yet saw a mask in the character of a *memento mori*.

Lady V. Ah! Turn about, and you will see a *memento mori* without a mask!

Sir G. What, my lord?

Lord V. [Without.] I cannot tell. I will consider, and send an answer.

Lady V. Here he comes, to interrupt our delightful dreams: a very antidote to mirth and pleasure. He will give you a full dose of the dismal. But you must stay and speak to him. Remember, his honour is pledged: insist upon that. I pity, but cannot relieve you. [Exit.

Enter Lord VIBRATE.

Lord V. I have been too sudden. I ought not to have pledged my honour. This is the consequence of hasty determination; of not doubting before we decide. Shall I never correct myself of that fault? [Sees Sir G. They look full at each other, till Sir G. catches the same dismal kind of countenance.] Ah! Sir George, here am I, brimful of anxiety and turmoil!

Sir G. Alas! man was born to trouble.

Lord V. Perplexed on every side; thwarted in every plan; no domestic comfort, no friend to grieve with me, no creature to share my miseries.

Sir G. Melancholy case!

Lord V. One crossing me, another blaming me, and my wife driving me mad!

Sir G. Distressing situation!

Lord V. My cares laughed at, my vigilance mocked, my sufferings insulted! And why? Because I am cautious! because I doubt! because I am provident! What is man without money?

Sir G. A fountain without water.

Lord V. A clock without a dial.

Sir G. What is it that buys respect, and honour, and power, and privilege, and houses, and lands, and wit, and beauty, and learning, and lords, and commons, and—

Lord V. Why none!—Then the manners of this dissipated age—

Sir G. They are truly shocking! They—they—they are absurd, ridiculous, odious, abominable.

Lord V. And to what do they lead?

Sir G. To everything that is horrid! To loss of peace, loss of property, loss of principle, loss of respect; bankruptcy, ruin, contempt, disease, and death!

Lord V. [Aside.] Yes, yes: he's the man! I do not think I repent. Heaven be praised! Sir George, you are a man of understanding; an economist. You will regulate your family and affairs to my heart's content.

Sir G. Oh! it shall be my study; my daily practice, my duty, my delight!

Lord V. You make me happy. And yet I cannot but wonder, being so rational a man, how you and my lady should agree so well.

Sir G. Dear, my lord, why so? Women are the most manageable good creatures upon earth.

Lord V. Women good?

Sir G. Indubitably; when they are pleased.

Lord V. So they say is the devil.

Sir G. The sweet angels deserve to be humoured. Their smiles are so enchanting! And, should they frown, who can be angry when we know the dear wayward sirens will only look the more bewitching, as soon as they are out of their pouts? It is so delightful to see the sun breaking from behind a cloud.

Lord V. Psha! When a woman begins to grow old—

Sir G. Hush! The sun—the sun never grows old. I grant you that, formerly, there used to be old women; but there are none now!

Lord V. Then you think me a fool for being wretched at my wife's thoughtlessness, caprice, and impertinence?

Sir G. No, I don't. Every body tells us that wives were born to be the plague of their husbands.

Lord V. And mine is the greatest of plagues!

Sir G. What is a wife's duty? To obey her lord and master. 'Tis her marriage promise, and the law binds her to it. She is the minister of his pleasures, the handmaid of his wants, his goods, his chattels, his vendible property.

Lord V. Ay; we find the husband may take the wife to market in a halter.

Sir G. In which I should hope he would afterwards hang himself!

Lord V. My lady thinks of nothing but revelling, and racketing, and turning the world upside down!

Sir G. 'Tis a great pity.

Lord V. Her tongue is my torment.

Sir G. The perpetual motion! It never ceases.

Lord V. Then how can you like her company?

Sir G. She is not my wife.

Lord V. No, or you would not be such good friends. Did she say anything concerning the marriage?

Sir G. Oh! yes. She delivered your lordship's kind message.

Lord V. What, that I had pledged my honour?

Sir G. Irrevocably.

Lord V. I was very rash. Hasty resolutions bring long repentance. She insists that the nuptials shall be public.

Sir G. Does she, indeed?

Lord V. For my part, I hate any display of vanity.

Sir G. It is extremely ridiculous! What would our ostentation, pomp, and magnificence be, but advertising ourselves to the world as fools and coxcombs?

Lord V. Is that a rational use of money?

Sir G. Should it not be applied to relieve the aged, comfort the poor, succour the distressed—

Lord V. What?

Sir G. Reward merit, encourage industry, and promote the public good?

Lord V. Promote a farce!

Sir G. Very true; the public good is a farce!

Lord V. The true use of money is to defend our rights—

Sir G. Revenge our wrongs, purchase for the present, provide for the future, secure power, buy friends, bid defiance to enemies, and lead the world in a string!

Lord V. Ay; now you talk sense. So, if I should consent, the wedding shall be private.

Sir G. Calm; tranquil.

Lord V. No feasting.

Sir G. No dancing, no music, no pantomime pleasures; but all silent, serene, pure, and undisturbed.

Lord V. We will just invite a select party.

Sir G. A chosen few.

Lord V. None but our real and sincere friends.

Sir G. And then we shall be sure the house will hold them.

Enter HARRY.

Harry. My lord, the builder desires to know if you will see him?

Lord V. I am coming. I will be with him in five minutes.

Harry. He says he can stay no longer.

Lord V. Then let him go. I will be with him presently.

Harry. The lawyers have sent word they are waiting for your lordship, at Counsellor Demur's chambers.

Lord V. Very well. There let them wait. The law is slow, and every man ought to be slow who is going to law. Come with me, Sir George; I have some papers to consult you upon.

Harry. The tradespeople, too, are below.

Lord V. Thus it is: I am eternally besieged; I never have a moment to myself.

Harry. This is the tenth time they have been here, by your lordship's own appointment.

Lord V. What of that?

Harry. They are become quite surly. They all abuse me: and some of them don't spare your lordship.

Lord V. Do you hear, Sir George?

Sir G. Oh, shocking! Your tradespeople are a sad unreasonable set. You cannot convince them that, if we were to keep our own appointments, be punctual in our payments, and know what we do want, and what we do not, we should no longer be persons of fashion.

Enter THOMPSON.

Thom. I am just come from the lawyers, my lord. The courts are sitting, their clients waiting; and if your lordship do not go immediately, they will be gone.

Lord V. Very true; and this last opportunity of serving an ejection will be lost. I have a thousand things to attend to. Would you be kind enough, Sir George, to go and—Hold! no; I don't know what to do! The estate is valuable: but law is damnable. I may lose the cause: it may cost even more than it is worth. Writs of error!—Brought into Chancery!—Carried up to the Lords!

Sir G. Then the stupidity of juries; the fictions of law; the chicanery of lawyers, their tricking, twisting, turning, lying, wrangling, browbeating, cajoling!

Lord V. Their frauds, collusions, perjuries, robberies—

Sir G. Ay! Detinue, replevin, plea, imparlance, replication, rejoinder, rebutter, surrejoinder, surrebutter, demurrer—

Lord V. Take breath! We ought both to demur: for it is the devil's dance, and both plaintiff and defendant are obliged to pay the piper. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—The Apartments of Lord Vibrato.

Lady JANE, her Woman, Doctor GOSTERMAN, and a Footman, discovered.

Lady J. [*To Footman.*] Tell the young gentleman I wait his pleasure. [*Exit Footman.*] It is very singular! men, I believe, do not often travel attended by waiting-maids!

Doctor. Dat is de mystery, my Latty Shane.

Lady J. What can he want to say to me?

Doctor. Dat is de more mystery, my Latty Shane. He vas fery mosh young, und fery mosh handsome, und he has fery mosh make fall in love mit you, my Latty Shane.

Lady J. Nonsense!

Doctor. My Latty Shane vas so full of de beauty, dat you vas make sharm efery body, my Latty Shane! Und as your name vas make mention, my Latty Shane, he vas all so pale as deaths!

Lady J. [*Aside to her Woman.*] You are sure, you say, Mr. Delaval made inquiries, and sent up his name?

Woman. [*Apart to Lady J.*] La! my lady, could you think he would not? I saw him before ten o'clock; just as you sent me where I was kept so long. And, goodness! had you beheld what a taking he was in! I warrant you, my lady, he asked a hundred and a hundred questions in a breath, and all about you!

Lady J. Well, go now where I desired you.

Woman. Yes, my lady. [*Exit.*]

Enter a Footman, who introduces MARIA, and exit.

Maria. [*Aside.*] Why do I tremble thus?

Lady J. [*To Doctor.*] What a charming countenance!

Doctor. Oh! fery mosh sharming!

Lady J. How prepossessing his appearance!

Doctor. Ya; he vas fery mosh possess.

Re-enter Footman.

Foot. Sir George has sent this domino and mask to know if they meet your ladyship's approbation.

Lady J. Ha, ha, ha! Italian refinement, copied after some Venetian cicisbeo. Put them down.

Maria. [*Aside Regarding the domino and mask.*] Here his presents, and here his affections are now directed! How shall I support the scene?

Lady J. You wish, sir, to speak to me.

Maria. [*Faltering.*] Embarrassed by the liberty I have taken—

Lady J. Let me request you to wave all apology, and tell me which way I can oblige or serve you.

Maria. You are acquainted with Sir George—I— you—Pray pardon me. I am overcome. My spirits are so agitated—

Lady J. [*Reaching a chain.*] Sit down, Sir. You are unwell. Bless me! Doctor—

Doctor. [*To Lady J.*] I vas tell my Latty Shane vat it vas.—Here, sair, you smell mit dat elixir; und I shall make your neck-bandit tie loose und— [*Going to loosen her neckcloth.*]

Maria. [*Alarmed.*] Pray, forbear!

Doctor. [*Aside. Imitates a woman.*] Ah, ha! Der teufel! he vas a voman!

Lady J. Are you better?

Maria. A moment's air. [*Goes to the window.*]

Doctor. [*Aside.*] Dat vas de someting mystery!

Maria. [*To Lady J.*] If you will indulge me a few minutes in private—

Lady J. By all means. Doctor— [*Whispers.*]

Doctor. Ya, ya; my Latty Shane, I vas understand: und I vas do efery ting as vat shall make agrable. Dat is my vay.—Sair, I vas your mosh oblishe fery omple sairfant, sair. I vas understand. My Latty Shane, I vas your mosh oblishe fery omple sairfant, my Latty Shane.— [*Aside.*]— Ha, ha!

[*Exit.*]

Lady J. Take courage, sir.

Maria. I am unequal to the task. This disguise sits ill upon me.

Lady J. What disguise?

Maria. I am not what I seem. I—

Lady J. Speak!

Maria. I am a woman.

Lady J. Heavens!

Maria. Distressed—

Lady J. By poverty?

Maria. Oh! no; I come to claim your counsel.

Lady J. In what way?

Maria. To prevent mischief—the shedding of blood.

Lady J. The shedding of blood?

Sir G. [Without.] I will be with you again presently, my lady.

Maria. Mercy! it is Sir George! What shall I do? He must not see me! This way—[Puts on the domino and mask.] Aid me, dear lady, to conceal myself; and excuse conduct which I cannot now explain. [Retires.]

Lady J. Depend upon me, madam. [Aside.] This is as unaccountable as it is alarming!

Enter Sir GEORGE VERSATILE

Sir G. I come, my charming Lady Jane, flying, and full of business, to consult you on a thousand important affairs!

Lady J. Surely! What are they?

Sir G. Upon my soul, I don't know!

Lady J. Heyday!

Sir G. They have every one slipped my memory.

Lady J. Miraculous!

Sir G. Whenever I have the inexpressible pleasure of enjoying your smiles, I can think of nothing else.

Maria. [Aside.] Perjured man!

Lady J. My smiles! Ha, ha, ha! What if I should happen to frown?

Sir G. Impossible! no lowering clouds of discontent dare ever shade the heavenly brightness of your brow.

Maria. [Aside.] Oh!

Lady J. Very prettily said, upon my word. Where did you learn it?

Sir G. From you: 'tis pure inspiration, and you are my muse.

Lady J. No; 'tis a flight beyond me. I love plain prose.

Sir G. So do I. A mere common-place, matter-of-fact man, I! The weather; the time of the day; the history of where I dined last; the names and titles of the company; the dishes brought to table; the health, sickness, death, birth, and marriage, of my acquaintance, and such like toothpick topics, for me! I am as literal in my narratives as any town-crier, and repeat them as often.

Lady J. Yet I should wish to talk a little common sense.

Sir G. Oh! so should I, I assure you: I am for pros and cons, and whys and wherefores. Your Aristotles, and Platos, and Senecas, and Catos, are my delight; I honour their precepts, venerate their cogitations, and adore the length of their beards!—which luckily reminds me of the masquerade. Is my domino to your taste?

Lady J. Ha, ha, ha! Ancient sages, dominos, and taste!

Sir G. Did you not notice the colour?

Lady J. Oh! the taste of a domino is in its colour?

Sir G. Why, no; but there may be meaning.

Lady J. Explain.

Sir G. Mine is saffron.

Lady J. What of that?

Sir G. Cruel question!—Hymen and his robe.

Lady J. Oh! oh!

Maria. [Aside.] She is pleased with his perfidy.

Lady J. A very significant riddle, truly!

Maria. [Advances.] Are you so soon to be married, sir?

Sir G. Bless me! Lady Jane, what frolicsome

gentleman is this? In masquerade so early, and my domino!

Maria. Permit me once more to ask, if you are soon to be married?

Sir G. Your question, sir, is improperly addressed. Put it, if you please, to that lady.

Maria. [Aside to Sir G.] Is that the lady to whom the question ought to be put?

Sir G. [Aside.] What does he mean? Will you indulge me, sir, by taking off that mask?

Maria. No, sir.

Sir G. 'Tis mine; and I am induced to claim it, from the great curiosity I have to see your face.

Maria. Do you not adore this lady?

Sir G. [Aside.] An odd question!—More than language can express.

Maria. [Aside.] Oh, falsehood!—Then I put myself under her protection.

Sir G. You know guardian angels when you see them. Pray, however, let us become acquainted.

Maria. For what reason?

Sir G. 'Twould gratify me. I should like you.

Maria. Oh! no.

Sir G. I certainly should. There is something of pathos and music in your voice, which—which—I never heard but one to equal it.

Maria. And whose voice was that?

Sir G. Oh! that—that was a voice so ingenuous, so affectionate, so fascinating—

Maria. But whose voice was it?

Lady J. [Aside.] What does this mean?

Maria. Tell me, and you shall see my face.

Lady J. Astonishing!

Sir G. I must not, I dare not—I shall never hear it more!

Maria. [Aside.] My feelings so overpower me, I shall betray myself.—[To Lady J.] Permit me to retire.

Lady J. You have alarmed and strangely moved me! I hope you will return?

Maria. Oh! yes; and most happy to have your permission.

Sir G. Why do they whisper?—[To MARIA, going.] Will you not let me know who you are?

Maria. No.

Sir G. Why?

Maria. Because—I am one you do not love.

Sir G. One I do not love!

Lady J. [Aside.] This is incomprehensible!

Re-enter MARIA, hastily.

Maria. [Apart to Lady J.] Oh, madam!

Lady J. What more is the matter?

Maria. For your life, do not mention the names of either of these gentlemen to the other!

Lady J. What gentlemen?

Maria. He is coming! They do not personally know each other: if they should, there would be murder! I dare not stay. For the love of God, beware! [Exit.]

Enter DELAVAL.

Sir G. [Calling.] Harkye! sir, come back! My domino! I shall want it in an hour or so.—Who have we here?

Del. [Agitated.] Your ladyship's very humble servant.

Lady J. Oh! How do you do? How do you do? [Aside.] Who can that lady be? She knows them both, it seems; and knows their rivalry! Her terror is contagious! Is their hatred so deadly? I shall certainly betray them to each other.

Del. [Aside.] What a strange behaviour she puts on! Does she affect to overlook me? [*Seeing Sir GEORGE.*] Who is this?

Lady J. Are you just arrived?

Del. This very morning: sooner, I fear, than—than was desired.

Lady J. Do you think so? [*To Sir G.*] Why don't you go to Lady Vibrate? She is waiting.

Sir G. 'Tis the fate of forty.

Lady J. What?

Sir G. To wait.—[*Looking at DELAVAL.*—*Aside.*] Who can this spark be, that she wants me gone?—Pray, what is the name of the youth that has made so free with my domino and mask?

Lady J. I really don't know.

Sir G. Don't know!

Lady J. I can't answer questions at present. I am flurried; out of humour—

Del. I fear, at my intrusion.

Lady J. I wish you had come at another time.

Del. I expected my visit would be unwelcome: let me request, however, to say a few words.

Lady J. Well, well; another time, I tell you: when I am alone.

Sir G. [Aside.] Oh! oh!

Del. They were meant for your private ear.

Sir G. [Aside.] Were they so?

Del. [Aside.] By her confusion and his manner, I suspect this to be the base betrayer of my sister's peace: the man, whose bare image makes my heart sick, and my blood recoil.

Lady J. [Aside.] Will neither of them go?—Why do you loiter here, Sir G.—[*Coughs.*]

Sir G. I must stay till the gentleman brings back my domino and mask, you know.—[*Aside.*] I'll not leave them.

Del. [Aside.] I am persuaded it is he.—Excuse me, sir; would you indulge me with the favour of your name?

Sir G. My name, sir! My name is—

Lady J. [Aside to Sir G.] Hush! don't tell it.

Sir G. [To Lady J.] Why not?

Lady J. I insist upon it!

Sir G. Nay, then—My name, sir, is a very pretty name. Pray, what is yours?

Del. [Aside.] Yes, yes; it must be he.—Have you any reason to be ashamed of it?

Sir G. Sir! Did you please to speak? Upon my honour, you are a very polite, pleasant person.

Del. [Aside.] If I should be mistaken!—I acknowledge, sir, there is but one man, whose name I do, but whose person I do not know, to whom that question would not have been rude in the extreme. Should you not be the man, I ask your pardon.

Sir G. Should I not! Sir, that I may be sure I am not, allow me to ask his name.

Del. His name is—

Lady J. [Screams.] Oh!

Del. Good heavens!

Sir G. What has happened?

Del. Are you ill?

Sir G. Is it cramp, or spasm?

Del. Surely, you have broken a blood-vessel!

Sir G. Shall I run for a physician?

Lady J. Instantly.

Sir G. I fly! Yet I must not leave you.

Lady J. No delay, if you value my life.

Del. Your life! I will go.

Lady J. [Detaining him.] No, no.

Sir G. I fly! I fly!

[*Exit.*]

Enter Lady JANE'S Woman.

Woman. Dear, my lady, what is the matter?

Lady J. Lead me directly to my own room.

Del. Shall I carry you?

Lady J. No; only give me your arm, and come with me. I want to talk to you. I wish to hear what you have to say.—[*Aside to her Woman.*] When Sir George comes back, tell him I am partly recovered, but must not be disturbed. It is my positive order.

Del. [Aside.] What does she whisper?

Lady J. Stay! The doctor may come in; but not Sir George. Mind, on your life! not Sir George.—Come, sir.

Del. [Aside.] This sudden change is mysterious.

Lady J. Come, come. [*Exit, with DELAVAL.*]

Woman. I purtest, it has put me in such a flutter, that I am quite all of a twitter!

Enter Sir GEORGE VERSATILE, followed by Doctor GOSTERMAN.

Sir G. Come along, Doctor! Make haste! Where is Lady Jane?

Woman. In her own room.

Sir G. Is she worse?

Woman. No, sir; much better. But she must not be disturbed.

Sir G. Nay, nay; I must see her.

Woman. Indeed, sir, I can let nobody in but the Doctor.

Sir G. Why so? Is not the gentleman I left here now with her?

Woman. I suppose so, sir.

Sir G. And I not admitted?

Woman. On no account whatever.

Sir G. He allowed, and I excluded! Indeed, I shall attend the Doctor.

Woman. Upon my honour, sir, you must not.

Sir G. Upon my honour, I will! My rival shall not escape me!

Doctor. Ha, ha! De rifal! Ha, ha, ha! Dat is coot! De young fer dat vas mit Laty Shane vas make you shealousy? Ha, ha, ha! Dat is coot! Bote dat is as noting at all. I shall tell you de something mystery. He vas no gentlemen. Ha, ha! He vas a voman!

Sir G. A woman!

Doctor. Ya, sair. He vas make acquaintance mit me, und I vas make acquaintance mit him; und he vas make faint, und I vas tie loose de neckbandt, und den, ha, ha! I vas discover de maus vas a voman!

Sir G. You astonish me!

Doctor. Ya, sair; I vas make astonish myself.

Woman. Won't you go to my lady, Doctor?

Doctor. Ya, my tear. Let me do. Laty Shane is fery pad; und I shall af de essence, und de cream, und de balsam, und de syrup, und de electric, und de magnetic, und de mineral, und de vegetable, und de air, und de earse, und de sea, und all, &c.

[*Exit, talking.*]

Sir G. I should never have suspected a woman! A stout, tall, robust figure! And for what purpose disguise herself? That may be worth inquiry. I will wait; and, if possible, have another look at the lady.

Enter Lord VIBRATE and Mr. THOMPSON.

Lord V. Two hundred and forty pounds! 'Tis a very large sum, Mr. Thompson.

Thom. So large, my lord, that I have no means of paying it. I must languish out my life in a prison.

Lord V. No, Mr. Thompson, no; you shall not do that. I will—And yet, two hundred—A prison—

I don't know what to say. If I pay this money for you, I shall but encourage all around me to run in debt.

Thom. It is a favour too great for me to hope.

Lord V. You are a worthy man, and a prison is a bad place. I—you—Pray, what is your opinion, Sir George? Is it not dangerous for a man to have the character of being charitable?

Sir G. No doubt, my lord. It is the very certain way for his house to be besieged by beggars.

Lord V. The master who pays the debts of one domestic, makes himself the debtor of all the rest.

Sir G. He changes a set of servants into a set of duns. He first encourages them to be extravagant, and then makes it incumbent upon himself to pay for their follies and vices: he not only bribes them to be idle and insolent, but to waste his property as well as their own.

Lord V. It is, as you say, a very serious case.—I—I am sorry for your misfortune, Mr. Thompson, very sorry; but really—

Sir G. Misfortune! What misfortune?

Lord V. He has foolishly been bound for his sister's husband, and must go to prison for the debt.

Sir G. To prison!

Lord V. You have shewn me how dangerous it would be for me to interfere.

Sir G. Very true, very true. He has lived with your lordship several years?

Lord V. He has; and I esteem him highly.

Sir G. A worthy man, whom it would be no disgrace to call your friend?

Lord V. None. Still, however, consequences must be weighed. I must take time to consider: 'tis folly to act in a hurry.

Sir G. Very true. Caution, caution. Is it a large sum?

Lord V. No less than two hundred and forty pounds!

Sir G. Caution is a very excellent thing—Two hundred and forty—A fine virtue—Two—I would advise your lordship to it by all means—hundred and forty—[*Looks round.*] Will you permit me just to write a short memorandum; a bit of a note? [*Goes to a table.*] I must send to a certain place. [*Writes.*] Excuse me a moment.

Lord V. What can be done in this affair, Mr. Thompson?

Thom. Nothing, my lord. I am resigned. When I assisted my brother, I did no more than my duty. Those who lock me up in a prison may, for aught I know, do theirs; yet, though they are at liberty, and I shall be confined, I would neither change duties nor hearts with them. [*Going.*]

Sir G. Harkye! harkye! Mr. Thompson, will you just desire this to be taken as it is directed? [*Apart.*] Don't say a word; 'tis a draft on my banker. Discharge your debt, and be silent.—You are very right, my lord; we cannot be too considerate, lest, by mistaken benevolence, we should encourage vice.

Thom. Sir George—My lord—

Sir G. Why now, will you not oblige me, Mr. Thompson? Pray, let that be delivered as it is directed. You, surely, will not deny me such a favour.—For you know, my lord, if we give—

Thom. Indeed, I—

Sir G. Will you be gone? Will you be gone? [*Pushes him kindly off.*—If we give without—without—

Lord V. Poor fellow! I suppose he is afraid of being taken.

Sir G. Oh! Is that it?—If we give, I say, with

too—Psha! I have lost the thread of my argument.

Lord V. I must own, this is a dubious case. Perhaps I ought to pay the money. [*Calls.*] Mr. Thompson!—I don't think I ought to let him go to prison. What shall I do, Sir George?

Sir G. Whatever your lordship thinks best.

Lord V. But there is the difficulty.—Mr. Thompson! He is gone! How foolish this is now! [*As he is going off.*] Harry! Run after Mr. Thompson, and call him back. One would think a man going to prison, would, like me, be wise enough to doubt, and take time to consider of it. [*Erit.*]

Enter Lady VIBRATE.

Lady V. I assure you, Sir George, I am very angry. I have been waiting an age, expecting you would come and give your opinion on my masquerade dress.

Sir G. Why did not your ladyship put it on?

Lady V. On, indeed! It has been on and off twenty times. I have sent it to have some alteration. Besides, it is growing late; masks will be calling in on you, in their way to the Opera-house, and you not at home to receive them!

Sir G. I ask ten thousand pardons; but you know I am the most thoughtless creature on earth.

Lady V. So I would have you. Were you like the sober, punctual Mr. Delaval, I should hate you: but then—

Re-enter DELAVAL.

Here the wretch comes!

Aside.

Sir G. [*Aside.*] So, so! Now I shall interrogate the lady. She has a very masculine air! [*DELAVAL bows to Lady V.*] A tolerable bow that for a woman!

Lady V. [*Aside.*] He wishes, I suppose, to sermonize me; but I shall not give him an opportunity.—Are you coming, Sir George?

Del. [*Aside.*] Ha!

Sir G. I will follow your ladyship in a minute.

Del. [*Aside.*] I was right! it is he!

Sir G. [*Aside.*] She eyes me very ferociously!

Lady V. I shall just call in upon you; or, if not, we shall meet afterwards. I expect you to be very whimsical and satiric upon all my friends; so, pray, put on your best humour. Grave airs, you know, are my aversion. [*Erit.*]

Del. [*Aside.*] That was intended for me. Now for my gentleman.

Sir G. [*Aside.*] She really has a very fierce look! a kind of threatening physiognomy, and would make no bad grenadier!

Del. I understand your name is Sir George Versatile?

Sir G. [*Aside.*] A bass voice, too!—At your service, sir, or madam; I really cannot tell which.

Del. Cannot!

Sir G. No, I cannot, upon my soul! [*Aside.*] A devilish black chin!

Del. I have an account to settle with you, sir.

Sir G. Have you? [*Aside.*] What the plague can she mean?

Del. When can I find you at leisure, and alone?

Sir G. Alone?

Del. Yes, sir; alone.

Sir G. Must this account, then, be privately settled, madam?

Del. Madam!

Sir G. I beg your pardon, sir, since you prefer it.
Del. If you know me, sir, your insolence is but a confirmation of the baseness of your character!

Sir G. I beg a million of pardons; I really do not know you.

Del. Then, sir, when you do, you will find cause to be a little more serious.

Sir G. [*Aside.*] What a Joan of Arc it is! There is danger she should knock me down.

Del. Be pleased to name your time.

Sir G. [*Aside.*] Zounds! She insists upon a *tête-à-tête*!—I hope you will be kind enough to excuse me; but I am just now so pressed for time, that I have not a moment to spare. Company is waiting. I must begone to the masquerade. You, I presume, are for the same place, and are ready dressed. I am your most obedient—

Del. [*Seizing him.*] Sir, I insist upon your naming an hour, to-morrow; and an early one.

Sir G. Why, what the plague! Here must be some mistake! Permit me to ask, do you know Dr. Gosterman?

Del. Yes, sir.

Sir G. Was you not just now in danger of fainting?

Del. Faint! I faint!

Sir G. It would, I think, be a very extraordinary thing! But, so he told me; with other particulars.

Del. Absurd! Doctor Gosterman has not seen me for several months.

Sir G. He said, sir, you were a woman; and, perhaps, from that error I may have, unconsciously, provoked you to behaviour which would else have been rather strange. Have I given you any other offence?

Del. Yes, sir; a mortal one.

Sir G. Mortal!

Del. And mortal must be the atonement.

Sir G. If so, the sooner the better. Let it be immediately.

Del. No: I have serious concerns to settle, so have you. 'Tis time you should think of things very different from masquerading. Name your hour to-morrow morning; then, take an enemy's advice, retire to your closet, and make your will.

Sir G. To whom am I indebted for this high menace, and this haughty warning? Your name, sir?

Del. That you shall know when next we meet; not before.

Sir G. What age are you, sir?

Del. Age!

Sir G. Such peremptory heroes are not usually long-lived.

Del. You are right, sir; my life is probably doomed to be short. But this is trifling: name your hour.

Sir G. At ten to-morrow morning.

Del. The very time I could wish. I will be with you at your own house; inform you who I am; and then—

Sir G. So be it.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*The House of Sir George Versatile.—A suit of apartments richly decorated.*

Sir GEORGE VERSATILE, Lady VIBRATE, and numerous Masks, discovered.

Lady V. What is the matter with you, Sir George? You are suddenly become as dull, and almost as intolerable, as my lord himself.

Sir G. I own, I had something on my spirits; but it is gone. Your ladyship's vivacity is an antidote to splenetic fits.

Lady V. Oh! if you are subject to fits of the spleen, I renounce you.

Sir G. No, no! Heigho! Ha, ha, ha! Let me go merrily down the dance of life!

Lady V. Ay; or I will not be your partner.

Sir G. As for recollections, retrospective anxieties, and painful thoughts, I—I—I hate them. They shall not trouble me. For, if a man, you know, were to be sprung on a mine to-morrow,—ha, ha, ha!—it were folly to let that trouble him to-day.

Lady V. Sprung on a mine! You talk wildly.

Sir G. True. I am a wild, unaccountable non-descript. I am anything, everything, and soon may be—

Lady V. What?

Sir G. Nothing. Strange events are possible; and possible events are strange.

Lady V. Come, come; cast off this disagreeable humour, and join the masks.

Sir G. With all my heart. A mask is an excellent utensil, and may be worn with a naked face.

Lady V. [*Retiring.*] Why don't you come? you used to be all compliance.

Sir G. So I fear I shall always be. 'Tis my worst virtue. Call it a vice, if you please; and perhaps it is even then my worst.

Lady V. I really do not comprehend you.

Sir G. No wonder. Man is an incomprehensible animal! But no matter for that; we will be merry still, say I—at least, till to-morrow.

Lady V. [*Joins the masks.*] Yonder is Lady Jane.

Sir G. Nay, then, I am on the wing!

Maria. [*Advancing.*] Whither?

Sir G. Ah! Have I found you again! So much the better. I have been thinking of you this half hour.

Maria. Ay? That must have been a prodigious effort!

Sir G. What?

Maria. To think of one person for so great a length of time.

Sir G. True. Were you my bitterest enemy, you could not have uttered a more galling truth. I am glad I have met with you, however.

Maria. So am I. 'Tis my errand here.

Sir G. You now, I hope, will let me see your face?

Maria. I might, perhaps, were it but possible to see your heart.

Sir G. No, no; that cannot be: I have no heart.

Maria. I am sorry for it.

Sir G. So am I. But come, I wish to be better acquainted with you.

Maria. And I wish you to be better acquainted with yourself: you know not half your own good qualities.

Sir G. Ha, ha, ha! My good qualities! Heigho!

Maria. Your fame is gone abroad. Your gallantry, your free humour, your frolics in England and Italy, your—Apropos: I am told, Lady Jane is captivated by the ardour and delicacy of your passion! Is it true?

Sir G. Are you an inquisitor?

Maria. Are you afraid of inquisitors?

Sir G. Yes.

Maria. I believe you.

Sir G. You may. Keep me no longer in this suspense. Let me know who you are.

Maria. An old acquaintance.

Sir G. Of mine?

Maria. Of one who was formerly your friend.

Sir G. Whom do you mean?

Maria. You must have been a man of uncommon worth; for I have heard him bestow such praises upon you, that my heart has palpitated if your name was but mentioned.

Sir G. Of whom are you talking?

Maria. Lord! that you should be so forgetful!

That can only have happened since you became a person of fashion; for no man once remembered his friends better. It is true, they were then useful to you.

Sir G. Sir, I—Be warned! Pursue this no further.

Maria. You little suspected, at that time, you were on the eve of being a wealthy baronet. Oh, no! And to see how kind and grateful you were to those who loved you! No one would have believed you could so soon have become a perfect man of the mode; and, with so polite and easy an indifference, so entirely have forgotten all your old acquaintance! I dare say you scarcely remember the late Colonel Delaval.

Sir G. Sir!

Maria. His daughter, too, has utterly slipped your memory?

Sir G. I insist on knowing who you are!

Maria. How different it was when, your merit neglected, your spirits depressed, and your poverty despised, you groaned under the oppression of an unjust and selfish world! How did your drooping spirits revive by the fostering smiles of the man who first noticed you, took you to his house and heart, and adopted you as his son!—Poor Maria! Silly girl, to love as she did! Where is she?

Sir G. This is not to be endured!

Maria. What was her offence? You became a baronet! Ay; true, that was her crime. Yet, when your fortunes were low, it was not imputed to you as guilt.—

Sir G. [*Aside.*] D—n!

Maria. Are your new friends more affectionate than your old? Fortune smiles, and so do they. Poor Maria! Has Lady Jane ever heard her name? Will you invite her to your wedding? [*Her voice continually faltering.*] Do. She should have been your bride; then let her be your bride-maid. She is greatly altered—she will be less beautiful, now, than her fair rival. Her birth is not quite so high; but if a heart—a heart—a heart—

[*Struggling with her feelings, sinks into Sir GEORGE'S arms, and her mask falls off.*]

Sir G. Heaven and earth!—'Tis she!—Help!—'Tis Maria!—Who waits?

Enter Lady JANE.

Lady J. What is the matter?

Sir G. Help, help!—Salts, hartshorn, water!—Help!

Lady J. Bless me! this lady again.

Sir G. Is she, then, known to you?

Lady J. No. Who is she?

Sir G. Quick, quick!

Lady J. Nay, but tell me.

Sir G. I cannot, must not!

Lady J. Must not?

Sir G. Dare not!—She revives; and, to my confusion, will soon tell you herself. Maria! Are you better, Maria?

Maria. I am very faint.

Lady J. My carriage is at the door. Will you trust yourself to me?

Maria. Oh! yes. I am weak; very weak, and very foolish! But I shall not long disturb your happiness; I hope soon to be past that.

Sir G. Past! Oh! Maria, I have no utterance. Lady Jane, you will presently know of me what to know of yourself is—Oh!—No matter. Not, then, for my sake, but for pity, for the love of suffering virtue, be careful of this lady; whom, when you know, as soon you must, you will despise and abhor the lunatic, the wretch, that could—Maria—I—
[*Exit.*]

Enter DELAVAL.

Del. What is the matter? Any accident? Was not that Sir George?—Good God! my sister!

Lady J. Your sister!

Del. How comes this? Why this dress? And with that apostate! that wretch! Speak, Maria!

Maria. I cannot.

Lady J. Mr. Delaval, be more temperate. Your sister's spirits and health ought not to be trifled with by your violence. I do not know, though I think I guess, her story. I hope you have a brother's tenderness for her?

Del. That shall be shortly seen. A few hours will show how dear she is to my heart.

Lady J. I fear you cherish bad passions; such as I never can love, and never will share.

Del. Well, well, Lady Jane, that is not to be argued now. I am a man, and subject to the mistakes of man. There are feelings which can, and feelings which cannot be subdued. I must run my course, and take all consequences.

Maria. Oh, God! in what will they end?

Lady J. No more of this, Mr. Delaval. Come with me: lead your sister to my carriage. She shall be under my care. She can inspire those sympathies, which your too stubborn temper seems to despise.

Del. Indeed, indeed, you wrong me! [*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.

MARIA in her own dress, Lady JANE, and LUCY, discovered at breakfast. Footmen waiting.

Lady J. Remove those things. We have done.

[*Exeunt Footmen.*]

Maria. What is it o'clock?

Lady J. Just struck ten, ma'am.

Lucy. Lady Vibrate is a sad rake! She did not leave the masquerade till five this morning.

Maria. And Sir George not there!

Lady J. After the discovery of last night, could you suppose he would be seen revelling at such a place?

Maria. I dread another and more horrible cause! My brother!

Lady J. Mr. Delaval, you know, slept in this house.

Maria. But he has been out these two hours.

Lucy. What then, ma'am? Is not Mr. Williams on the watch? You know, ma'am, you may trust Mr. Williams with your life.

Maria. If all were safe, he would be back.

Lady J. Pray, calm your spirits.

Maria. Nay, nay—But Mr. Williams must have been here before this, if something fatal had not happened.

Lucy. I am sure, ma'am, you frighten me to death! *Lady J.* [*Aside.*] Her terrors are but too well founded!

Maria. [*Footsteps without.*] What noise is that?

Lucy. Bless me!

Lady J. See who it is.

Lucy. [*After opening the door.*] La! ma'am, I declare it is Mr. Williams.

Enter WILLIAMS.

Lucy. Well, Mr. Williams; everything is right; is not it? All is as it should be?

Wil. That is more than I know.

Maria. Why, then, the worst is past.

Wil. No, ma'am; I can't say that, either.

Lady J. Nay—But what news do you bring? Speak.

Wil. Why, you know, my master, last night, made enquiries how to find the chambers of Counsellor Demur; so, when he went out this morning, I observed your directions, and followed him. He went to the counsellor's in Lincoln's-inn, and there I left him, and hurried away to Sir George's, to inquire and hear all I could; though it was rather unlucky that I was not acquainted in the family.

Lady J. Did not you make use of my name?

Wil. Oh! yes, my lady. Besides, servants, your ladyship knows, are not so suspicious as their masters; they soon become friendly together; so, in five minutes, Sir George's valet and I were on as intimate a footing as we could wish.

Maria. And what did he say? Tell me.

Wil. Why, ma'am, he said, that Sir George did not leave his own house last night, after the fainting of the young gentleman.

Lucy. That was you, you know, ma'am.

Wil. And, what is more, that he did not go to bed; but walked up and down the room till daylight in the morning; and then called, I don't know how often, to warn the servants that he should not be at home to anybody whatever, except to a strange gentleman.

Maria. My brother!

Wil. Why, yes, ma'am; according to the description, it could be nobody else.

Lady J. And at what hour was Mr. Delaval to be there?

Wil. [*Aside.*] Zooks! I forgot to ask.—That—that, my lady, I did not learn. So, this being all the servants told me, I ran post haste to make my report to you.

Maria. The worst I foreboded will happen!

Lady J. What can be done?

Wil. Perhaps it will be better for me to go back to Sir George's; wait for the arrival of my master; and, if he should come, hasten away as fast as I can to inform you of it.

Lucy. That is a good thought, Mr. Williams. Is not it, madam? A very good thought, indeed! Don't you think it is, my lady?

Lady J. I know not what we can do better.

Maria. Nay, but while Williams is bringing us the intelligence, everything we most dread may happen.

Lucy. Dear! so it may.

Wil. Suppose, then, madam, I should stay at my post, and despatch Sir George's valet to you with the news?

Lucy. Well, that is the best thought of all! I am sure you will own it is, madam.

Maria. I know not what to think.

Lady J. We must resolve; or, while we are deliberating—

Maria. Merciful God! Run, Williams! Fly! Save my brother! Save Sir George!

Lady J. Succeed but in this, and command all we have to give.

Wil. I will do my best.

Lucy. That I am sure he will. [*Ereunt.*]

SCENE II.—*An apartment in the House of Sir George Versatile.*

SIR GEORGE VERSATILE *discovered walking, and greatly agitated.*

Sir G. [*Looking at his watch.*] He will soon be

here. Five minutes, but five minutes, and then—
[*Walks again; throws himself on a sofa; takes up a book, throws it away, and then rises.*] What is man's first duty? To be happy. Short-sighted fool! The happiness of this hour is the misery of the next! [*Walks again, and looks at his watch.*] What is life? A tissue of follies! inconsistencies! Joys that make reason weep, and sorrows at which wisdom smiles. Psha! There is not between ape and oyster so ridiculous or so wretched a creature as man! [*Walks.*] Oh, Maria!—[*Looking at his watch.*] I want but a few seconds: my watch, perhaps, is too fast. [*Rings.*]

Enter a Footman.

Sir G. Has nobody yet been here?

Foot. No, sir

Sir G. 'Tis the time to a minute. [*Loud knocking.*] Fly! If it be the person I have described, admit him. [*Exit Footman.*] Now let the thunder strike!

Enter DELAVAL.

Sir G. Good morning, sir!

Del. You recollect me?

Sir G. Perfectly.

Del. 'Tis well.

Sir G. I have been anxious for your coming. Your menace lives in my memory; and I shall be glad to know the name of him who has threatened such mortal enmity.

Del. A little patience will be necessary. I must preface my proceedings with a short story.

Sir G. I shall be all attention. Please to be seated. Wave ceremony, and to the subject. [*They sit.*]—Now, sir.

Del. About six years ago, a certain youth came up from college, poor, and unprotected. He was a scholar, pleasing in manners, warm and generous of temper, of a respectable family, and seemed to possess the germ of every virtue.

Sir G. Well, sir?

Del. Hear me no. My praises will not be tedious. Chance made him known to a man who desired to cherish his good qualities; and the purse, the experience, and the power of his benefactor, such as they were, he profited by to the utmost. Received as a son, he soon became dear to the family; but most dear to the daughter of his friend, whose tender age and glowing affections made her apt to admire the virtues she heard her father so ardently praise and encourage. You are uneasy?

Sir G. Be pleased to continue.

Del. The assiduities of the youth to gain her heart were unabating; and his pretensions, poor and unknown as he then was, were not rejected. The noble nature of his friend scorned to make his poverty his crime. Why do you bite your lip? Was it not generous?

Sir G. Sir!

Del. Was it not?

Sir G. Certainly! Nothing could—equal the—generosity.

Del. The health of his benefactor was declining fast; and the only thing desired of the youth was, that he should qualify himself for the cares of life by some profession; he, therefore, entered a student in the Temple; and the means were furnished by his protector, till the end was obtained. Was not this friendship?

Sir G. It was.

Del. The lady, almost a child when first he knew her, increased in grace and beauty faster than in years. Sweetness and smiles played upon her coun-

tenance. She was the delight of her friends, the admiration of the world, and the coveted of every eye. Lovers of fortune and fashion contended for her hand; but she had bestowed her heart; had bestowed it on a—Sit still, sir; I shall soon have done. I am coming to the point. Five years elapsed, during which the youth received every kindness friendship could afford, and every proof chaste affection had to give. These he returned with promises and protestations that seemed too vast for his heart, I would say for his tongue.—Are you unwell, sir?

Sir G. Go on with your tale.

Del. His benefactor, feeling the hand of death steal on, was anxious to see the two persons dearest to his heart happy before he expired; and the marriage was determined upon, the day fixed, and the friends of the family invited. The intended bridegroom appeared half frantic with his approaching bliss. Now, sir, mark his proceeding. In this short interval, by sudden and unexpected deaths, he becomes the heir to a title and large estate. Well! Does he not fly to the arms of his languishing friend? Does he not pour his new treasures and his transports into the lap of love? Coward and monster!—

Sir G. [Both starting up.] Sir.

Del. Viler than words can paint! Having robbed a family of honour, a friend of peace, and an angel of every human solace, he fled, like a thief, and concealed himself from immediate contempt and vengeance in a foreign country. But contempt and vengeance have at length overtaken him: they beset him: they face him at this instant. The friend he wronged is dead: but the son of that friend lives, and I am he.

Sir G. 'Tis as I thought!

[*Aside.*]

Del. You are—I will not defile my lips by telling you what you are.

Sir G. I own that what I have done—

Del. Forbear to interrupt me, sir. You have nothing to plead, and much to hear. First say; did my sister, by any improper conduct, levity of behaviour, or fault, or vice whatever, give you just cause to abandon her?

Sir G. None! none! Her purity is only exceeded by her love.

Del. Then, how, barbarian, how had you the heart to disgrace the family and endanger the life of a woman, whose sanctified affection would have embraced you in poverty, pestilence, or death; and who, had she possessed empires, would have bestowed them with an imperial affection?

Sir G. Sir, if you ask, have I committed errors?—call them crimes if you will—yes. If you demand, will you justify them?—no. If you require me to atone for them, here is my heart: you have wrongs to revenge, strike: and, if you can, inflict a pang greater than any it yet has known.

Del. Justice is not to be disarmed by being braved. To the question. It can be no part of your intention, and certainly not of mine, that you should marry my sister. Something very different must be done.

Sir G. What? Name it.

Del. You must give me an acknowledgment, written and signed by yourself, that you have basely and most dishonourably injured, insulted, and betrayed Maria Delaval: and this paper, immediately as I leave your house, I shall publish in every possible way, till my sister shall be so appeased, and honor so satiated, that vengeance itself shall cry, hold!

Sir G. Written by me! Published! No. I will sign no such paper.

Del. So I supposed; and the alternative follows. Here I am: nor will I quit you, go where you will, till you consent to retire with me to some place from which one of us shall never return. Should I be the victor,—flight, banishment from my native country, and the bitterest recollections of the villainies of man, must be the fate of me and my sister. If I fall,—you then may triumph, and she languish and die unrevenged. This, or the written acknowledgment. Consider, and choose.

Sir G. What can I answer? The paper you shall not have. My life you are welcome to: take it.

Del. Have you not brought disgrace enough on my family? Would you make me an assassin? My sister and my father loved you. Let me, if possible, feel some little return of respect for you.

Sir G. Having wronged your sister, would you have me murder the brother? Already the most guilty of men, would you make me worst of fiends? Though an enemy, be a generous one.

Del. Plausible sophist! The paper, sir: or man to man, and arm to arm, close the scene of my dishonour or your own. The written acknowledgment. Determine. [Walks away and views the pictures.]

Sir G. [Apart.] Why, ay! 'Tis come home! I have sought it, deserved it—'tis fallen, and the rock must crush the reptile! Then welcome ruin. The sword must decide. [Goes to take his sword, but stops.] The sword? What! Betray the sister and assassinate the brother? Oh, God! And such a brother! Stern, but noble-minded: indignant of injury, peerless in affection, and proud of a sister whom the world might worship; but whom I, worthless wretch, in levity and pride of heart, have abandoned. [Aloud.] Mr. Delaval!

Del. Have you resolved to sign?

Sir G. Hear me.

Del. The written acknowledgment!

Sir G. My behaviour to your sister is—what I cannot endure to name.—'Tis hateful! 'Tis infamous! My obligations to your most excellent father, the respect you have inspired me with, and my love for Maria—

Del. Insolent, insufferable meanness! The paper, sir!

Sir G. Angry though you are, Mr. Delaval, you must hear me. I say, my love, my adoration of Maria has but increased my guilt. It has made me dread her contempt. I durst not face the angel whom I had so deeply injured.

Del. Artifice! Evasion! Cowardice!—Your signature!

Sir G. [Snatching up his sword from the table.] You shall have it. Follow me.

Del. Fear me not.

Sir G. [Stopping short.] Hold, Mr. Delaval. Justice is on your side. If your firmness be not a savage spirit of revenge, if you do not thirst for blood, you will feel my only resource will be to fall on your sword. I cannot lift my arm against you.

Del. Then sign the acknowledgment.

Sir G. Can you, in the spirit even of an enemy, ask it? Do you not already despise me enough? Think for a moment: am I the only man that ever erred? Is it so wonderful, that a giddy youth, whose habitual failing was compliance, by sudden accident elevated to the pinnacle of fortune, surrounded by proud and selfish relations, of whose approbation I was vain; is it so strange, that I should be overpowered by their dictates, and yield to their entreaties? Your friendship or my death is now the only alternative. Suppose the latter: will it honour you

among men? At the man of blood the heart of man revolts! Will it endure you to Maria? Kind, forgiving angel, and hateful to myself as her affection makes me, I last night found that affection still as strong, still as pure, as in the first hour of our infant loves. Lady Jane—

Del. Forbear to name her! 'Tis profanation from your lips! No more casuistry! No subterfuge! The paper!

Sir G. Can no motives—

Del. None!

Sir G. My future life—my soul, shall be devoted to Maria.

Del. The paper!

Sir G. Obdurate man! [*Reflects a moment.*] You shall have it. [*Goes to the table to write, during which DELAVAL remains in deep thought, and much agitated.*] Here, sir! since you will not be generous, let me be just. 'Tis proper I remove every taint of suspicion from the deeply wronged Maria. [*Gives the paper.*]

Del. [*Reads with a faltering voice.*] "I, GEORGE VERSATILE, once poor and dependent, since vain, fickle, and faithless, do, under my hand, acknowledge I have perfidiously—broken my pledged promise—to the most deserving, lovely, and—"

[*Begins in much agitation to tear the paper.*]

Sir G. Mr. Delaval!

Del. Damu it—I can't—I can't speak. Here! Here!

[*Striking his bosom.*]

Sir G. Mr. Delaval!

Del. My brother!

Sir G. [*Falls on his neck.*] Can it be? My friend!

Del. This stubborn temper—always in extremes! The tiger or the child.

Sir G. Oh, no! 'Twas not to be forgiven! Best of men!

Del. Well, well; we are friends.

Sir G. Everlastingly! brothers!

Del. Yes; brothers.

Enter WILLIAMS, hastily.

Wil. Sir!—

Del. How now?

Wil. I beg your pardon, but Lady Jane and your sister are below. They insist on coming up, and the servants are afraid to—

Sir G. Maria! Let us fly. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*The apartments of Lord VIBRATE.*

Lady VIBRATE and Doctor GOSTERMAN discovered.

Doctor. Ya, my coot laty; dat vas efery vordt so true as vat I say. I vas discover it vas a voman; und Sair Shorge, und my Laty Shane, und de vaiting-vomans vas discover to me all as vat I say more.

Lady V. Ay, ay; that was the reason Sir George was not at the masquerade.

Doctor. Ya, my coot laty.

Lady V. I observed he was in a strange moody humour.

Doctor. My Lordt Fiprate vas fery mosh amazement, ven I vas make him discover all as vat I vas make discover mit my coot laty.

Lady V. Sir George has behaved very improperly.

Enter Lord VIBRATE.

Lord V. So, so, so! All I foreboded has come to pass: the day has slipped away, a new one is here, and every possibility of recovering the estate is gone.

Lady V. Ha, ha, ha!

Lord V. Do you laugh?

Lady V. Ha, ha, ha! I do indeed.

Lord V. Is your daughter's loss the subject of your birth?

Lady V. Ha, ha, ha! No, no; not her loss, but your positive determination to prove I did not know you. Ha, ha, ha! When I told you that even that motive would not be strong enough, how you stormed! "But it will, my lady. But it won't, my lord. I say it will, my lady. I say it won't, my lord." Ha, ha, ha! Will you believe that I know you now?

Lord V. What shall I do? Advise me, Doctor.

Doctor. I vas adfice, my coot lordt, dat you shall do eferyting as vat you please.

Lady V. Ay, think; ask advice. Ha, ha, ha! Now that you can do nothing, the inquiry will be very amusing.

Enter THOMPSON.

Lord V. Well, Thompson, what says Counsellor Demur? Has the time absolutely elapsed?

Thom. Absolutely, my lord.

Lady V. How wisely your lordship doubts before you decide! Eh! Doctor?

Thom. I have good news, nevertheless.

Lord V. Good news! Speak: of what kind?

Thom. The honesty of the opposite party.

Lord V. What, the holder of the land?

Thom. Yes, my lord.

Lord V. Which way? Explain.

Thom. He has engaged to Mr. Demur, I being present, that, if your lordship will only shew the legality of your late title, he will resign the estate.

Lord V. Is it possible?

Lady V. It cannot be: the last purchaser is in India.

Thom. The last purchaser is dead; and it has descended to one whom you, my lord and lady, little suspect to be its possessor.

Lord V. Who?

Lady V. Who?

Thom. Mr. Delaval.

Lady V. Mr. Delaval!

Lord V. Mr. Delaval resign it on exhibiting the legality of my title?

Thom. He will, my lord.

Lord V. Did he make no conditions?

Thom. None.

Lord V. What, did he not mention Lady Jane?

Thom. Her name did escape his lips; but rising passion, and, if I rightly read his heart, emotions of the most delicate sensibility, immediately closed them; as if he would not endure the love he bore her to be profaned by any the slightest semblance of barter and sale.

Lord V. What do you say to that, Lady Vibrate? What do you say to that?

Lady V. The proceeding is honourable, I own.

Lord V. Did I not always tell you, Mr. Delaval was a man of honour?

Lady V. You tell me, my lord? Why, you were going to challenge him yesterday morning.

Lord V. He is no such weathercock as your favourite, Sir George.

Lady V. You mistake: Sir George is no favourite of mine. Is he, Doctor?

Doctor. Dat vas all yust as vat you say, my coot laty.

Lord V. What, he did not come to make a buffoon of himself, for your diversion, at the masquerade last night? Eh! Doctor?

Doctor. Dat vas all yust as vat you say, my coot lordt.

Lady V. His perfidious treatment of Miss Delaval is unpardonable.

Doctor. Dat vas pad ; fery pad, inteet.

Lord V. Ay, ay ; he has plenty of words, but he has no heart.

Doctor. Dat is pad ; fery pad, inteet.

Thom. Pardon me, my lord ; Sir George may have committed mistakes, but to the goodness of his heart I am a witness.

Lady V. You ?

Lord V. How so ?

Thom. By his benevolence I was yesterday relieved from the disgrace and the horrors of a prison.

Lord V. Indeed !

Lady V. Which way ?

Thom. He paid a debt, which, had I been confined, I never could have discharged ; and, for this unexpected act of humanity, he would not suffer so much as my thanks.

Lord V. Did Sir George pay the two hundred and forty pounds, Mr. Thompson ?

Thom. The note, which he pretended to write and send by me, was a draft on his banker for three hundred.

Lord V. Why, he confirmed all my arguments against it ; and added twice as many of his own.

Doctor. Sair Shorge vas alway make agréable. Dat vas his vay.

Lady V. I own, nowever, I am still more surprised at the unexampled generosity of Mr. Delaval.

Enter WILLIAMS.

Where is your master, Mr. Williams ?

Wil. They are all coming, my lady.

Lady V. Who is coming ?

Wil. Mr. Delaval, Lady Jane, Miss Delaval, and Sir George. There has been sad work ; but it is all over and they are now so happy ! Here they are.

Enter Mr. DELAVAL leading Lady JANE, and Sir

GEORGE VERSATILE with MARIA, followed by LUCY.

Lord V. Mr. Delaval, I have great obligations to you. Thompson has been telling me of your disinterested equity.

Del. The obligation, my lord, was mine. Your lordship well knows that the first of obligations is to be just.

Lord V. Well, well ; but the estate you are so willing to resign will still, I hope, be your's.

Del. Nay, my lord.

Lord V. Dubious as all things are, that is a subject on which I protest I do not believe I shall ever have any doubts. What say you, Lady Jane ? But now I have my doubts again.

Lady J. What doubts, my lord ?

Lord V. I doubt whether you understand me ?

Lady J. Would your lordship teach me to dissemble ?

Lord V. Hum ! I doubt whether that would be much for your good.

Del. I hope Lady Vibrate will not oppose our union ?

Lady V. No, Mr. Delaval. Your last generous action has charmed me ; and Sir George—

Sir G. Has declined in your good opinion. But you cannot think so ill of me as I do of myself ; and if ever again I should recover my own self-respect, I shall be indebted for it to this best of men, and to this most incomparable and affectionate of women.

Maria. My present joys are inexpressible—

Del. Which my impetuous indignation threatened for ever to destroy. How dangerous are extremes ! Sometimes we doubt, and indecision is our bane ; at others, hurried away by the sudden impulse of passion, our course is marked with misery. One man is too compliant ; another too intractable. Yet happiness is the aim of all. Since, then, all are so liable to be misled, let gentle forbearance, indulgent thoughts, and a mild forgiving spirit, be ever held as the sacred duties of man to man. [Exeunt.]

THE END.

D U P L I C I T Y ;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS,

BY THOMAS HOLCROFT.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SIR HORNET ARMSTRONG.
SIR HARRY PORTLAND
'SQUIRE TURNBULL
VANDERVELT
OSBORNE
TIMID
SCRIP
Servants.

CLARA
MELISSA
MISS TURNBULL
MRS. TRIP.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Sir Harry Portland's House.*

CLARA and MELISSA discovered.

Clara. Well, my dear Melissa, you will be a happy woman.

Mel. I have no doubt of it. The attention which Mr. Osborne has shewn me was not that of a man eager to gain the affection of his mistress by humouring her caprices, praising her beauty, and flattering her follies. He is obliging and well-bred, but sincere; yet his disapprobation is delivered with a delicacy that makes it more agreeable than some people's compliments.

Clara. If time, instead of mellowing the strokes, should wear away this smooth varnish, and discover a harsh outline, should you not be offended at the severity of his manner, think you?

Mel. Believe me, dear Clara, there is no danger; for if there be one man on earth more capable of making a woman happy than another, it is Mr. Osborne.

Clara. It would be heresy in you, my dear, to hold any other opinion; and I have no doubt but you will continue orthodox after marriage.

Mel. Yes; I shall die in that faith.

Clara. Your brother, Sir Harry, I believe, is of your religion, too.

Mel. Entirely. The friendship of Mr. Osborne

and my brother is as sincere as the commencement of it was remarkable. Have you ever heard their story?

Clara. Never. You know my acquaintance with your family is but just begun; but I hope you will not think them words of course when I assure you that, short as it is, I feel myself interested in its happiness.

Mel. Oh! I am sure you are sincere; I know it by sympathy. Well, then, I'll tell you: Harry and Osborne happened to be both abroad at the same time. As my brother was going to Italy, and passing through the mountainous part of Savoy, he came to a hollow way, among the rocks, surrounded by trees and caverns; all on a sudden, at a turning in the road, he beheld Osborne and his servants, attacked by six banditti, and ready to sink under their wounds.

Clara. Was Sir Harry alone? [*Alarmed.*]

Mel. He had his governor, two servants, and the postilion. My brother instantly leaped from his carriage, snatched up his sword and pistols, and flew to the place of action.

Clara. I declare you terrify me.

Mel. He was not seen by the combatants, and took care to advance so near before he fired, that he could not fail to do execution. He laid two of the banditti dead; and their companions, who had discharged their fire-arms, and beheld Sir Harry's people running to the attack and levelling their pieces, fled.

Clara. Thank you for that, my dear; you have given me breath.

Mel. The intrepidity with which Sir Harry saw Osborne defend himself, and the fortitude he discovered when he was informed (as it was at first believed) that his wounds were mortal, attached my brother so powerfully to him, that he resolved not to leave him in the hands of strangers, but anxiously waited while he was under cure.

Clara. This was a noble generosity.

Mel. It was; and Osborne was so sensible of it, that, though he was going the other way, he would return with Sir Harry into Italy; and their friendship has continued ever since.

Clara. But is it not strange, my dear, that he cannot detach his friend from the gaming-table?

Mel. My brother is infatuated. It is his greatest, almost his only weakness.

Clara. But the report is, that Mr. Osborne takes

advantage of this weakness; and, in fact, has half ruined Sir Harry himself.

Mel. The report of malice, my dear.

Enter Sir HARRY PORTLAND and Mr. OSBORNE.

Sir Harry. Ladies, your obedient. Pray, when did you arrive in town, madam? [*To CLARA.*]

Clara. Yesterday. But how came you to quit Bath so suddenly, gentlemen?

Sir Harry. Mr. Osborne, madam, was *horriblement ennuyé*; dull as an alderman at church, or a fat lap-dog after dinner; thinking on marriage, Melissa, and other important matters; and so—

Osborne. Come, come, Sir Harry, this is mighty ingenious; but you were, at least, as willing to be gone as myself. The truth, madam, is, my modest friend here heard you were to set off in a day or two; and from that moment was continually giving hints, and asking me how I, as a lover, could exist so long without a sight of my mistress; and, in short, began, all at once, to talk so sympathetically about absence and ages, that I, who had made the excursion purely to oblige him, was, I acknowledge, exceeding happy to find I could oblige him by returning.

Clara. What say you to this, Sir Harry? But, I know your politeness: you will confess it all to be true, and begin to say civil things upon the subject, that will only put me to the trouble of blushing and curtsying; so we'll suppose them all, if you please. But come, tell me: what's the news of the day?

Mel. News! Oh! that's true. Look here, my dear. I thought I had something to tell you. [*Reads a paragraph in a newspaper.*] "*We hear, from very good authority, that an hymeneal treaty is concluded between a certain beautiful ward, not a mile from St. James's-square, and her old guardian; and that the lady is expected in town from Bath, every hour, to sign and seal.*"

Sir Harry. What say you to this, madam?

Clara. Say! I protest I don't know what to say; except that these newsmakers are a very pleasant, ingenious kind of people.

Mel. But aren't you angry?

Clara. Angry! no, indeed. I am sure I am very much obliged to them for thinking of me: I shall be so stared at! I'll go into public continually, and my guardian shall go with me.

Mel. But is there any foundation for this report, my dear?

Clara. Nay, I am sure I can't tell. I have suspected the matter a great while, by my guardian's smirking and squeezing my hand so often. He read, the other day, in the Annual Register, of a man, at Inverness, who lived to the age of one hundred and seventeen; and he has been talking ever since of purchasing a country-seat in the Highlands.

Sir Harry. That would be pleasant.

Clara. Very. Then we should have a flock of goats, I suppose.

Sir Harry. Dorastus and Faunia.

Clara. Oh! yes; quite in the Damon and Philida way.

Osborne. You are very happy in a lover, madam.

Clara. Oh! quite proud of my conquest. There is no such great miracle in bringing a young fellow, whose passions are all afloat, to die at one's feet. The thing's so natural that one does it every day. But to thaw the icy blood of a grave old gentleman; to see him smirker, sigh, dance minuets, and look ridiculous for one—Oh! there is, positively, no flattery equal to it.

Sir Harry. He will make your winter evenings in

the Highlands quite entertaining, with relating the wild pranks he committed, and the deeds of prowess he was guilty of, in his youth; then you will be so delighted with listening to his raptures, and tasting his panado, and—

Clara. Oh! yes, yes, yes—Ha, ha!—I—I think I see him now, with his venerable bald head, his shrivelled face, and his little pug nose, that looks as red and as bright as the best Dutch sealing-wax, rising from his chair, by the help of his crutch-headed stick, to breathe forth vows of love and everlasting fidelity. Ha, ha, ha!

Mel. It's whimsical enough.

Clara. Yes. Oh! now you talk of whimsicality, I was accosted by an old gentleman the night before I left Bath, in the Rooms, who was the drollest being I ever met with. I thought he would have made love to me; swore I was an angel, and said a thousand civil things.

Osborne. Oh! madam, the old men are the only polite men of this age.

Clara. Upon my word, I begin to think so.

Osborne. The young ones, taught in the modern school, hold a rude familiarity to be the first principle of good breeding.

Clara. Manners, like point-ruffles, are now most fashionable when they are soiled.

Sir Harry. No, no; they only hang the easier for being deprived of starch. But who was this old gentleman, pray, madam?

Clara. A relation of yours, sir.

Sir Harry. Of mine, madam?

Clara. I should suppose so, for he mentioned his nephew, Sir Harry Portland.

Mel. Our uncle, Sir Hornet Armstrong.

Sir Harry. It is. I found a letter from him when I came to town, in which he informed me he should arrive in Bath the very day we left it.

Enter a Servant, with a letter.

Who brought this?

Serv. It came by the post, sir.

[*Exit.*]

Clara. I die to be better acquainted with him. I must have him in my train of sighing swains.

Osborne. You seem astonished, Sir Harry.

Clara. Some unkind billet from his mistress, I suppose.

Sir Harry. No, indeed; it is the most unaccountable epistle I ever received, and from my unaccountable uncle, too. There, read, read.

[*To OSBORNE.*]

Osborne. [*Reads.*] "*Dear Harry,—You know, you dog, how your old uncle loves you. You will say so when you are thoroughly acquainted with the occasion of this. In brief, I met with a young lady at Bath, the most extraordinary, take her altogether, I ever beheld. She is a nonpareil, a phenix! But you will judge for yourself: she is coming up to town with her brother; who, by-the-by, is a country booby—but that's no matter. I saw her only once, and that was in the rooms; but once is sufficient. They intend coming up to London, by way of seeing the town, for they are country people, I find; though the sister has more accomplishments, ease, and good-breeding, than I ever yet saw in the drawing-room. I proposed a match to the brother, and he seemed happy at the offer. They will arrive nearly as soon as this, for they set out before it; and I shall follow, maugre the gout, as fast as I can.—Hornet Armstrong.—P.S. I forgot to mention their name is Turnbull.*"—Turnbull! why, what, in the devil's name, is Sir Hornet mad?

Sir Harry. In one of his right ancient whims, I suppose Sir Hornet has had many such in his time

Mel. But pray, who is this miraculous lady, Mr. Osborne? for you seem to know something of her.

Ob. Do you remember, Sir Harry, a gawky girl, that stalked round the rooms, and stared prodigiously?—she that was stuck to the side of a bob-wigged country 'squire?

Clara. Oh! what, the—the girl with her arms dangling, her chin projecting, and her mouth open, that looked as if she were afraid of being lost.

Sir Harry. Yes; or, as if she dared not trust herself alone, out of her own parish, lest somebody should catch her, put her in a sack, and send her for a present to the king of the cannibals.

Ob. The same; that is the accomplished Miss Turnbull.

Sir Harry. How!

Ob. That is the easy, well-bred, drawing-room lady.

Sir Harry. Is it possible?

Clara. Ha, ha, ha! Well, [with affected gravity.] and I don't doubt but she would make a sort of a—a—very good wife. Understands the art of brewing, baking, pickling of pork, curing of hung beef, darning of stockings, and other branches of housewifery, in perfection. Believes in ghosts, and has got the Wandering Prince of Troy, the Babes in the Wood, and the entertaining dialogue of Death and the Lady, by heart.

Ob. Such, and so numerous, are the wife-like properties of Miss Barbara Turnbull.

Clara. Turnbull, too! Well, that is such a delightful name for a country lady; so pastoral!

Ob. The father was one of the greatest graziers in the west of England; and was so intent on getting money, that he bred his children in the most stupid ignorance. He is lately dead, and the son has commenced gentleman and 'squire, by virtue of the father's industry and a pack of fox-hounds; and though he has scarcely knowledge enough of articulate sounds to hold a dialogue with his own geese, yet does he esteem himself a devilish shrewd fellow, and a wit. His conversation is vociferous, and patched up of proverbs and out-of-the-way sayings, which he strings together without order or connection; and utters, upon all occasions, and in all companies, without respect to time, place, or person.

Clara. Well, well, Sir Harry, I shall have to wish you joy soon, I suppose; but I must be gone; fifty visits to make this morning—time flies—but agreeable company, and all that, you know—Oh! Sir Harry, you mean to attend the spring meeting this year at Newmarket? I am told you understand the turf; I think of sending a venture of five hundred by somebody. But I shall see you often enough before then. Adieu. [Exit with MELISSA.]

Sir Harry. Well, what do you think of this lady, Osborne?

Ob. I think her a very amiable, accomplished lady; and one that, under an assumed levity, observes and understands everything about her.

Sir Harry. I am entirely of your opinion. If I may judge from an acquaintance of such short date, she is the first woman in the world.

Ob. Except one, Sir Harry.

Sir Harry. You, Osborne, may make exceptions, if you please; I am not so captious. She has beauty without vanity, virtue without prudery, fashion without affectation, wit without malice, gaiety without coquetry, humour—

Ob. Hold, hold! stop to breathe. How was it? Vinegar without acid, fire without heat, light without shade, motion without matter, and a likeness without a feature!

Sir Harry. "Spite, by the gods! proud spite and burning envy!"

Ob. But did you observe her Newmarket hint, Sir Harry; and the concealed significance with which it was delivered?

Sir Harry. I did.

Ob. Which being faithfully done into English, bears this interpretation: "I, Clara Forrester, a beautiful, elegant, sensible girl, with a fine fortune, should like to take you, Harry Portland, with youth, spirit, and certain *et ceteras*, but!"

Sir Harry. "But that I am afraid of indulging a partiality for any man who is so intolerably addicted to gaming." Is not that the conclusion of your speech?

Ob. Oh, fie! No, no: gaming! That man has a body without a soul, that never felt an inclination to gaming.

Sir Harry. Perhaps so; but that man has the greatest soul who can best resist that inclination.

Ob. Psha! Gaming is the essence of fashion, and one of your strongest recommendations. Clara is a girl of spirit; and what girl that comes under that description, would ever place her affections on a sneaking, sober, prudent fellow? a mechanical scoundrel, that knows the day of the month, sips tea, keeps a pew in the parish church, writes memorandums, and goes to bed at eleven o'clock. Pho! absurd!

Sir Harry. Curse me, Osborne, if I know what to make of you. You are a riddle that I cannot expound. You have such an awkward way of praising gaming, that it always has the appearance of satire.

Ob. Satire! How so? Do you think I'd satirize myself? Who sports more freely than I do?

Sir Harry. Why, there's the mystery. You are as eager, to the full, as I am. If I get a hundred on a back hand, you offer a thousand; nay, had I the fortune of a nabob, and were to stake it all, you would be the first man to cry "covered!" and be d—d mad if any one wanted to go a guinea: not because you have not generosity, but in the true and inveterate spirit of gaming.

Ob. Certainly. Gaming! why, gaming is the best sal volatile for the spleen: it rouses the spirits, agitates the blood, quickens the pulse, and puts the whole nervous system in a continual vibration. No man ever yet died of apoplexy, that loved a box and dice.

Sir Harry. But they have died as suddenly.

Ob. Oh! ay, ay; but that's a fashionable disease, an influenza; that's to make your exit with *éclat*; that's to go out of the world with a good report.

Sir Harry. True, true; and, indeed, as to a few years more or less, that is, in reality, a mighty insignificant circumstance.

Ob. A bagatelle! Let us live while we do live, and die when we can't live any longer.

Sir Harry. That's my comfort, that's my comfort. Yes, yes; a pistol—a pistol is a very certain remedy for the choleric. Nobody but a pitiful scoundrel would go sighing, and whining, and teasing other people with his griefs and complaints. When a man is weary, what should he do but go to sleep?

Ob. To be sure. Life itself is but a dream. 'Tis only sleeping a little sounder.

Sir Harry. What! live to be pitied! Ha, ha! A decayed gentleman! No, no, no. A withered branch; a firelock without a flint? And yet—heigho! this Clara—d—n it, its provoking. Youth, beauty, affability—she's a bewitching girl!

Ob. She is, indeed.

Sir Harry. A lovely girl!

Osb. Ay, enough so to make any man, that might hope to be in her favour, in love with life.

Sir Harry. Any man, any man but me—no, no—Undone, undone, undone!

Osb. Well, but, seriously, since you have such bad success, why don't you renounce play?

Sir Harry. 'Tis too late. I have sunk eighty thousand; my resources almost all exhausted, my estates all mortgaged to Jews and scoundrels.

Osb. All?

Sir Harry. All; except the estate in Kent.

Osb. Well then, if you cannot content yourself with your present loss, your best way will be to make another vigorous push.

Sir Harry. That's exactly what I am determined to do; and, unless the devil possesses the dice, I think I may expect, without a miracle, that fortune should change hands.

Osb. One would think so, indeed. Will you dine, then, at my house? There will be the Chevalier, the Baron, and the usual set. They have engaged to dine with me. They are spirited fellows, and will play for any sum.

Sir Harry. I don't know. Suspicion is a cursed meanness; and yet, I cannot help having my doubts of some among that company. Nay, had you not so often assured me you were perfectly acquainted with them all—

Osb. Why, I tell you again and again, so I am. I will be answerable for their conduct, and that's more than I would say for any other set of gamblers upon earth.

Sir Harry. Well, well; I'll meet you there.

Osb. We dine early; at five.

Sir Harry. Agreed.

Osb. And then, hey for a light heart and a heavy purse. [Exit.]

Sir Harry. No, no; no light heart for me: I am sunk, degraded in my own opinion. Gaming alters our very nature. Osborne used to hate it; he was then an open-hearted, generous fellow; he now appears to have contracted an insatiable love for money, and a violent desire to win, he cares not of whom—of me as soon as another. Were I in his situation, and he in mine, I think I should find an aversion to increase his distress; he knows mine, yet has no such aversion. Perhaps he thinks my ruin certain, and that he may as well profit by it as another. I know him to have the most refined and strictest sense of honour: I have lost most of my money to him and in his company, and, therefore, have not been duped out of it. That is some comfort, however. [Exit.]

SCENE II.

Enter Mr. OSBORNE and TIMID.

Osb. Well, Mr. Timid, has Sir Harry sent to you for a further supply?

Timid. Lackaday! sir, yes; and a very large supply, too. He wants five thousand pounds immediately. Lackaday! I asked him how he thought it possible for me to raise such sums as he called upon me for every day; reminded him what a bad way his affairs were in, and what an usurious rate I was obliged to borrow all his money at.

Osb. What said he?

Timid. Lackaday! not much: seemed chagrined; said it must have an end, one way or another, soon; and demanded whether I could or could not raise the money. Lackaday! I told him I was no longer

master of ways and means; and he said then he must positively employ another prime minister, for supplies he must have.

Osb. Why did you tell him that? Go to him, inform him you have met with a tender-hearted Jew, who knows nothing of the situation of his affairs, that will lend him ten thousand pounds directly, if he want it.

Timid. Ten thousand! on what terms?

Osb. Oh! the mortgage of the Kentish estate.

Timid. The Kentish estate! Lackaday! but suppose he should go to gaming, and lose it to somebody else instead of you.

Osb. Oh! I'll take care of that.

Timid. Lackaday! It must not be Benjamin Solomons who lends this?

Osb. True; no—humph! Isaac Levi, agent to a private company at Amsterdam.

Timid. [Writes in a pocket-book.] "Isaac Levi, agent to a private company at Amsterdam." I ack aday!

Osb. Well, go you to him, and inform him that the money shall be ready in about half-an-hour.

Timid. Lackaday! good young gentleman! Heaven pardon me, I had like to have said d—the dice! You'll be a true friend?

Osb. Be under no apprehensions. This old fool is become suspicious, I must be sudden. [Aside.]

Timid. Had not we better inform him of all, before he goes any further?

Osb. By no means; leave that to me.

Timid. Lackaday! Well, the remembrance of a good deed is grateful on a death-bed.

Osb. Do you be expeditious; I'll instruct the Jew, and he shall meet you here. [Exeunt.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The same.*

SIR HARRY PORTLAND and MELISSA discovered.

Sir Harry. Heavens! what romance! I can scarcely believe my eyes. Did you ever hear of so strange an affair?

Mel. Strange! it's miraculous. Quixotism! And our good uncle is the prince of madmen.

Sir Harry. To send a foolish, illiterate, country dowdy, and her blockhead brother, a visiting on such an errand! What can I say to them? I declare I don't know how to behave: never was so embarrassed in my life. Where are they?

Mel. He has made an acquaintance with the groom, and is gone to the mews, which seems to be his proper element, to examine the horses; and I left her with my woman, staring, like a Dutch doll, at everything she fixed her eyes on. Here she comes.

Enter Miss TURNBULL.

Miss T. My gracious! Here be a power of voine —[staring about.]—I wonder if that be he that be to be my husband. [Aside.]

Sir Harry. I hope, madam, the fatigue of your journey has not injured your health.

Miss T. Zir?

Sir Harry. I hope you are pretty well after your journey.

Miss T. Pretty well, thank you, zir. Iveck! he's a handsome man. [Aside.]

Mel. This is the oddest affair.

Sir Harry. [*Aside.*] I don't know what to say to her. I am afraid, Miss Turnbull, you wou'd find the town so agreeable as the Elysian fields of Somersetshire.

Miss T. Lysian fields! There be no such yields in our parts. There be only corn yields and hay yields.

Mel. My brother, madam, means to say, you are not so well pleased with the town as with the country, perhaps.

Miss T. Oh! yes, but I be though, and ten times better. [*They stand silent for some time.*] Pray, miss, when did you see Zekel Turnbull, my uncle?

Mel. I have not the honour to know him.

Miss T. My gracious! What, don't you know Zekel?

Mel. No, indeed.

Miss T. Why, he do come to London zity your times every year.

Sir Harry. Is he in parliament?

Miss T. Parliament!

Sir Harry. Yes.

Miss T. What, a parliament-man?

Sir Harry. Yes.

Miss T. No; he be a grazier. [*Silence again.*] Pray, miss, have you been to see the lions and the wax-work to-day?

Mel. To-day?

Miss T. Ees.

Mel. I never saw them in my life.

Miss T. My gracious! What, never saw the kings and the queens, and the tomb-stones?

Mel. No.

Miss T. Merciful vather! Well, let's go and see 'em now, then.

Mel. People of fashion never go to those kind of places.

Miss T. Never!

Mel. Never.

Miss T. My gracious! But I am sure I will go every day, while I be in London zity, if I can vind the way. Pray, be this vair-time here? Where be all those volk gwin, and where do they all come fro?

Turn. [*Without.*] Barbara, Barbara! Where beest, Barbara?

Miss T. I be here.

Enter 'Squire TURNBULL.

Turn. Well, Zir Harry, here we be. Madam, your zervant. I zupped wi' Zir Hornet three nights ago, an' a zaid you be a vine lass: what, though I had never zeen you, but I gave you, miss, in a bumper, an' Zir Hornet swore that, except Barbara, a didn't know one to match you.

Mel. He did me great honour.

Turn. Why, to be zure a did. What, though a was wrong—I zee a was wrong; Barbara is well enough; but vor all the length of her spurs, she won't do, pitted against this vine ginger pullet.

Mel. Your compliments quite overpower me, sir.

Turn. Compliments! No, no. What, though vather be dead, an' I ha' three thousand a year, and the best pack of vox dogs in Zomersetshire, I ha' no need make compliments; I would as zoon override the hounds, or vell oak zaplings vor vire-wood. Barbara, mayhap, understands zic things, her reads kademy o' compliments; vor my part, I ha' no time vor zic trash—

Miss T. I'm zure it be a very pretty book.

Turn. Hold thy tongue, Barbara, an' then nobody will know thee beest a vol. Lookye me, miss: I do want a wife, and I should like hugely vor you an' I to zet our horses together, as the zaying is.

Mel. Sir, I don't understand—

Turn. Vor my part, I am none o' your half-bred ones. What, though shilly-shally and no thank you are always hungry—a lame tongue gets nothing, and the last wooer wins the maid—a bad hound may start a hare, but a good one will catch her.

Sir Harry. I believe, sir, you never saw my sister before.

Turn. Why, no, to be zure. What though, love and a red nose can't be hid—if you cut up the goose, I'll eat it—The hare starts when the hound least expects it.

Sir Harry. Very true, sir; but here is a disagreeable misunderstanding—

Turn. Why, to be zure, I do know it. We misunderstand the thing partly well: it be very disagreeable, an' I be glad of it. I ha' brought Barbara to London to see the lions, buy ribands, an' be married. But, what though, liking's liking, an' love's love; myself bevore my zister. If the mountain won't go to the man, the man mun go to the mountain—an' vaint heart never won vair lady.

Sir Harry. Don't you think, sir, that were my zister's affections totally disengaged, this abruptness were very unlikely to gain them? Is it not too violent, think you, for female delicacy?

Turn. Why, to be zure—female delicacy! I hate it; and as vor your abruptness, why, gi' me the man that speaks bolt outright: I am vor none o' your abruptness. What though, he must ha' leave to speak that can't hold his tongue.

Mel. Your proverb is quite apropos, sir.

Turn. Why, to be zure; dogs bark as they are bred.

Sir Harry and Mel. Ha, ha, ha!

Turn. I am a staunch hound, miss, and seldom at vault; an' zo, wi' your leave, I'll—

[*Offers to kiss MELISSA.*]

Mel. I beg, sir—

Turn. Nay, don't be bashful; I like fruit too well to play long at bob-cherry—a's a vol, indeed, that can't carve a plum-pudding.

[*Offers to kiss again, and is prevented by Sir H.*]

Sir Harry. I am sorry to be obliged to inform you, that you are entirely mistaken, both with respect to the affections of my sister and myself. As a friend of my uncle's, sir, I shall be happy to shew you every respect, but nothing farther can possibly take place between the families.

[*Enter a Servant, and delivers a card to MELISSA.—Exit MELISSA.*]

Serv. Mr. Timid desired me to tell you, sir, that Mr. Levi is quite tired of waiting; and says, if you can't come now, he will call again to-morrow.

Sir Harry. Oh! tell him he must not go; I beg Mr. Levi's pardon, I'll be with him in a minute. [*Exit Servant.*] Sir Hornet has been exceedingly precipitate in this business, sir: he is coming to town, and must apologize for his error. As to my sister, I have no doubt but she has every respect for your merits they deserve; but her affections are pre-engaged, the nuptials fixed, and are soon to be celebrated. While you remain in town, however, I beg you will command my house and services. [*Exit.*]

Turn. Well, Barbara, what dost think on un?

Miss T. Why, a be well enough; but I daunt rightly know what a means.

Turn. What a means! thee beest a vol; thee dost na' know the London tongue, thee means: a zaid, in a kind o' round-about way, that it's all right.

Miss T. Did a?

Turn. Did a! why to be zure a did; didst na'

zee how zivil a were, an' what a low bow a made ? But thee has no contagion in thee ; thee will never learn what's what.

Miss T. Why, where be I to learn zic things ? I ha' never been no where.

Turn. Never been no where ! Well, what o' that ? Where have I been ? I ha' never been no where. What though, I do know how to ztir my broth without scalding my finger—I can zee an owl in an oven as zoon as another.

Miss T. But when be us to go and zee the zights ?

Turn. Oh ! we'll go all together on the wedding-day.

Miss T. My gracious ! I wish it were here.

Turn. Ay, ay ; I daunt doubt thee : women, pigs, and poultry, be never zatisfied.

Miss T. An' be you to be married as well ?

Turn. Be I to be married as well ! Why, to be zure I be. Isn't vather dead ? an' ha' not I three thousand a-year, an' the best pack o' vox dogs in Zomerzethire ? An' didst na' hear me tell miss 'at I would marry her ? What though, I do know how to catch two pigeons wi' one pea ; shew a dog a bone, and he'll wag his tail ; he that is born a beauty is half-married, an' like will to like.

Miss T. Well, then, take me to parliament-house, an' shew me the king, an' the queen, and the lord mayor, an' th' elephant, an' the rest o' th' royal vamily.

Turn. I tell thee, thee sha'n't.

Miss T. My gracious ! What zignification's my coming to London zity, an' I must be moped up a this'n ? I will go, zo I will.

Turn. I tell thee, thee sha'n't.

Miss T. Why, then, an' I unmutt zee the king, I'll go into next room and zee his picter, that I will.

[*Exit.*]

Turn. Ahoic ! Barbara, Babara ! The helve after the hatchet—He that holds a woman, mun ha' a long rope an' a strong arm—Women an' mules will go their own road in zpite of riders or ztinging-nettles.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*The House of Mr. Vandervelt.*

Enter VANDERVELT.

Vand. Clara is very beautiful, but mankind is very censorious. They will tell me that sixty-seven is too late in life to undertake the begetting, bringing up, and providing for a family. What of that ? Must I go out of the world as I came into it—nobody to remember me ? Must the name of Vandervelt be forgotten ? Must I leave no pretty picture of myself ? Sixty-seven is but sixty-seven. Have not we a thousand examples of longevity upon record ? And then, as to cuckolds, I cannot be persuaded that they are as common now as they were when I was a youngster. Times, men, and manners alter. Children are born wittier, and the world gets more sedate : I myself am a living proof of it : I never go to bagnios now ; I never break lamps, beat watchmen, and kick constables now. I have no such wicked inclinations.

Enter CLARA.

Clara. Ah ! *mon cher* papa ! What, ruminating ?

Vand. Ah ! turtle. But why do you always call me papa ? you know I don't like that word, turtle.

Clara. And why, papa, do you always call me turtle ? Have not I told you, fifty times, it puts me in mind of calipash, and aldermen, and other ugly animals.

Vand. Calipash ! Thou art sweeter, more tender, delicate, delightful, and delicious, than all the calipash and calpee in the universe. A gem, a jewel, that all the sultans, grand signiors, and great moguls of the whole earth have not riches enough to purchase.

Clara. You are so gallant ! You do say the most obliging things.

Vand. Say the most obliging things ! Ay, and will—no matter—Deeds, title-deeds, rent-rolls, India bonds—Well, death and the day of judgment will make strange discoveries.

Clara. Oh ! yes : I know you wise men often meditate on these serious subjects.

Vand. Ay, life is treacherous ground ; one foot firm, and the next in a pit.

Clara. But why so melancholy, papa ?

Vand. I have no friends ; that is, no relations, no children ; have made a great fortune by care, and labour, and anxiety, and debarring myself the pleasures and comforts of life in my youth ; and why should not I sit down and enjoy it ?

Clara. Very true ; and why don't you ?

Vand. Because men are fools, and laugh they don't know why. I hate ridicule ; nobody loves to be thought ridiculous. The world has got false notions : a man of fifty is called old, and must not be in love, for fear of being pointed at ; whereas, some men are older at thirty, than others at threescore.

Clara. Certainly.

Vand. What is threescore ?

Clara. A handful of minutes,—

Vand. That vanish like a summer shower,—

Clara. Melt like a lump of sugar in a dish of tea—

Vand. That come you don't know how,—

Clara. And go you don't know where.

Vand. Surely, a man of sixty may walk through a church-yard without fear of tumbling into a grave ?

Clara. If he can jump over it.

Vand. True : and I was once an excellent jumper. Sixty ! why, Henry Jenkins, the Yorkshire fisherman, lively to a hundred and sixty-nine. So that a man of sixty, even in these degenerate days, has a chance to live at least a hundred years.

Clara. Well, I declare, papa, you are quite a blooming youth ; forty years younger, in my opinion, than you were a quarter of an hour ago.

Vand. Forty ?

Clara. At least.

Vand. Why, then, by dad, as thou sayest, I am a blooming youth. Ah ! turtle, I could tell you something that would surprise you ; I could tell you—Think what I could tell you. [*Sings.*] “ ‘Tis joy to wound a lover”—hem !—“ how much more to give him ease.”

Clara. [*Sings.*] “ When his passion we discover”—

Vand. “ Oh ! how pleasing 'tis to please !” Oh ! I could tell—but no, no ; you are sniggering, laughing in your sleeve : ay, ay, I perceive it ; you're a wit, and I am an old fool : sneering, ridiculing me ; I hate wit and ridicule.

Clara. Me a wit ! Lord ! papa, I would not be such an animal for the world. A wit ! Why, a wit is a kind of urchin, that every man will set his dog at, but won't touch himself, for fear of pricking his fingers. A wit is a monster with a hideous long tongue and no brains ; a dealer in paradoxes ; one that is blind through a profusion of light ; walks upon metaphor, is always seen in a simile, vanishes if you come too near him, and is only to be laid by a cudgel.

Vand. Frightful, indeed! Thank heaven, nobody can say I am a wit.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Mr. Codicil, the attorney, desires to speak with you, sir.

Vand. Very well; I am coming.

Serv. Mrs. Trip, madam, is in the housekeeper's room, and says she hopes your ladyship is well.

Clara. Desire her to walk up. [*Exit Servant.*]

Vand. Who is Mrs. Trip, turtle?

Clara. A person that lived several years in our family. She is, at present, lady's-maid to Melissa, Sir Harry Portland's sister. She will divert me with her fine language; besides that, I wish to ask her how she likes Sir Harry's family.

Vand. I know Sir Harry's uncle, Sir Hornet Armstrong, very well; an old friend.

Clara. Indeed! I never saw him here.

Vand. Why, no, I don't know how it has happened, but I have not seen him above twice these two years myself; he's an odd mortal; a whimsical old gentleman. Well, b'ye, b'ye!

Clara. Adieu!

Vand. B'ye, b'ye! [*Exit.*]

Clara. This Sir Harry runs continually in my head; ay, and I am afraid has found a place in my heart: yes, yes; there's no denying that: but that friend, that Mr. Osborne—If I have any penetration, that man wears a most suspicious, hypocritical face.

Enter Mrs. TRIP.

So, Mrs. Trip, how have you done this long time?

Mrs. T. Pretty well, thank you, madam, except that I am subject to the historicals, and troubled with the vapours; being, as I am, of a dilikut nervous system, whereof I am so giddy, that my poor head is sometimes quite in a whirlpool; and if I did not bathe with my lady, the doctor tells me I should decline into a liturgy, and so fall down and die, perhaps, in a fit of apostacy.

Clara. And how long have you lived in Sir Harry's family, Mrs. Trip?

Mrs. T. I came soon after my poor dear lady, your mamma, died, and was interrogated; whereof I was at her funeral. My lady is a very good lady; that is, I mean, ma'am, my future lady that I live with at present: she is to be married soon to Mr. Osborne, and may Hydra, the god of marriage, tie the gorgon knot; whereof I heard your ladyship is to be one of the ceremonials.

Clara. I am invited, and shall be there. But, pray, Mrs. Trip, what is your opinion of Mr. Osborne?

Mrs. T. Oh, lard! ma'am, consarning Mr. Osborne—I heard a small bird sing.

Clara. A small bird sing!

Mrs. T. Yes, ma'am.

Clara. Of what feather was this fowl?

Mrs. T. Foul! No, I assure you, your ladyship; as fair a speechified person as any in England; whereof he has a great valiation for me.

Clara. Well.

Mrs. T. And so, the secret is, that Mr. Osborne has won almost all Sir Harry's estate.

Clara. Indeed!

Mrs. T. And, moreover, has pretended to be a synagogue, and a Jew, and has lent money in other people's names, on mortgagees and nuitants, whereof my friend has been a party consarned.

Clara. Good heaven, what villainy! [*Aside.*] And pray, who is your friend, Mrs. Trip?

Mrs. T. Oh! ma'am, I hope your ladyship won't

intoxicate me on that head, for I know Mr. Timid too well to—

Clara. Oh! it was Mr. Timid?

Mrs. T. Why—that is, ma'am—I didn't mean—Mercy! what have I said?

Clara. You may assure yourself, Mrs. Trip, I shall be careful not to do you any prejudice.

Mrs. T. I am sure, I am supinely obliged to your ladyship. [*Exit.*]

Clara. Poor Sir Harry! He has a heart that does honour to mankind, that does not merit distress; yet, if I augur right, it must shortly feel the severest pangs false friendship can inflict. Ungrateful Osborne! I must warn Melissa to beware of him, and, if possible, to detach Sir Harry from the gambling-table. [*Exit.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—Sir Harry Portland's House.

Enter SIR HARRY PORTLAND, CLARA, MELISSA, and VANDERVELT.

Clara. Ha, ha, ha! Sir Harry, you are a happy man.

Vand. Ay, Sir Harry, you are a happy man.

Mel. Such an accomplished spouse!

Clara. And so kind an uncle!

Sir Harry. Upon my soul, I can't help laughing; and yet the more I reflect on the affair, the more I am amazed; Sir Hornet is whimsical, 'tis true, but no fool.

Vand. Fool, Sir Harry! no, no; he is always the readiest to spy the fooleries of other people: many a time have I laughed at his whims and jokes; an odd mortal he is.

Clara. Nay, if he be so fond of a joke, who knows but he may have sent them on this errand for the joke's sake?

Vand. By dad, turtle, thou hast hit it. As sure as can be, that's it; it is for the joke's sake.

Sir Harry. Impossible: the affair is too serious to be intentional caprice.

Mel. But I thought, when I left you, you were coming to an eclairsissement.

Sir Harry. Coming to an eclairsissement! Why, I told them, as plain as I could speak, that no alliance whatever could take place between the families.

Mel. 'Tis certain they have not understood you, then.

Sir Harry. Well, there the matter must rest till I can find an interpreter, for I can't make myself more intelligible.

Clara. And you have not had one tender love-scene yet?

Sir Harry. Not one. I am amazed at the girl's simplicity, it equals her ignorance; she speaks and looks so totally unconscious of impropriety, so void of intentional error, that I don't know how to reply.

Clara. Suppose, then, you were to practice a little. Come, I'll stand up for the young lady.

Sir Harry. I shall still find a difficulty to speak.

Clara. Surely!

Sir Harry. In very truth, ma'am. But it will be from a quite different motive.

Clara. Oh! for the love of curiosity, Sir Harry, explain your motive.

Vand. Ay, Sir Harry, explain your motive.

Sir Harry. I cannot, sir.

Vand. Cannot! Sir Harry, why so?

Sir Harry. For reasons, sir, which are far more easily imagined than described.

Vand. Nay, don't be afraid, Sir Harry. My turtle knows how to answer interrogatories; you won't find her a simpleton, I warrant.

Sir Harry. No, sir; the danger is that she might find me one.

Vand. I fancy, Sir Harry, you are a little like me; cautious with the ladies, lest you should be made ridiculous. I am very circumspect in those matters.

Sir Harry. You are very right, sir; it is not every one who has the gift of wearing a fool's-cap with a grace.

Clara. Ay, but notwithstanding all this, Sir Harry, I should like to have a love-scene with you.

Vand. How, turtle!

Clara. In the character of Miss Turnbull.

Vand. Oh! ay, do, Sir Harry, have a love-scene with my turtle.

Sir Harry. Anything to oblige you, sir.

Vand. Come, then, begin. [*Clara sets herself in an awkward, silly attitude.*] Ha, ha, ha! Look, look at my Turtle lovey-dovey.

Sir Harry. [Addressing Clara.] My uncle, Sir Hornet Armstrong, madam, is desirous that I should gain the inestimable blessing of your hand.

Clara. Anan!

Vand. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Harry. And give me leave to say, madam, however unworthy I may be of the happiness and honour intended me, no person can be more sensible of them.

Clara. What! that be as much as to say you want ha' me, I suppose. [*Whimpers.*]

Vand. Ha, ha, ha! Nay, but don't cry in earnest, lovey-dovey.

Sir Harry. Oh! dry those heavenly eyes, madam, and believe me, when I call every sacred power to witness my affection, I love, I adore, I die for you. Suffer me to wipe away those pearly tears that hide the beauties of your cheek. [*Offering to salute her.*]

Clara. Hold, hold, Sir Harry!

Vand. Ay, hold, hold, Sir Harry.

Sir Harry. Why so, sir? 'Tis quite in character.

Clara. Deuce take you, Sir Harry, you—you are too passionate in your feigned addresses; so warm and pressing—

Vand. Ay, so warm and pressing.

Clara. One was not aware.

Sir Harry. I was taken by surprise myself, madam. The bounteous god of love kindly contrived an opportunity which my profound adoration, and a conscious want of merit, had totally deprived me of. Pardon me, if, for a moment, I forgot that respect which every one, who beholds you, cannot help feeling.

Vand. Why, what's this, Sir Harry? You are not in downright earnest, are you?

Sir Harry. Sincere as dying sinners imploring mercy.

Vand. What, in love with my turtle?

Clara. Pooh! Why, no, to be sure. We were only acting a supposed scene.

Vand. Supposed! By dad, I think it was devilishly like a real scene. You both did your parts very naturally.

Sir Harry. Oh! sir, no actor who feels as forcibly as I do, can ever mistake his character.

Vand. Feels forcibly! Your feelings are forcible, indeed.

Mel. Come, come, let us adjourn to the drawing-

room; I want to have your opinions on a painting of Coreggio's that my brother has made me a present of.

Vand. Favour me with your hand, young lady; and, Sir Harry, do you take my turtle's; but don't you let your feelings be too forcible. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*The Hall in Sir Harry Portland's house.*

Enter Sir HORNET ARMSTRONG and Servant.

Sir Hor. Are the trunks safe, sirrah George?

Serv. Yes, sir.

Sir Hor. And did you order that dog of a postilion to take care of the poor devils the horses?

Serv. I did, sir.

Sir Hor. And of himself?

Serv. I did, sir.

Sir Hor. You did, sir? Why, then, do you go and take care of yourself, you rascal.

Serv. I will, sir.

Sir Hor. And d'ye hear, George?

Serv. Sir?

Sir Hor. If I find you disobey my orders, I'll break your bones.

Serv. I'll be very careful, sir, I assure you. [*Exit.*]

Enter TIMID and SCRIP.

Timid. Brokerage comes rather heavy, Mr. Scrip, when the sum is large.

Scrip. Heavy! no, no; a d—d paltry pittance; five-and-twenty pounds only, you see, selling out twenty thousand. Get more by one lucky hit than fifty of these would produce.

Timid. Ay!

Scrip. Oh! yes; jobbing—stock-jobbing, between you and I, is the high road to wealth.

Timid. Lackaday! may be so. Well, good day.

[*Scrip is going, but seeing Sir Hornet, stops to listen.*]

Sir Hor. What, old Lackaday!

Timid. Ah! Sir Hornet.

[*Sir Hor.* What's the best news with you?

Timid. Ah, lackaday! the best news I know is scarcely worth relating.

Scrip. Beg pardon, sir, [*To Sir Hor.*] beg pardon—bad news in town, did you say?

Sir Hor. Bad, sir! not that I have heard.

Scrip. Exceedingly sorry for it.

Sir Hor. Sir?

Scrip. Never was more distressed for bad news.

Sir Hor. Distressed for bad news!

Scrip. Excessively! The reduction of Gibraltar, the taking of Jamaica, and the destruction of the grand fleet, one of the three would make me a happy man for life.

Sir Hor. The destruction of the grand fleet make you happy for life?

Scrip. Completely.

Sir Hor. Here's a precious scoundrel!

Scrip. No great reason to complain, to be sure; do more business than any three doctors of the college; generally of the sure side; made a large fortune, if this does not give me a twinge; rather overdone it; but any severe stroke, any great national misfortune, would exactly close my account.

Sir Hor. Hark you, sir!

Scrip. Sir?

Sir Hor. It is to be hoped—

Scrip. Yes, sir, it is to be hoped.

Sir Hor. That a halter will exactly close your account.

Scrip. Sir?

Sir Hor. You raven-faced rascal! Rejoice at national misfortunes! Zounds! I thought such language was nowhere to be heard from the mouth of

an Englishman, unless he were a member of parliament.

Scrip. Lord! sir, you don't consider that I am a bear for almost half a million.

Sir Hor. You are an impudent villain! Rejoice at the distress of your country!

Scrip. Why, Lord! sir, to be sure; when I am a bear. There's not a bear in the Alley but would do the same. Were I a bull, indeed, the case would be altered.

Sir Hor. A bull!

Scrip. For instance, at the taking of Charles-Town, no man was merrier, no man more elate, no man in better spirits.

Sir Hor. How so, gentle sir?

Scrip. Oh! dear sir, at that time I was a bull to a vast amount, when, very fortunately for me, the news arrived; the guns fired, the bells clattered, the stocks mounted, and I made ten thousand pounds. Enough to make a man merry. Never spent a happier night in my life.

Sir Hor. Aha! then, according to that arithmetic, you would be as merry and as happy to-night, could you accomplish the destruction of this said British fleet.

Scrip. Happier, happier by half! for I should realize at least twice the sum—twice the sum.

Sir Hor. Twice the sum!

Scrip. Ay, twice the sum. Oh! that would be a glorious event, indeed. Never prayed so earnestly for anything since I was born; and who knows—who knows what a little time may do for us?

Sir Hor. Zounds! how my elbow aches! [*Aside.*]

Scrip. I shall call on some leading people—men of intelligence—of the right stamp.

Sir Hor. You shall?

Scrip. Yes, sir.

Sir Hor. Why, then, perhaps you will be able to destroy the British fleet between you.

Scrip. I hope so, I hope so—do everything in my power. Oh! it would be a glorious event.

Sir Hor. Hark you! sir, do you see that door?

Scrip. Sir?

Sir Hor. And this cane?

Scrip. Why, but, sir—

Sir Hor. Make your exit, you imp!

Scrip. But, sir—

Sir Hor. Get out of the house, you vile rascal, you diabolical—[*Drives SCRIP off.*] A son's son of a scoundrel! Who is he? What business had he here?

Timid. Lackaday! sir, he is a stock-broker, that Sir Harry employed, at his sister's request, to sell out for her; because she chooses to have her fortune in her own possession again to-morrow. I have been paying him the brokerage, and receiving the money, which I shall deliver to Madam Melissa directly.

Sir Hor. An incomprehensible dog! Pray for the reduction of Gibraltar, the taking of Jamaica, or the destruction of the British fleet!

Timid. Lackaday! sir, it is his trade.

Sir Hor. Trade! a nation will never flourish that encourages traders to thrive by her misfortunes. But come, tell me something of my own affairs: where is Harry? how does he go on?

Timid. Ah, lackaday!

Sir Hor. What, is he a wild young dog? Does he get into thy books?

Timid. Ah, lackaday!

Sir Hor. Ah, lackaday! Zounds! don't sigh, man: he won't die in thy debt.

Timid. Ah, lackaday! Sir Horner, he should be welcome to the last farthing I have in the world.

Sir Hor. Should he, old Truepenny? then give me thy hand; thou shalt be remembered in my codicil: but, what, he shakes his elbow, I suppose, eh? Seven's the main?

Timid. Ah, lackaday! Sir Horner, what between main and chance he has been sadly nicked.

Sir Hor. Has he? I'll score his losings upon his pate, a dog—that is, if he will let me. But where is Miss Turnbull? she'll soon reform him; her angelic smiles will teach him—

Timid. Sir?

Sir Hor. Sir! Zounds! you stare like the wooden heads of the twelve Cæsars. Miss Turnbull's charms, I say, will find employment for all his virtues and wean him from all his vices.

Timid. Will they, sir?

Sir Hor. Will they, sir! Yes, they will, sir.

Timid. Lackaday!

Sir Hor. Lackaday! What ails you?

Timid. Nothing, sir, nothing; only that I am afraid my eyes begin to grow dim.

Sir Hor. Your head, I believe, begins to grow very thick.

Timid. Ah, lackaday! sir, like enough, like enough.

Sir Hor. Be kind enough to answer me a few questions: is not Miss Turnbull a beautiful girl?

Timid. May I speak truth?

Sir Hor. May you speak truth! to be sure you may.

Timid. Then I answer no, sir.

Sir Hor. No!

Timid. No.

Sir Hor. Is she not an elegant girl?

Timid. No.

Sir Hor. Nor a witty girl?

Timid. No.

Sir Hor. Tol de rol lol! tititum! Pray, what is she, in your opinion?

Timid. A silly, ignorant, ill-bred, country girl, and very unfit for Sir Harry's wife.

Sir Hor. Tol de rol lol! laditum! Let me look in your face. Yes, yes; he has it; the moon's almost at full. Poor Lackaday! which is your right hand? [*Timid holds it up.*] Indeed! wonderful! And are you really in your sober senses?

Timid. Why, indeed, sir, I begin to be rather in doubt: I believe so; but lest I should lose them, I will wish your honour a good morning. [*Exit.*]

Sir Hor. Lackaday! Ha, ha! Not beautiful, nor witty, nor—tol de rol lol! The old fool has a mind to set up for a wit, and has begun by bantering me. Zounds! I was neither drunk nor mad; and to the best of my knowledge, I am not now in a dream. The brother, indeed, is a booby; and does not appear to be of the same family—hardly of the same species; though he had sense enough to snap at the offer immediately. I remarked he did not stand on ceremony. Surely, I have made no mistake in the business—'Sblood! if it prove so! Parson Adams the second! I shall—Eh! who's this? No, no, no—it is; 'tis she herself, in propria pers—

Enter CLARA.

Miss Turnbull, I most heartily rejoice to see you.

Clara. Miss Turnbull! [*Aside.*]

Sir Hor. Your presence has relieved me from one of the oddest qualms—but the sight of you has given me a cordial.

Clara. What do you mean, Sir Horner?

Sir Hor. Mean, my angel! why, here has been a bantering, lying, enigmatical son of a scoundrel, with a bundle of ironical, diabolical tales, railing at your beauty and accomplishments, till, egad! I began to fancy my fine-flavoured pine-apple a crab

Clara. This is delightful! But I cannot find in my heart to undeceive him. [*Aside.*] There is no answering for the difference of taste, sir.

Sir Hor. True. Asses prefer thistles to nectarines; but yet he must be an ass, indeed, who could not distinguish St. Paul's from the pillory.

Clara. Taste, Sir Hornet, is a sort of shot silk, and has a variety of shades: one says 'tis blue, another black, and a third is positive 'tis yellow. It would be a vain attempt, therefore, for Miss Turnbull to endeavour to please the whole world.

Sir Hor. An old booby! I would not give a hair of the pope's beard to please him. But how is it with Sir Harry? is he in raptures? is he dying for you?

Clara. No, sir; he eats and drinks as usual, and is, for aught I can discover, in tolerably good health.

Sir Hor. Is he? an audacious dog! in good health! If I find him in good health I'll pistol him. But you mistake the matter, perhaps: the rascal's proud, and not willing you should see his sufferings; he is a stricken deer, and sheds his tears in solitude and silence, mayhap. Do you discover no symptoms of the sighing swain? Does he never cut his fingers? or scald himself? or run against a post, and beg its pardon?

Clara. No, sir.

Sir Hor. I doubt he is a sad dog. But no, no; I am certain he adores you; 'tis impossible he should do otherwise. But there is another material point, about which I am not quite so certain.

Clara. What is that, sir?

Sir Hor. Has he found any place in your affections? 'Tis true, he's a fine fellow. I don't mean by that, one that is pickled in cosmetics; preserved in musk and marchal powder; and that will melt away, like Lot's wife, in the first hard shower! none of your fellows that are too valiant to give a woman the wall, and too witty to let her have the last word; but one that is—in short, his own manner will best describe what he is.

Clara. True, Sir Hornet, but the time has been so short.

Sir Hor. Short! Ah! madam, if he did not do the business with a *coup d'œil*, at once, I would not give a feather of a goose-wing for all the arrows his Cupid has in his quiver. But come, Miss Turnbull, I know you are above the silly prejudices that ordinary minds are swayed by; tell me sincerely, has he made any impression on your heart? Is he the man?

Clara. To speak ingenuously, Sir Hornet, that is a point entirely undetermined, at present.

Sir Hor. Undetermined! why, what—

Clara. Sir Harry's person is engaging, his manners delightful, and his understanding unexceptionable.

Sir Hor. Bravo! my dear girl! you charm me to hear you say so.

Clara. I will say more, Sir Hornet. I find my heart interested in his behalf, and sincerely believe I shall never see another man with whom I could be half so happy.

Sir Hor. My dear Miss Turnbull!

Clara. But yet I have too many reasons to fear it will be impossible we should ever be united.

Sir Hor. Impossible!

Clara. I firmly believe, Sir Harry possesses a thousand virtues, but they are all discoloured by a failing, which, if not as erroneous as some other vices, is more destructive than any.

Sir Hor. I understand you.

Clara. This will for ever deter a woman, who values her own peace, from cherishing a passion that must, in its consequences, be so fatal.

Sir Hor. But you, my angel, will soon cure him of this: it is not a rooted vice—

Clara. Permanently, or my intelligence says false.

Sir Hor. Well, but we have hopes that Mr. Osborne will find means to reclaim him; he is continually with him, continually warning him, and—

Clara. Mr. Osborne, Sir Hornet, is an interested physician, and would rather encourage than cure the disease.

Sir Hor. Heaven forbid! But who informs you of this?

Clara. Those who are in the secret, I assure you, sir. I am afraid Mr. Osborne is a wicked man; he is—what I dare not speak.

Sir Hor. I confess you alarm me, though I hope without cause. Osborne assumes every appearance of rigid virtue: and, if this were true, he would be the worst of villains. However, suspend your opinion awhile; I'll soon sift the affair: and in the meantime, let me beg of you to think as well of Sir Harry as your doubts will permit you.

Clara. I shall do that, Sir Hornet, without an effort. [*Exit.*]

Enter VANDERVELT.

Vand. [*Sees Clara going off.*] Why, turtle, why—Ah! Sir Hornet, I am glad to see you.

Sir Hor. Ah, ha! friend Van! why, you look tolerably well.

Vand. Tolerably well! Ay, to be sure. Why should I not?

Sir Hor. Why should you not! Let me see: there are, as near as I can guess, about seventy reasons why you should not.

Vand. Humph! Oh! what, my age? No, no: let me tell you, Sir Hornet, I—I am not an old man.

Sir Hor. No?

Vand. No; nor you neither.

Sir Hor. Indeed! I am exceedingly glad of that: and, pray, when did you make this discovery?

Vand. Make it! why, I have been making it these twenty years and upwards.

Sir Hor. Oh, ho! And how do you prove it?

Vand. By comparison and reflection. I'll tell you—hold! first, I'll shew you what I call my list of worthies: there, look at that.

[*Gives a common-place book.*]

Sir Hor. What the devil have we here? [*Reads.*] "*Patrick O'Neal, married, for the seventh time, at the age of one hundred and thirteen; walks without a cane, never idle; children and great-grand-children to the number of one hundred and twenty-three.*"

Vand. There's a fellow! I warrant that man is alive and hearty at this moment.

Sir Hor. Humph! And, pray do you think to imitate this worthy, as you call him? Will you be married seven times, and have a hundred and twenty-three children?

Vand. That's more than I can tell.

Sir Hor. Ha! [*Reads.*] "*Thomas Parr, being aged one hundred and twenty, fell in love with Catherine Milton.*"

Vand. Ay, and did penance in a white sheet, at the church-door.

Sir Hor. Humph! [*Reads.*] "*Henry Jenkins*"—

Vand. Ay, there's another: corrected his great-grandson, a youth of seventy, with his own hand, for being idle.

Sir Hor. [*Reads.*] "*Johannes de Temporibus, or John of Times, armour-bearer to the emperor Charlemagne, died, aged three hundred threescore and one years.*"

Vand. Very well; now tell me; when you compare me to Johannes Temporibus, that is, when you compare sixty-seven to three hundred threescore and one, can you say I am an old man?

Sir Hor. An old man! By the beard of Methusalem, thou art scarce an infant; it will be, perhaps, these five years yet before thou art perfectly a child.

Vand. Nay, Sir Hornet, let me beg of you to be serious; you are an old friend, and know the world; I shall be glad of your advice: I ruminate on these things by myself, till I am quite melancholy; now, if I had but somebody to bear half my griefs, I should suppose they would be lessened.

Sir Hor. Why, true, as you say, one would imagine so.

Vand. Don't you think, then, if I were to take a handsome, young wife, I should, perhaps, find a cure for all my ills?

Sir Hor. An infallible one.

Vand. And this is, seriously, your opinion?

Sir Hor. Seriously.

Vand. Then tell me—you were talking with the young lady that went out as I entered—

Sir Hor. Well, what of her?

Vand. Is she not very beautiful?

Sir Hor. A divinity.

Vand. Finely accomplished?

Sir Hor. Beyond description.

Vand. That's right. You are a sensible, discerning man, Sir Hornet; and I am delighted to find you approve my choice.

Sir Hor. Your choice!

Vand. My choice. That is the young lady, you must know, to whom I intend to pay my addresses.

Sir Hor. Your what?

Vand. The lady I mean to marry.

Sir Hor. Ha, ha, ha!

Vand. Nay, Sir Hornet—

Sir Hor. Ha, ha, ha! all mad; every soul.

Vand. I don't understand.

Sir Hor. Most reverend youth, I beg your pardon. Ha, ha, ha!

Vand. You see things in a mighty strange light, Sir Hornet. Is it any miracle that a man should love a beautiful woman?

Sir Hor. Ha, ha, ha! Love! why thou'rt another *Ætna*—Cupid's burning mountain. Your nose has taken fire at your fancy, and become a beacon to warn all young gentlemen of threescore and ten, of the rocks and quicksands hidden in the sea of amorous desires.

Vand. Upon my word, Sir Hornet, this is exceedingly strange.

Sir Hor. Ha, ha, ha! You must excuse me. What a rosy youth! Harkye! friend Vandervelt, it's my opinion you have been bantering me.

Vand. Od! that's a good thought. [*Aside*].—Bantering you! why, ay, to be sure I have. Ha, ha, ha! [*Forces a laugh*].

Sir Hor. Oh! you have?

Vand. Certainly. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Hor. Ha, ha, ha! [*With the same tone*].

Vand. Didn't you perceive that before? Ha, ha!

Sir Hor. No 'faith! Ha, ha, ha!

Vand. That's a good joke. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Hor. Excellent! Ha, ha, ha! [*During the laugh, Sir H. imitates Vandervelt*].—Now let us be serious.

Vand. With all my heart.

Sir Hor. And I'll tell you a story.

Vand. Do.

Sir Hor. There was a certain ancient personage of

my acquaintance, called Andrew Vandervelt—

Vand. What, is your story about me?

Sir Hor. Give me leave, young gentleman, and you shall hear.—Every body imagined him to be a prudent, sedate, grave person, with a moderate share of common sense—

Vand. Well!

Sir Hor. And, as it was evident his beard was grey, his limbs palsied, his skin shrivelled, and his sinews shrunk—

Vand. How, Sir Hornet?

Sir H. They naturally concluded, he had made his will, wrote his epitaph, and bespoke his coffin—

Vand. Mercy upon me!

Sir Hor. But instead of meditating, like a pious Christian, on the last four things, a crotchet takes him in the head, he buys a three-penny fiddle, scrapes a matrimonial jig, claps a pair of horns upon his head, and curvets through the town, the sport of the mob, derided by the young, pitied by the old, and laughed at by all the world.

Vand. Heaven deliver me, what a picture!—But you forget, Sir Hornet; didn't I explain to you that it was only a joke?

Sir Hor. Oh! true. Ah! witty rogue! Well, adieu. I'll remember the joke. Ha, ha, ha!

Vand. Ay do. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Hor. Oh! for a song to the tune of "Room for Cuckolds!" [*Exeunt*].

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Chamber at Sir Harry Portland's.

Enter Sir HARRY PORTLAND.

Sir Harry. [*Much agitated*]. May the everlasting curse of heaven consume those implements of hell, those deceitful, infernal fiends! I'll never touch, never look on cards or dice again. If I ever make another bet, may all the horrors of a ruined fortune haunt me, sleeping and waking; may I be pointed at by children, and pitied by sharpers. Distraction! May I be—I am already ruined, past redemption.

Enter a Servant, who delivers a letter to Sir HARRY.

Sir Harry. [*Breaks open the letter hastily*]. Um—Um—Stay, sir. [*To the Servant*]. D—n! Is it possible? In league with sharpers! Who brought this letter, sir?

Servant. A porter, sir.

Sir Harry. Where is he?

Servant. Gone, sir; he ran off round the corner in a hurry.

Sir Harry. You may go, sir. [*Exit Servant*].

Enter OSBORNE.

Osborne. You seem moved, Sir Harry; may I enquire the cause?

Sir Harry. You are the cause, sir.

Osborne. I!

Sir Harry. Yes, you. There, read, sir.

Osborne. [*Reads*]. "Beware of a false friend; the person who gives you this caution, would sacrifice a life to preserve you from the destruction that threatens you. Mr. Osborne is in league with Jews and sharpers, and you are a victim to his avarice and duplicity." So, so. Well, Sir Harry, do you give any credit to this epistle?

Sir Harry. Nay, sir, you are to tell me how much or how little credit it deserves.

Obs. Why, look you, Sir Harry, I cannot, nor I will not, enter into explanations.

Sir Harry. Sir! Cannot, nor will not, enter into explanations!

Obs. No, sir.

Sir Harry. But I say, sir, you shall.

Obs. Shall!

Sir Harry. Yes, sir, shall.

Obs. Ay, sir? Who is he that shall make me?

Sir Harry. I am he, sir.

Obs. Indeed!

Sir Harry. Friendship, honour, honesty, ought to make you; but present appearances declare you void of these.

Obs. Present appearances declare you void of reason, sir, otherwise you would remember me for one of those who are not to be terrified by a loud tongue, or an angry brow. I repeat it, I will not now enter into explanations. I have played with you, I have staked my money, and won yours. Would it have been dishonourable had you won mine? I have disposed of that money as I thought proper. No matter whether with Jews or Christians; and, I should have supposed, your passion and suspicion would have required better proof, than the malevolent aspersion of an anonymous letter, ere they ought to have incited you to a quarrel with your friend.

Sir Harry. I beg your pardon, dear Osborne; I am to blame; nothing but the severity of my late losses can plead for me; I know you to be a noble-hearted, worthy fellow, and explanations, on such an accusation, are as much beneath you to give, as me to demand. Forget my silly warmth: it is my weakness.

Obs. Do you forget the cause of it, Harry, and it is forgot.

Sir Harry. It was madness—I am above suspicion—'tis ungenerous—'tis damnable—pray excuse—pray forgive me.

Obs. Well, well, think no more on't; only guard against suspicion for the future. [Exit.]

Sir Harry. No, no, it cannot be; there is an open fortitude in his manner, a boldness that can only result from innocence.

Enter MELISSA.

Mel. Oh! brother, I am glad I have found you. Why did you send these troublesome things to me? Why did not you take care of them for me? Trust a giddy girl, indeed, with a parcel of bank bills. Here, here, here they are, take 'em, take 'em, they will be safe with you; I have been in a panic, ever since they were in my possession, lest they should take wing, and fly through the key-hole, or in some other unaccountable way. I am unused to such large sums, and don't feel happy while they are about me.

Sir Harry. But what am I to do with them?

Mel. Keep them till to-morrow, and then, you know, when you give my hand to your friend, you may give them too, to make it the more acceptable; there are just twenty, of one thousand each. So, now I am easy—good bye: I am going to purchase a few knick-knacks. [Exit.]

Sir Harry. Well, but, sister! Melissa! She's gone, down on the light wings of innocence and happiness, while I, depressed by folly, feel a weight upon my heart, that hope itself cannot remove. What is a ruined gamester? An idiot, who begins for his amusement, who continues hoping to retrieve, and who is ruined before he can recollect himself; a wretch, deserted, solitary, forlorn; ashamed

of society, yet miserable when alone; shunned by the prosperous; despised by the prudent; deservedly exposed to the poisoned shafts of insolence and envy; a by-word to the vulgar, and a jest to the fortunate; haunted by duns, preyed upon by usurers, persecuted and curst by creditors. Inexplicable infatuation!

[Exit.]

SCENE II.—*Another Apartment.*

Enter CLARA, MELISSA, and 'Squire TURNBULL.

Mel. Mr. Turnbull, I must beg, sir, you'll desist. *Turn.* Desist, why, to be zure; I'll go and buy license out o' hand, make hay while the zun do zhine, and don't lose the zheep for a ha'p'orth o'tar; what tho', the pepper-box must ha' a lid; a bushel o' words wunt vill a basket; when the owl goes a hunting, 'tis time to light the candle.

Clara. Ha, ha, ha! If you'll permit me, my dear, I think I can relieve you from this embarrassment.

Mel. Permit you! I am sure if you can, you shall be canonized, and have churches erected to your memory.

Clara. I'll talk to him in his own language, he can comprehend no other.

Turn. Well, vair lady.

Clara. Well, zir.

Turn. You do zee how the nail do drive. Be you to be one at bridal?

Clara. No.

Turn. No! Why zo? you'st be bride-maid.

Clara. No, but I wunt.

Turn. Wunt you?

Clara. No; nor you'st not be bridegroom, nother.

Turn. No?

Clara. No.

Turn. How zo?

Clara. Because you've zold the zkin avore you've caught the vox. You've reckoned your chickens bevore they be hatched.

Turn. Nay, nay; stop at the dike; zure I do knaw my own mind, an miss be agreed.

Clara. But miss ben't agreed.

Turn. No! That's a good joke; but she be, though.

Clara. But she ben't, though.

Turn. But I'm zure she be.

Clara. But I'm zure she ben't.

Turn. No! Why, miss, ben't you agreed?

Mel. No, sir.

Turn. No!

Clara. You may gape, but the cherry won't drop; too much mettle is dangerous in a blind horse; mis-reckoning is no payment; John would ha' wed, but Mary war na willing.

Mel. You seem surprised, sir; I can only say, it is without reason; you have deceived yourself, in supposing such an alliance possible, and I hope your own good sense will inform you, that, after this declaration, any renewal of your addresses to me must be considered an insult.

Turn. An' zo, then, the meaning of all this vine zpeech, I suppose, is, that you wunt ha' me?

Mel. It is.

Clara. "Make hay while the zun do zhine; don't lose the zheep for a ha'p'orth of tar; a bushel of words wunt vill a basket; when the owl goes a hunting, 'tis time to light the candle." Your most obedient, gentle 'squire. Ha, ha, ha

[Exit with MELISSA.]

Turn. Zo, then, it zeems I ha' been reckoning without my host here. Well, what though, zoon hot

zoon cold; zoon got zoon gone; care's no cure; zorrow won't pay a man's debts; he wanted a zinging-bird, that gave a groat for a cuckoo; an' he that loses a wife and zixpence, has lost a tester.

Enter Miss TURNBULL.

Why, Barbara, what be's the matter wi' thee? Where hast thee been?

Miss T. Been! Why I ha' bin wildered.

Turn. What lost!

Miss T. Ees; an' if I had na' by good hap met wi' John, who has got direction in written hand, it were vive golden guineas to a brass varthin I'd been kidnapped an' zent to America, among the Turks.

Turn. Zerve thee right, thee must be gadding; but I ha' news vor thee, the cow has kicked down the milk; it's all off 'tween miss and I.

Miss T. Zure! rabbit me an I didn't guess as much.

Turn. Ees, the nail's clenched; zhe and I ha' zhook hands, an' parted.

Miss T. My gracious! What, won't yo' ha' zhe?

Turn. No, I wunt; her may whistle, but I zha'n't hear; her may beckon, but I zha'n't come; catch me an' ha' me, I'm no vool; zo, do you zee, an' you be minded to wed, zay grace an' vall to; vor I don't like your London tricks, an' zo I st leave it as vast as I can.

Miss T. An' when be I to be wed?

Turn. Why, I do vind Zir Hornet be come; zo, when yo' do zee Zir Harry, yo' may zettle 't; an', d'ye hear, Barbara, don't let me vind yo' at any o'these skittish off an' on vreaks; I ha' zeen too much on 'um lately. Oh! here be Zir Harry coming, an' zo I st leave you to make love your own way; I st not play my ace o'trumps out yet. *[Exit.]*

Enter Sir HARRY PORTLAND.

Sir Harry. So, here's my good whimsical uncle's nonpareil, as he calls her—his phœnix. All alone, Miss Turnbull?

Miss T. Ees; brother be just gone; a's vallen out wi' miss, an' a's plaguily frumped.

Sir Harry. Sure!

Miss T. Ees; a zaid, too, 'at yo' an' I be to make love.

Sir Harry. He did!

Miss T. Ees; and I do know his tricks; a'll be in a woundy rage, an I don't do as he bids me.

Sir Harry. What, will he be surly?

Miss T. Zurly! a'll snarl worser than our great dog, Jowler, at a beggar.

Sir Harry. He is ill-tempered, then?

Miss T. Oh! I'll zulk vor a vortnight round, an' when a comes about again, a'll make a believe to romp; an' then a' lumps, an' gripes, an' pinches, till I am quite a weary on't.

Sir Harry. Well you may, I think. Poor thing. *[Aside.]* And which way are we to make love?

Miss T. My gracious! don't you know?

Sir Harry. I believe I can give a guess; you, I suppose, are to hang down your head and titter.

Miss T. Ees.

Sir Harry. A—hem! and look sheepish.

Miss T. Ees.

Sir Harry. You gnaw your apron; I twirl my thumbs.

Miss T. He, he! Ees.

Sir Harry. You say—it's a very fine day, sir; and I answer, yes, ma'am, only it rains.

Miss T. He, he, he! Ees, iverk, that be vor all the world the very moral of our country vashion. Oh! but here be zomebody coming.

Enter Sir HORNET ARMSTRONG, CLARA, and VANDERVELT.

Sir Hor. Why, Harry, you dog, what, have you hid yourself, because you would not see me?

Sir Harry. Dear sir, I am exceedingly glad to see you, but it is not a quarter of an hour since I heard of your being in town; and I suppose, sir, you will scarcely be angry at finding me in this company.

[VAND., Sir HARRY, and Miss T. retires.]

Sir Hor. Finding you in—Zounds! what awkward cargo of rusticity has he got there?

[To CLARA.]

Clara. A young lady from Somersetshire, with a tolerably good fortune, that Sir Harry, it is thought by some, intends to marry.

Sir Hor. Marry! He should as soon marry the mummy of queen Semiramis.

Clara. She has been strongly recommended to the family, sir.

Sir Hor. Recommended! By whom?

Clara. By one you are very intimate with, and who has very great influence with Sir Harry, as well as with yourself.

Sir Hor. Ay! Who is that?

Clara. Pardon me there, Sir Hornet.

Sir Hor. Certainly the fellow cannot be foolish enough to admire her; but I shall soon discover that, by what he thinks of you. Harkye, Harry!

Sir Harry. Sir.

Sir Hor. I cannot, upon the whole, tell very well what to make of you. Are you thoroughly convinced that you are, at this instant, legally capable of making your will?

Sir Harry. My will, sir!

Sir Hor. Ay, are you of sound mind?

Sir Harry. I believe so, sir.

Sir Hor. Then pray tell me, now we have you face to face, what is your opinion of Miss Turnbull?

Sir Harry. Sir, that is by no means a question proper to be answered in this company.

Sir Hor. Psha! D—n your delicacy. Make your panegyric, and I'll blush for her and you, too.

Sir Harry. Sir, I have no panegyric to make.

Sir Hor. Sir!

Sir Harry. Even so.

Sir Hor. Why you impudent, confounded—Have you the barefaced effrontery, with such a picture before your eyes, to—

Sir Harry. You have applied the torture, and my own ease requires confession.

Sir Hor. Humph! And so you—Now, pray, all be attentive, for Bacon's brazen head is going to utter. So you do not think Miss Turnbull a most engaging—*[Sir HARRY smiles.]*—Why, you intolerable—

Sir Harry. I am concerned to see you so serious on the subject. I must acknowledge, that in this case, sir, I have either a most perverse or stupid imagination, and, cannot, for the soul of me, discover the latent wonders in the young lady, which your better sight has so distinct a view of.

Sir Hor. Ha!

Sir Harry. I am, however, exceedingly willing to try the utmost strength of my faith, to believe as much as I can, and take the rest for granted; provided you will not inflict the punishment of a wife upon my superstition.

Sir Hor. Obliging youth! *[Bows.]* Inflict the punishment of a wife upon your superstition! And so you think, no doubt, a wife a burthen much too heavy for the back of so fine and pretty a town-made gentleman as yourself.

Sir Harry. With the addition of Miss Turnbull's accomplishments, I most undoubtedly do, sir.

Sir Hor. You do! Humph! Pray, most civil sir, permit me to ask—perhaps there may be some other lady in this good company, to whom your profound penetration would give the preference?

Sir Harry. If such preference could, in the least, make me deserving of her, I have no scruple to say there is.

Sir Hor. Miracle of modesty! There is?

Sir Harry. Most assuredly. But, though to possess the lady you hint at, would make me blessed beyond description, I have never dared to declare so much before, because I am conscious of being unworthy of such a profusion of charms and accomplishments.

Clara. Generous diffidence!

[*Aside.*

Sir Hor. Charms and—What the devil is all this? Where am I, at sea, or on shore? Have I a calen- ture in my brain, or is this my nose! They—they call you Sir Harry Portland, don't they, sir?

Sir Harry. And your nephew, sir.

Sir Hor. No; that's rather dubious. Well, then, Mr. Harry, or Sir Harry, or what you please, you are pretty well convinced, I suppose, that I have had some slight regard for you?

Sir Harry. Perfectly, sir, and remember it with gratitude.

Sir Hor. That remains to be proved, friend. Ever since your father's death, if I don't mistake, I have been tolerably busy, a little active, or so, in forming your mind and manners, and moulding you into a sort of being, a man might behold without blushing.

Sir Harry. It is impossible, sir, I should ever forget your goodness, though I am happy to be reminded of it.

Sir Hor. That's a lie, I believe. However, sir, among the rest of my cares, I was anxious to find a woman worthy of you; nay, so solicitous was I about adjusting preliminaries, that though the gout had laid an embargo upon a parcel of my fingers and toes, I resolved to forego my own ease, and set sail immediately, that I might convoy you safe into the harbour of happiness.

Sir Harry. I am very sensible of the benevolence of your intentions, sir, and only wish you had done me the honour to—

Sir Hor. Well, I have only a word or two more to say on the subject: I have been an enthusiastic old blockhead, 'tis true, and was fool enough to think all men had eyes; however, if you have not either the complaisance, the wit, or the love, to hit upon some expedient to make your peace with Miss Turnbull, I will never see, never know, never speak to you again. And now, sir, you will act as your great wisdom shall direct.

Sir Harry. Indeed, sir, I am distressed to see you so intent upon this business; I am exceedingly unhappy to do the least thing to incur your displeasure, at this moment especially: I have a thousand reasons to be dissatisfied with myself, and am grieved to add your anger to the list. I would do anything in my power to preserve your friendship and affection; but this is too severe a task; I cannot totally forget common sense: I cannot entirely command so delicate a passion as that of love. A little time will discover whether I am ever to think of love or happiness again! of this, however, I am certain, I never can possess either with Miss Turnbull. [*Exit.*

Sir Hor. Indeed, youngster! so resolute!

Clara. What a noble fortitude!

[*Aside.*

Sir Hor. We shall see who will first read their re-

cantation. An insensible, blind puppy! I'll be a greater torment to him than a beadle to a beggar, a cat to a rat, or a candle to a moth: I'll singe his wings; I'll plague him worse than Moses did the Egyptians.

Clara. Oh! Sir Hornet, you'll soon be of another opinion.

Sir Hor. Never, never, never!

Enter 'Squire TURNBULL, unperceived.

However, let him act as he will, Miss Turnbull shall have no cause to repent her coming to London.

Miss T. What! will yo' take me to zee the zights?

Turn. Who the devil bade that goose cackle?

Sir Hor. A cursed idiot, or I have no skill in physiognomy.

Turn. What, Barbara! Ees, that her be, though no vool, neather: her do know better than to thatch her house wi' pancakes.

Sir Hor. Psha! Miss Turnbull! [*To CLARA.*

Miss T. Ees, I be here.

Sir Hor. Again! [*Takes CLARA by the hand.*]

Give me leave, I say, dear Miss Turnbull, to—

Vand. Eh! Sir Hornet!

Clara. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Hor. Why, what—

Vand. You don't take my turtle for Miss Turn-

bull, sure?

Sir Hor. Your turtle! I don't know what you mean by your turtle; but I take this young lady for Miss Turnbull, sure.

Vand. You do?

Sir Hor. Yes, I do. [*VAND. and CLARA laugh.*]

Why, what the devil—Eh!—why, sure—

Vand. Ha, ha, ha! This is a good joke.

Sir Hor. A good joke! Why, madam—'Squire—

Zounds!—

Vand. Ha, ha, ha! I would not have missed this for a thousand pounds, in new coined guineas.

Sir Hor. Mr. Turnbull, sir, is not this your sister, sir?

Turn. Zister!

Sir Hor. Yes.

Turn. What thic?

Sir Hor. Yes.

Turn. Thic Barbara?—

Sir Hor. Zounds! yes, I tell you.

Turn. Why, no, to be sure. Thic be Barbara!

Clara. Ha, ha, ha!

Vand. Ha, ha, ha! the biter bit; the fleecer fleeced.

Sir Hor. [*Whistles.*] Thic be Barbara!

Turn. Ees, thic be Barbara!

Miss T. Ees, I be Barbara.

Vand. Why, what a numskull your nephew is, Sir Hornet.

Sir Hor. Do you think so?

Vand. A blind, insensible puppy!

Sir Hor. Is he?

Vand. But you'll torment him; you'll singe his wings; you'll plague him worse than Moses did the Egyptians. What a discovery!

Sir Hor. Oh! yes; I have made more discoveries.

Vand. Ay, what are they?

Sir Hor. Why the first is, you're an old fool; the next is, I am another; and the third is, that we are not the only fools in company.

[*Exit, followed by CLARA and VAND.*

Turn. Barbara!

Miss T. Ees.

Turn. How does thee like London?

Miss T. I knaw not; it do zeem a strange place.

Turn. A strange place!

Miss T. Ees, I do think it be.

Turn. Thee dost?

Miss T. Ees.

Turn. An' zo do I; whereby, dost zee, I'll get out on't as vast as I can. A pretty chace, as the man zaid that rode vifty miles a'ter a wild goose. London! An this be London, the devil take London. Come, pack up thy ribbands an' vlappets, an' make thyzel ready.

Miss T. Neca, zure; you wunt go zo zoon.

Turn. Wunt I? An' I stay in thic town to-night, I'll eat it vor breakfast to-morrow.

Miss T. My gracious!

Turn. Come, come, don't stand mauxing and dawdling, but make thyzel ready.

Miss T. Lard! why I a' zeen nothing yet.

Turn. No, nor nothing thee zhalt zee, that I promise thee; zo stir thy stumps, I tell thee.

Miss T. My gracious! Mun I go down into t' country again like a vool, an' ha' nothing to zay vor myzel?

Turn. Why, look thee, Barbara; come along; vor thee have come up like a vool, zo there can be no harm in thy going down like a vool. *[Exeunt.]*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Library in Sir Harry Portland's House.

Sir HARRY PORTLAND and TIMID discovered.

Timid. Indeed, sir, you have always been the best of masters to me.

Sir Harry. No, Timid, no; I have been a very weak, idle, fellow; and have put it out of my power to be a good master to any one.

Timid. Lackaday! Sir, don't say so; I am afraid I have been a bad servant; a very bad servant.

Sir Harry. Never.

Timid. Lackaday! Sir, you don't know, you don't know! Lackaday! I thought all for the best.

Sir Harry. You have only done what I commanded.

Timid. To be sure, sir. But, lackaday!—I wish I dared to open my mind to him. I am terrified; he will never believe me innocent. *[Aside.]*

Sir Harry. My ruin is all my own work. Here, Mr. Timid, take this ring, and remember me; it may be the last present I shall ever make you.

Timid. Pray don't say so, sir. I am terrified.

Sir Harry. I am going to Mr. Osborne's.

Timid. To Mr. Osborne's!

Sir Harry. Yes; if you should not see me to-morrow morning; if any accident should happen—

Timid. Lackaday!

Sir Harry. Give the state of my affairs, which I ordered you to draw up, to my uncle, and this picture to Clara, the young lady that is with him.

Timid. Sir! What do you mean?

Sir Harry. Oh! nothing, nothing; I'm not very well; I—a slight swimming in my head, that's all; but there is no knowing what may happen.

Timid. Lackaday! Sir, you terrify me; you talk like a dying man making his will.

Sir Harry. No, no, not so; I have nothing to leave: and, as to dying, men must die; live as long as they can, they must all die at last.

Timid. Shall I go for Sir Hornet, or your sister, or the young lady?

Sir Harry. No; no young ladies for—Oh!

Timid. Lackaday! my heart aches.

Sir Harry. I am going to Mr. Osborne's presently.

Timid. Lackaday!—I wish he knew: I'll take the mortgage of the Kentish estate; Mr. Osborne ordered me to bring it: I'll lay it open on Mr. Osborne's table. I hope my dear master will see it; I hope he will discover all. *[Aside.]*

Sir Harry. Heigho!

Timid. Dear sir, don't sigh so; don't look so: tell me what I can do to serve you, to oblige you, to make you happier?

Sir Harry. Nothing, nothing; past hope, past cure; quite, quite—

Timid. Lackaday!

Sir Harry. A thoughtless, profligate, idle, dissipated fellow. Oh! my head, my head!

Timid. I cannot bear to see him so. I'll hurry to Mr. Osborne's; I'll try if I can yet persuade him to be a true friend; I'll beg, I'll pray, I'll go down on my knees; I'll do anything. *[Exit.]*

Sir Harry. Clara! an angel! a cherub! And what am I? Well, well, it will soon be all over; there will be a sudden stop—a speedy end. *[Laughing without.]* So happy—Heaven—Heaven increase your joys! mine are for ever fled—light laughter, innocent smiles, and social mirth are fled for ever, for ever Oh, folly! Oh, madness! *[Exit.]*

Enter Sir HORNET, VANDERVELT, and CLARA, laughing.

Sir Hor. Ay, ay, pray laugh, laugh heartily, I beseech you; I deserve, and I desire no mercy.

Clara. It is one of the oddest adventures.

Vand. How the deuce could you mistake that blowzabel, Miss Turnbull, for my turtle?

Sir Hor. Why, true, as you say, friend Van; but that happens to be a blunder which I never did, nor ever could make. I should as soon take myself for a king, or you for a conjuror. I only mistook this lady to be Miss Turnbull, not Miss Turnbull to be this lady.

Vand. Mistook Miss Turnbull and this lady, and—I don't understand it.

Clara. Be kind enough, Sir Hornet, to explain the matter.

Sir Hor. You remember, madam, I had some conversation with you in the Rooms at Bath.

Clara. Perfectly.

Sir Hor. And you could not but perceive how forcibly I was struck with your wit, beauty, and accomplishments.

Clara. I recollect you were very polite, sir, and were pleased to say abundance of obliging things.

Sir Hor. Not half so many as I thought, I assure you, madam.

Vand. Well said, Sir Hornet. My old friend is quite enamoured with you, turtle.

Sir Hor. Yes, sir, so I am; though I do not intend to marry the lady.

Vand. Hem!

Sir Hor. My grand object, the thing that, of all others, I have most at heart, is to see my nephew, Sir Harry, happy; as for myself, I feel I am growing old apace, and am almost tired of the farce of life.

Vand. Why so, Sir Hornet? I am sure you play your part excellently.

Sir Hor. No, no; I am rolling down hill apace, and as the first steep declivity may precipitate me to the bottom, there are certain affairs I wish to see finished, one of which is the marriage of Sir Harry.

Clara. So the person you asked concerning me,

when I went out of the rooms, mistook the question, and thought you meant Miss Turnbull?

Sir Hor. So it appears, madam; and I was too much enraptured to stay to rectify mistakes. When I negotiated the affair with 'Squire Turnbull, I studiously avoided an interview with his supposed sister, for fear the business should wear a face of precipitate delicacy; and I thought if I could once bring you and Sir Harry together, I would leave the contingent possibilities to love, and the superior good qualities and penetration of the parties, which I, rationally enough, concluded could not fail to produce the desired effect.

Clara. But, Sir Hornet, how did it happen that you did not enquire of me myself who I was?

Sir Hor. Why, 'faith! madam, I had been so particular with you, and had spoken so freely on the subjects of love and matrimony, that I was afraid, if I made those kind of inquiries, you would mistake the matter, perhaps, and think I wanted to make love to you in my own proper person. Hey, young Van?

[*Aside.*

Vand. Heigho!

Clara. Oh! no, Sir Hornet, I assure you, I had a better opinion of your understanding.

Vand. Hem!

Sir Hor. Certainly, had I been capable of such a whim, I should have made myself curiously ridiculous. Hey! young Van?

[*Aside.*

Clara. Beyond dispute!

Vand. Heigho!

Enter TIMID, looking wild and frightened.

Sir Hor. Heyday! What's the matter with you, old Lackaday?

Timid. I'm terrified, I'm terrified, I'm terrified!

Sir Hor. Terrified! What's the matter? Zounds! why don't you speak?

Timid. Lackaday! I can't, I can't speak.

Sir Hor. Make signs then.

Timid. I'm a miserable old man; I ran all the way to tell you—

Sir Hor. What?

Timid. Mr. Osborne!

Sir Hor. Mr. Osborne! What of him?

Timid. Lackaday! Sir Harry!

Clara. Heavens! A duel.

Timid. I have put my trust in man, and am deceived; I have leaned upon a reed, and am fallen; I have seen the shadow of friendship, and—

Sir Hor. Curse light on your metaphors; come to facts: What of Osborne? What of Sir Harry? Where are they? What have they done? What are they doing?

Timid. Gambling!

Sir Hor. How!

Timid. I was at Mr. Osborne's when Sir Harry came; I was there with the mortgage of the Kentish estate.

Sir Hor. Of what?

Timid. It was executed this very day; I am a miserable old man—all lost!

Sir Hor. Lost!

Timid. Lackaday! that's not all; I went into the next room and heard Sir Harry go to gaming with a gang of sharpers that were there on purpose; Sir Harry had lost everything he had in the world; Mr. Osborne has got all—the mortgages of all his estates: I saw 'em, left 'em all in a box on his table.

Sir Hor. Mortgages of all his estates! Perdition! How did he get them? How came you to know?

Timid. Lackaday! I am terrified, I dare not tell;

I am an accomplice! A wicked, innocent, miserable old man.

Sir Hor. D——n! Order the coach, there! I'll tear him to atoms; I'll rend him piecemeal—my poor boy—an intolerable villain! Dear madam, you don't know what I feel.

Clara. Pardon me, Sir Hornet, if you knew my heart, you would not say so; I detest the treachery of Mr. Osborne as much as you do; and, woman as I am, would risk my life to see it properly punished.

Sir Hor. A smooth-tongued, hypocritical villain, that owes his life to my boy.

Clara. Dear Sir Hornet, excuse my weakness; I am in the utmost terror—in dread of consequences still more fatal.

Timid. Lackaday! sir, so am I; I am terrified. Sir Harry gave me this ring for a remembrance, and bade me deliver this picture to you, madam.

Clara. [*Bursts into tears.*] It is his own.

Timid. He looked so melancholy, and so furious; he had his pistols.

Clara. His pistols! Oh! for pity's sake, Sir Hornet, let us fly.

Sir Hor. Instantly.

Timid. I'm a miserable old man. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—Mr. Osborne's House.

Enter Sir HARRY PORTLAND excessively agitated, followed by OSBORNE with a brace of pistols that he had wrested from him.

Osborne. How now, Sir Harry; what is the cause of this sudden phrenzy? Why expose your want of temper and fortitude thus to the company? You have driven them away, they are all going—

Sir Harry. Oh! horror!

Osborne. If you must wreak vengeance on yourself, let it be a becoming one at least.

Sir Harry. Insupportable horror!

Osborne. Fie, fie, recover your temper; be, or seem to be a man. What!—you knew you were ruined before this event.

Sir Harry. Oh, Osborne! Oh, Melissa! I cannot speak—I cannot utter it; I'm a wretch—a villain, the meanest, the worst of villains; and infamy, eternal infamy is mine.

Osborne. Why, what have you done?

Sir Harry. Ruined you, ruined my sister.

Osborne. How!

Sir Harry. And branded myself, everlastingly, a villain.

Osborne. Ruined me! ruined your sister! which way?

Sir Harry. The money I have lost within—

Osborne. Well?

Sir Harry. Is her's—Is your's.

Osborne. Mine!

Sir Harry. Melissa's—her fortune—she put it into my hand this very day.

Osborne. D——n!

Sir Harry. Have compassion on me, give me the pistols, let me at once put an end to my misery and shame.

Osborne. Thoughtless, weak man! Do you think the momentary pang of death a sufficient punishment for the ruin and destruction you have entailed upon all those who have had the misfortune to love, or to be related to you? Do you think that to die, and to forget, at once, your infamy and crimes, is a compensation for the havoc you have made with the peace and property of those who were dearest to you, who must live to feel the effect of your vices,

and bear, unjustly, the reproach of your abandoned conduct.

Sir Harry. Oh! torture!

Os. Was it not enough that you had reduced yourself, from affluence and honour, to contempt and beggary, but you must wantonly, wickedly sport with what was not your own; and involve the innocent and unborn in your wretchedness? Shall not your sister's offspring, whom your intemperance shall have reduced to poverty and misery, detest your memory, and imprecate curses on your name?

Sir Harry. Oh, hell!

Sir HORNET ARMSTRONG speaks without, and afterwards enters, followed by CLARA and TIMID.

Sir Hor. Where are they? which is the room? So, Mr. Lucifer—could you decoy your friend to no other place to rob him, but your own house?

Os. Did you address yourself to me, Sir Hornet?

Sir Hor. Yes, I did, Sir Satan, and if—

Sir Harry. Dear sir, forbear; I alone am the proper object of anger—of vengeance—a wretch—a despised and miserable outcast; and bitterness and despair are deservedly my portion.

Sir Hor. You are a dupe, a poor fascinated fool; you have beheld the serpent's mouth open, have felt the influence of his poisonous breath, yet stupidly dropped into his ravenous jaws, and sung a requiem to your own destruction.

Os. You are liberal, sir, of your epithets and accusations. What do you mean by them?

Sir Hor. Horrible impudence! Have you not taken a vile, a rascally advantage of the want of temper in the man for whom you professed the most perfect friendship? Have you not stripped him of his estate, by the most villainous arts, by plotting with Jews and scoundrels?

Os. You talk loud, sir.

Sir Harry. Osborne plotting! the letter then was true.

Sir Hor. Yes, plotting! He is the principal, the leader of the hellish gang that has been plundering you.

Os. Well, sir! suppose it—What then?

Sir Hor. What then! Halts!

Os. Why so, sir? He has persisted in bringing destruction upon himself, and must suffer the effects of his obstinacy. What crime was there in my receiving what he was resolved to throw away? He had not been a month returned from his travels, before his passion for play made him the jest of every polite sharper in town. They saw there was an estate to be scrambled for, and every one was industrious to obtain a share. After squandering a part of his fortune among these adventurers, he engaged at play with me, and after losing one sum, was never easy till he had lost another. Am I, then, to be accountable for his folly?

Sir Harry. Infernal treachery! Dares he avow it?

Os. Dare! Yes, sir, I dare.

Clara. Righteous heaven! is there no peculiar, no quick vengeance for ingratitude? [*Aside.*]

Sir Hor. The deeds, the annuities you have granted, the mortgages you have made, are in his possession; he owns he has them all.

Sir Harry. He!

Os. Yes, sir, I.

Sir Harry. Madness! Remember and beware, remember and tremble! though I have no longer the fortune of Sir Harry Portland, I have still Harry's spirit, and dare chastise insolence and perfidy.

Os. No doubt; the man who is rash enough to

risk his estate upon the chance of a die, has, generally, valour enough to wish to cut the winner's throat. Friendship is no protection.

Clara. Friendship! Monstrous prostitution! Friendship! Deeds, Mr. Osborne, are the best proofs of friendship, and that preacher will gain but little credit who is a detected villain, while he is describing the fitness and beauty of moral virtue.

Sir Hor. Friendship! Where are the deeds, the mortgages?

Os. There they are, sir. [*Points to a box.*] They are mine; the annuities he has granted, and the mortgages he has made, are mine; his effects are mine, his houses are mine, his estates are mine, his notes are mine, his all is mine, except his poverty and spirit, which, as he says, are his own.

Sir Harry. Heavens! must I bear this?

Sir Hor. Oh! for ratsbane or hemp.

Os. Nay more, sir: [*To Sir HARRY.*] I was not only aware, but certain of my own superior address, or I had not been weak enough to have risked any part of my fortune. I have not yet acquired your heroic contempt for riches; as it was, I used every art to stimulate and incite you to play; took every advantage, studied every trick, improved every lucky chance, and rejoiced at every and all of your losses, till I had you totally in my power; I beheld distress accumulating on your head, and was happy at it; remarked the agitation of your mind, and increased it; saw the infirmity of your temper, and aggravated it.

Sir Harry. D—n! Are you a man?

Os. Try me.

Sir Harry. Dare you give me the satisfaction—the revenge of a man?

Os. I'll give it you instantly, sir. [*As Sir Harry offers to go, Osborne seizes his arm, and before he speaks, his countenance changes from assumed anger and contempt, to the most tender and expressive friendship.*] There, there lies your revenge! there is your satisfaction! Take them; remember your former folly, and be happy.

Sir Harry. Sir!

Sir Hor. What?

Clara. Astonishment!

Os. Why do you seem surprised? My heart is your's, my life is your's! I owe you everything; a debt which never can be repaid, and never will be forgotten. When sinking beneath the murderous hand of villainy, it was the benevolent ardour of your soul, it was the intrepid valour of your arm that rescued me!

Sir Harry. Generous friend!

Os. In that box is contained all that I have ever won of you, and almost all you have ever lost. I have become an associate with sharpers to protect you from them; and, by sacrificing a little, have preserved the rest. I have worn the mask till it is become too painful, and now gladly cast it off. If my conduct have yet a dubious appearance, I have a witness that will be instantly credited.—[*Goes to the chamber-door, and calls Melissa.*—*MELISSA enters, and runs to Sir Harry.*]

Mel. My brother!

Sir Harry. Sister! Osborne!

Clara. Oh, my heart!

Sir Hor. [*After a pause.*] Tol de rol!

Timid. Lackaday! I'm a happy old man! He's a friend, he's a true friend! I'm a happy old man!

Sir Harry. Can you, too, sister, forgive my folly? you that I have injured so unpardonably?

Mel. Dear brother, you are not so guilty as you

suppose. It was a plot upon you; you were led into it, to shew you what a losing gamester is capable of.

Sir Hor. Harkye, sir! [*To Osborne.*] All the mortgages and deeds are there, you say?

Osborne. All, sir; together with whatever money that has, at any time, been won of him, since I have been concerned in this transaction.

Sir Hor. All in that box?

Osborne. All.

Timid. I'm a happy old man!

Sir Harry. My dear uncle!

Sir Hor. Let me alone—*Tol de rol!*—[*Goes to Osborne, and takes his hand.*] Will you forgive me, Osborne? will you—will you forgive my boy?

Sir Harry. [*Takes Osborne's other hand.*] Osborne!—I cannot speak—

Clara. Indeed, Mr. Osborne, I don't know how to tell you what I think. Esteem, admiration, are poor expressions to convey my feelings. I have been mistaken and to blame. I trembled for Sir Harry; I condemned you; and wrote a letter—

Sir Harry. Dear madam, was that letter your's?

Clara. It was.

Sir Harry. How much obliged am I to you, and to you all.

Clara. I am sorry; I was to blame.

Osborne. Nay, madam; nobody was to blame. And now, dear Harry, suffer me to say one word: let this transaction be a powerful, an everlasting memento to you. Remember the blood that has been spilt in the moment of passion and distress, in consequence of indulging in this shocking vice; remember the distracted wife and widow's curse, the sting of desperation, and the red and impious hand of suicide! Despise the folly that made the practice fashionable; oppose its destructive course; and for ever shun, for ever abominate, the detestable vice of gaming.

Sir Harry. Professions of resolutions from me, Osborne, come with an ill grace. I am ashamed of my folly: I despised, even while I practised it; but the punishment you have inflicted has been so judicious, so severely generous, I think I can safely say there is no probability of a relapse.

Sir Hor. Well, but, Harry, turn about—look at this lady; surely, you have not forgotten Miss Turnbull, have you?

Sir Harry. Your Miss Turnbull, sir, I shall never forget.

Sir Hor. Oh! what you have heard the renowned history of my Bath adventure?

Sir Harry. I have, sir.

Sir Hor. Well, and what say you to—eh! my che-

rub? You told me, you know, you had no aversion to the fellow.

Clara. Nay, Sir Hornet, is that the part of a confidant?

Sir Hor. Why, yes, it is; for, as I take it, a confidant is but a kind of a go-between to bring the parties together—And here comes the blooming youth—

Enter VANDERVELT.

here comes Johannes de Temporibus, to second the motion.

Vand. To second what motion, Sir Hornet?

Sir Hor. An hymeneal motion.

Vand. Can't tell. Who are the candidates?

Sir Hor. Harry Portland and Clara Forester.

Vand. Hold, hold! Sir Hornet, not so fast! that lady is my ward.

Sir Hor. Yes, and may, if she please, be your wife.

Vand. Nay, I—I did not say so, Sir Hornet.

Sir Hor. No, but I did, young Van. But harkye! [*takes him aside*] resign all your silly pretensions peaceably, throw your worthies into the fire, and give up the lady to her lover; or you shall be held up, in terrorem, an object of ridicule, to frighten all the dangling, whining, old fools in Christendom, who are turned of three-score.

Vand. Well, well, speak in a lower key.

Sir Hor. May I be certain of your consent, then?

Vand. Why, yes, yes—Heigho!

Sir Hor. Dear madam, this worthy old gentleman, your guardian, most humbly implores you would have pity upon Sir Harry.

Clara. Did you say so, papa?

Vand. Me! no.

Sir Hor. How?

Vand. Not in those exact words; but something very like it, turtle. Heigho!

Mel. Come, my dear Clara, let me have the happiness to call you sister.

Osborne. Let me intercede, madam.

Clara. Psha! here is everybody interceding, but him that can intercede most to the purpose.

Sir Harry. Forgive me, dearest Clara! my fate is suspended on your lips; and I am so conscious of unworthiness, and so much affected by the fear of a severe sentence, that I have not power to plead for mercy.

Clara. Yes; but you have a partial, tender-hearted judge.

Sir Hor. Ay, "and a wise young judge," too.

Clara. Well, well! I cannot dissemble. A generous heart, a noble mind, are seldom met and seldom merited. When happiness like this presents itself, to reject is not to deserve it. [*Exeunt.*]

THE SCHOOL FOR ARROGANCE;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS,

BY THOMAS HOLCROFT.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

COUNT CONOLLY VILLARS
SIR PAUL PECKHAM
SIR SAMUEL SHEEPY
DORIMONT
EDMUND
MAC DERMOT
PICARD
EXEMPT.

LADY PECKHAM
LUCY
LYDIA
Servants.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The House of Sir Paul Peckham.*

Enter LYDIA, followed by MAC DERMOT.

Lydia. Once again, Mr. Mac Dermot, have done with this nonsense.

Mac D. Arrah! and why so scoffish? Sure, now, a little bit of making love—

Lydia. Pshā! Do me the favour to answer my questions. The Count, your master, is in love with Miss Lucy Peckham?

Mac D. 'Faith! and you may say that.

Lydia. Is he really well born?

Mac D. Oh! as for that, honey, let him alone. The noblest blood of France, ay, and what is better, of Ireland, too, trickles to his fingers' ends. The Villars, and the O'Counollies.

Lydia. And he wishes to marry into the family of the Peckhams?

Mac D. The devil a bit, my dear:

Lydia. How?

Mac D. He is very willing to marry the young lady, but not her family. His pride and his passion have had many a tough battle about that, d'ye see. Only think! a direct descendant of the former kings of Ireland, and collateral cousin to a present peer of France, to besmear and besmoulder his dignity by

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rubbing it against porter butts, vinegar casks, and beer barrels.

Lydia. Miss Lucy is, indeed, a lovely girl; animated to excess, and sometimes apparently giddy and flighty: but she has an excellent understanding, and a noble heart; and these are superior to birth, which is indeed a thing of mere accident.

Mac D. 'Faith! and that it is. I, a simple Irishman, as I am—why now, I would have been born a duke, had they been civil enough to have asked my consent.

Lydia. The Count fell in love with her at the convent, to which she was sent to improve her French.

Mac D. And where I think you first met with her?

Lydia. Yes; she saw me friendless, and conceived a generous and disinterested affection for me. He has followed her to England; has taken apartments in our neighbourhood, and lives in splendour—yet is not rich.

Mac D. Um, um! No; but, then, he is a colonel in the Irish brigade; and, besides his pay, has sacrit supplies.

Lydia. From whom?

Mac D. 'Faith! and I don't believe he knows that himself.

Lydia. That's strange! His pride is excessive.

Mac D. To spake the truth, that now is his failing. An' if it was not for that, oh! he would be the jewel of a master! He trates his infiarors with countimp, keeps his distance with his aquals, and values the rubbishing dust of his great-grandfathers above diamonds!

Lydia. His character is in perfect contrast to that of his humble rival, Sir Samuel Sheepy; who, even when he addresses a footman, is all bows and affability; whose chief discourse is, "Yes, if you please," and, "No, thank you;" and who, in the company of his mistress, stammers, blunders, and blushes, like a great boy.

Mac D. What is it you till me? He the rival of the Count my master! that old—

Lydia. A bachelor, and only fifty; rich, of a good family, and a great favourite with Lady Peckham, by never having the courage to contradict her.

Mac D. Why, there now! You talk of the Count's pride! Here is this city lady as proud as ten Counts! Her own coach-horses, ready harnessed, don't carry their heads higher! And then she is as insolent, and as vulgar, and—Hem!

Enter Lady PECKHAM and Sir SAMUEL SHEEPY, followed by two Footmen, in very smart morning-jackets.

Lady P. Here, fellows! go with these here cards. [*Footmen receive each a parcel of large cards, and are going.*] And, do you hear? When you comes back, get those dismal heads of yours better powdered; put on your noo liveries, and make yourselves a little like Christians. These creeters are no better nor brootes, Sir Samooel! They are all so monstrous low and vulgar? I have a party to-night; I hopes you will make von?

Sir S. Certainly, my lady.

Lady P. So, miss, is Sir Paul come to town?

Lydia. I have not seen him, madam.

Lady P. Sir Paul generally sleeps at our country seat, at Hackney.

Sir S. A pleasant retreat, my lady!

Lady P. Wastly! A wery paradise!—Where is my daughter, my son?

Lydia. I don't know, madam.

Lady P. And why don't you know? Please to go and tell her Sir Samooel is here. [*Exit LYDIA.*]—A young purson that my daughter has taken under her pertuction.

Sir S. Seems mild and modest, my lady.

Lady P. Not too much of that, Sir Samooel. [*Surveying MAC DERMOT.*] Who, pray—who are you, young man?

Mac D. I!—Faith? my lady, I—I am—mysilf: Mac Dermot.

Lady P. Who?

Mac D. The Count's gentleman.

Lady P. Gentleman! Gentleman, indeed!—Count's gentleman! Ha! a kind of mungrel Count, Sir Samooel; half French, half Irish! As good a gentleman, I suppose, as his footman here. I believes you have seen him, though?

Sir S. I think I once had the honour to meet him here, my lady.

Lady P. An honour, Sir Samooel, not of my seeking, I assure you. Aspires to the hand of Miss Looey Peckham! He! An outlandish French foriner! I hates 'em all! I looks uppon none on 'em as no better nor savages! What do they vant with us? Why, our money, to be sure! A parcel of beggars! I wishes I was queen of England for von day only! I would usher my orders to take and conquer 'em all, and transport 'em to the plantations, instead of negurs.

Sir S. I have heard, my lady, that the Count was my rival.

Lady P. He your rival, Sir Samooel! He! A half-bred, higglety-pigglety, Irish, French fortun-hunter, rival you, indeed!—

Enter LYDIA.

Vell, miss, where is my daughter?

Lydia. In her own apartment, madam, dressing.

Lady P. She'll be down presently, Sir Samooel. —Gentleman indeed! The Count's gentleman! Ha! Pride and poverty. [*Exit with Sir S.*]

Mac D. [*Highly affronted.*] Pride! By the holy footstool, but your ladyship and Lucifer are a pair!

Lydia. [*Knocking.*] Here comes Sir Paul.

Mac D. Then I will be after going.

Lydia. No, no; stay where you are.

Enter Sir PAUL PECKHAM.

Sir P. Ah! My sweet, dear Liddy! You are the angel I wished first to meet! Come to my—[*Run-*

ning up to her.]—Why, how now, hussy? Why so shy?

Lydia. Reserve your transports, sir, for Lady Peckham.

Sir P. Lady?—But who have we here?

Lydia. Mr. Mac Dermot, sir.

Sir P. Oh! I remember; servant to the Count, my intended son-in-law.

Mac D. The viry same, sir.

[*Bows.*]

Sir P. I hear an excellent character of your master. They tell me he is a fine, hearty, dauntless, swaggering fellow! If so, he is a man of family, and the very husband for my Lucy.

Mac D. Faith! then, and he is all that.

Sir P. As for this Sir Samuel Sheepy, he shall decamp. A water-drinker! A bowing, scraping, simpering, ceremonious sir! Never contradicts anybody! D—e! An old bachelor! And he! he have the impudence to make love to my fine, young, spirited wench!—But he is my lady's choice! Is she within?

Lydia. Yes, sir.

Sir P. I suppose we shall have a fine breeze on this subject. But, what! am I not the monarch, the Grand Seigneur of this house? Am I not absolute? Shall I not dispose of my daughter as I please? Do you hear, young man? Go, present my compliments to the Count, and tell him, I mean to give him a call this morning.

[*LYDIA makes signs to MAC DERMOT to stay.*]

Mac D. I am waiting for him here, sir.

Sir P. Waiting for him here, sir! No, sir! You cannot wait for him here, sir!

Mac D. But, sir—

Sir P. And, sir! Why don't you go?

Mac D. The Count bid me, sir—

Sir P. And I bid you, sir, pack! Begone!—[*Exit MAC DERMOT.*]—Now we're alone, my dear Lydia—Why, where are you going, hussy?

Lydia. Didn't you hear my lady call?

Sir P. Call! No. And if she did, let her call.

Lydia. Surely, sir, you would not have me offend her?

Sir P. Offend! Let me see who dare be offended with you in this house! It is my will that you should be the sultana.

Lydia. Me, sir?

Sir P. You, my queen of hearts! You! My house, my wealth, my servants, myself, all are yours!

Lydia. You talk unintelligibly, sir.

Sir P. Do I? Why, then, I'll speak plainer: I am in love with you! You are a delicious creature, and I am determined to make your fortune! I'll take you a house up in Mary-le-bone; a neat snug box: hire you servants, keep you a carriage; buy you rings, clothes, and jewels, and come and sup with you every evening! Do you understand me now?

Lydia. Perfectly, sir!

Sir P. Well, and—eh!—Does not the plan tickle your fancy? Do not your veins tingle, your heart beat, your—eh? What say you?

Lydia. I really, sir, don't know what to say, except that I cannot comply, unless a lady, whom I think it my duty to consult, should give her consent.

Sir P. What lady? Who?

Lydia. Lady Peckham, sir.

Sir P. My wife! Zounds! are you mad? Tell my wife

Lydia. I shall further ask the advice of your son and daughter, who will wonder at your charity, in taking a poor orphan like me under your protection.

Sir P. Pooh! Nonsense!

Lydia. A little farther off, if you please, sir.

Sir P. Nearer, angel! nearer!

Lydia. I'll raise the house, sir.

Sir P. Psha!

Lydia. Help!

Sir P. My handkerchief! You sweet—

Enter EDMUND.

Edmund. *Lydia!* sir!

Sir P. How now, sir! [*Aside to LYDIA.*] Hem! say it was a mouse.

Edmund. What is the matter, sir?

Sir P. What's that to you, sir? What do you want, sir? Who sent for you, sir?

Edmund. I perceive you are not well, sir!

Sir P. Sir?

Edmund. How were you taken?

Sir P. Taken! [*Aside.*] Young scoundrel!—Take yourself away, sir!

Edmund. Impossible, sir! You tremble! Your looks are disordered! your eyes wild!

Sir P. [*Aside.*] Here's a dog!

Edmund. Be so obliging, Miss Lydia, as to run and inform Lady Peckham how ill my father is.

Sir P. Why, you imp! [*Stopping LYDIA.*] Lydia, stay where you are. You audacious! Will you begone?

Edmund. That I certainly will not, sir, while I see you in such a way!

Sir P. Way, sir!—Very well, sir! very well!

Edmund. I'll reach you a chair, sir. Pray, sit down; pray, cool yourself.

Sir P. Oh! that I were cooling you in a horse-poult.

Edmund. You are growing old, sir.

Sir P. You lie, sir!

Edmund. You should be more careful of yourself. Shall I send for a physician?

Sir P. [*Aside.*] D—e, but I'll physic you; I'll—
[*Muttering as he goes off.*] A sly, invidious—The demure dog has a mind to her himself. Yes, yes; oh! d—e, pitiful Peter! but I'll fit you. [*Exit.*]

Lydia. You see, sir—

Edmund. [*Shrugging.*] I do.

Lydia. I must leave this family

Edmund. Leave! Why, charming Lydia, will you afflict me thus? Have I not declared my purpose?

Lydia. Which cannot be accomplished. You promise marriage; but your father will never consent.

Edmund. Then we will marry without his consent.

Lydia. Oh! no. Do not hope it. When I marry, it shall be to render both my husband and myself happy: not to embitter, not to dishonour both.

Enter a Footman.

Foot. A person, who calls himself Mr. Dorimont, inquires for you, madam.

Lydia. Heavens! Can it be? Shew him up instantly. [*Exit Footman.*]

Edmund. You seem alarmed!

Lydia. No, no; overjoyed!

Edmund. Who is it?

Lydia. I scarcely can tell you. A gentleman who used to visit me in the convent.

Edmund. Have you been long acquainted?

Lydia. Little more than two years; during which he was my monitor, consoler, and guide.

Edmund [*Seeing DORIMONT before he enters.*] His appearance—

Lydia. Is poor; but his heart is rich in benevolence. Pray leave us. [*Exit EDMUND.*]

Enter DORIMONT.

[*Rushing to meet him.*] Ah! sir—

Dori. I am happy to have found you once again.

Lydia. What, sir, has brought you to England?

Dori. Business; part of which was to see you.

Lydia. You have been always generous and kind: yet I am sorry you should see me thus.

Dor. Why? What are you?

Lydia. An humble dependant—a lady's companion.

Dor. Alas! Why did you leave the convent without informing me?

Lydia. 'Twas unexpected. You had forborne your visits; and I feared death, or some misfortune. At my mother's decease, the young lady with whom I live having an affection for me, and seeing me deserted, offered to take me with her to England, promising I should rather be her friend than her companion.

Dori. And has she kept her word?

Lydia. On her part, faithfully, tenderly

Dori. That is some consolation.

Lydia. But—

Dori. What?

Lydia. She has a mother, who does not fail to make inferiority feelingly understand itself.

Dori. [*With some emotion.*] Indeed! [*Collecting himself.*] But with whom were you in such earnest conversation when I entered?

Lydia. The brother of my young lady—a gentleman worthy your esteem.

Dori. And worthy yours? You blush.

Lydia. Do you blame me for being just?

Dori. No; he is rich, young, and handsome. Do you often meet?

Lydia. We do.

Dori. You are lovely, inexperienced, and unprotected.

Lydia. Fear nothing; I shall not easily forget myself.

Dori. [*Earnestly.*] I hope not. But what does he say?

Lydia. That he loves me.

Dori. Is that all?

Lydia. No; he offers me secret marriage.

Dori. Secret marriage!

Lydia. I see the danger, and wish to shun it. You may find me some place of refuge in France.

Dori. Can you so easily renounce all the flattering prospects love has raised?

Lydia. Yes; and not only them, but love itself, when it is my duty.

Dori. Noble-minded girl! Remain where you are; nay, indulge your hopes; for know, your lover will be honoured by your hand.

Lydia. Sir!—Honoured?

Dori. Honoured! By birth you are greatly his superior.

Lydia. Can you be serious? Oh! trifle not with a too trembling heart. Why did my mother conceal this from me? Oh! if true, why die and leave it unrevealed?

Dori. There was reason: she was not your mother.

Lydia. Oh! sir, you have conjured up ten thousand busy thoughts. Is my mother living?

Dori. No.

Lydia. My father?

Dori. He is.

Lydia. Why has he so long forsaken me?

Dori. That must be told hereafter. Be patient; wait the event. You are acquainted with Count Conolly Villars?

Lydia. He visits here.

Dori. I have business with him.

Lydia. Ah! sir, I fear you will meet a cool re

ception. Your humble appearance and his pride will but ill agree.

Dori. Fear not; my business is to lower his pride.

Lydia. Sir? he may insult you.

Dori. Humble though I am myself, I hope to teach him humility. To visit you, and to accomplish this, was the purport of my journey. Adieu for the present. Think on what I have said; and, though by birth you are noble, remember, virtue alone is true nobility. *[Exit.]*

Enter LUCY: her dress more characteristic of the girl than the woman; and her manner full of life, but tempered by the most delicate sensibility.

Lucy. Well, Lydia, any news for me?

Lydia. Mr. Mac Dermot has been here with the Count's compliments; but, in reality, to see if Lady Peckham was at home. You know how he wishes to avoid her.

Lucy. Yes; and I don't wonder at it. She has just been with me, ushering her orders, as she calls it. "I desires, miss, you will receive Sir Samooel Sheepy as your intended spouse." And so she has sent me here to be courted; and the inamorato is coming, as soon as he can take breath and courage.

Lydia. But why, my dear, do you indulge yourself in mocking your mamma?

Lucy. Lydia, I must either laugh or cry; and, though I laugh, I assure you it is often with an aching heart.

Lydia. My dear girl!

Lucy. I hope, however, you will own there is no great harm in laughing a little at this charming Adonis, this whimsical lover of mine.

Lydia. Perhaps not.

Lucy. What can his reason be for making love to me?

Lydia. There's a question! Pray, my dear, do you never look in your glass?

Lucy. Um—yes. But does he never look in his glass, too?

Lydia. Perhaps his sight begins to decay. But are you not alarmed?

Lucy. No.

Lydia. Do not you love the Count?

Lucy. Um—Yes.

Lydia. Well, and you know how violent and prejudiced Lady Peckham is.

Lucy. Perfectly. But I have Sir Paul on my side; and, as for Sir Samuel, he was dandled so long in the nursery, and is still so much of the awkward, bashful boy, that he will never dare to put the question directly to me; and I am determined never to understand him till he does.

Lydia. Here he comes.

Lucy. Don't leave me.

Enter Sir SAMUEL SHEEPY.

Sir S. [Bowling with trepidation.] Madam—Hem! Madam—

Lucy. [Curtsying and mimicking.] Sir—Hem! Sir—*[Aside to LYDIA.]* Count his bows.

Sir S. Madam, I—Hem! I am afraid—I am troublesome.

Lucy. Sir—Hem! A gentleman of your merit—Hem!

Sir S. [Continues bowling through most of the scene.] Oh! madam, I am afraid—Hem!—You are busy.

Lucy. [Curtsying to all his bows.] Sir—Hem!

Sir S. Do me the honour to bid me begone.

Lucy. Surely, sir, you would not have me guilty of rudeness?

Sir S. [Aside.] What a blunder! Madam—Hem! I ask ten thousand pardons.

Lucy. Good manners require—Hem!

Sir S. That I should begone without bidding.

[Going.]

Lucy. Sir!

Sir S. [Aside.] I suppose I'm wrong again.

Lucy. I didn't say so, sir.

Sir S. [Turning quick.] Didn't you, madam?

Lucy. A person of your politeness, breeding, and accomplishments—Hem!—

Sir S. [Aside.] She's laughing at me.

Lucy. Ought to be treated with all reverence.

[Curtsying with ironic gravity.]

Sir S. [Aside.] Yes; she's making a fool of me.

Lucy. Sir! Were you pleased to speak, sir? Hem!

Sir S. Hem!—Not a word, madam.

Lydia. This will be a witty conversation.

Lucy. I presume, sir—hem!—you have something to communicate.

Sir S. Madam!—Hem!—Yes, madam—I mean no, madam. No, nothing—Hem!

Lydia. Nothing, Sir Samuel!

Sir S. Hem!—Nothing; nothing.

Lucy. Then may I take the liberty, sir, to inquire—hem!—what the purport of your visit is?—hem!

Sir S. The—the—the—hem!—the—purport is—hem!—I—I have really forgotten.

Lucy. Oh! pray, sir, take time to recollect yourself.—Hem! I am sure, Sir Samuel—hem!—you have something to say to me. Hem!

Sir S. Yes; no, no; nothing.

Lydia. Fie! Sir Samuel, nothing to say to a lady?

Sir S. No.—Hem! I never had anything to say to ladies in my life. That is—Yes, yes; I own—I have something of the—the utmost—hem!

Lucy. Indeed!

Sir S. A thing which—lies at my heart.—Hem!

Lucy. Mercy! Sir Samuel!—Hem!

Sir S. Which I—hem!—have long—But I will take some other opportunity. *[Offering to go.]*

Lucy. By no means, Sir Samuel. You have quite alarmed me! I am impatient to hear! I am afraid you are troubled in mind.—Hem!

Sir S. Why,—hem!—Yes, madam,—rather—hem!

Lucy. I declare, I thought so. I am very sorry. Perhaps you are afraid of death?

Sir S. Madam!

Lucy. Yet you are not so very old.

Sir S. Madam!

Lucy. But I would not have you terrify yourself too much.—Hem!

Sir S. Madam!

Lucy. I perceive I have guessed it.

Sir S. Madam!—Hem!—No, madam

Lucy. What, then, is this important secret? Nay, pray tell me. Hem!

Sir S. Hem! N—n—n—n not at present, madam.

Lucy. Nay, Sir Samuel—

Sir S. Some other time, madam.—Hem!

Lucy. And can you be so cruel to me? Can you? I declare I shall dream about you: shall think I see you in your winding-sheet; or some such frightful figure; and shall wake all in a tremble.—Hem!

Sir S. A tremble, indeed, madam!

Lucy. And won't you tell me, Sir Samuel? Won't you?

Sir S. N—n—n—n not at present, madam.—Hem!

Lucy. Well, if you won't, Sir Samuel, I must leave you; for what you have said has absolutely given me the vapours.—Hem!

Sir S. I, madam? Have I given you the vapours?
 Lucy. Yes, you have, Sir Samuel; and shockingly, too. You have put such gloomy ideas into my mind—

Sir S. Bless me, madam—hem!

Lucy. Your salts, Lydia!—Hem!

Sir S. I hope, madam, you—you are not very ill.
 Lucy. Oh! I shall be better in another room.—Hem!

Sir S. [*Aside.*] Yes, yes; 'tis my company that has given her the vapours. [*Aloud.*] Shall I—

[*Confusedly offering his arm.*]

Lucy. No, no; stay where you are, Sir Samuel.

Sir S. [*Aside.*] She wants to be rid of me.—Hem!

Lucy. Only, remember, you are under a promise to tell me your secret.—Hem!—If you don't, I shall certainly see your ghost. Remember—Hem! [*Exit.*]

Sir S. Madam—I—[*To LYDIA.*] Miss Lydia—Hem!

Lydia. Sir?

Sir S. If you would—hem!—be so civil, I—

Lydia. Oh! sir, I have the vapours as bad as Miss Lucy. [*Exit.*]

Sir S. Have you?—Hem! Bless me! the vapours! My old trick. I always give young ladies the vapours; I make 'em ill. They are always sick of me—hem! 'Tis very strange, that I can't learn to talk without having a word to say; a thing so common, too. Why can't I give myself monkey airs; skip here and there; be self-sufficient, impertinent, and behave like a puppy; purposely to please the ladies? What! Is there no such thing to be found as a woman who can love a man for his modesty? This foreign count, now, my rival, is quite a different thing! He, [*imitating*]—he walks with a straight back, and a cocked-up chin, and a strut, and a stride, and stares, and takes snuff, and—Yes, yes; he's the man for the ladies! [*Exit.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in the House of Sir Paul Peckham.*

Enter LYDIA.

Lydia. I cannot forget it. My father alive, and I of noble descent! 'Tis very strange! Hope, doubt, and apprehension, are all in arms! Imagination hurries me beyond all limits of probability.

Enter EDMUND.

Edmund. Why do you thus seek solitude?

Lydia. To indulge thought.

Edmund. Has your friend brought you bad news?

Lydia. No.

Edmund. What has he said?

Lydia. Strange things.

Edmund. Heavens! What?

Lydia. You would think me a lunatic, were I to repeat them.

Edmund. Lydia, you are unjust.

Lydia. Am I? Well, then, I am told—would you believe it?—I am told that my family is illustrious.

Edmund. Good heavens! 'tis true!—I feel it is true! Charming Lydia, [*kneeling*] thus let love pay you that homage which the blind and malignant world denies.

Lydia. Rise, Edmund! Birth can, at best, but confer imaginary dignity: there is no true grandeur, but of mind.

Edmund. Some one is coming.

Lydia. Ay, ay; get you gone.

Edmund. I am all transport!

Lydia. Hush! Away!

Edmund. My angel!

[*Kisses her hand, and exit hastily.*]

Enter Footman, introducing DORIMONT.

Foot. A gentleman to you, madam.

Lydia. This sudden return, sir, is kind.

Dori. I have bethought me. The moment is critical, and what I have to communicate, of importance. Are we secure?

Lydia. We are: this is my apartment. [*LYDIA goes and bolts the door.*] Have you seen the Count, sir?

Dori. No; but I have written to him anonymously.

Lydia. And why anonymously!

Dori. To rouse his feelings, wound his vanity, and excite his anger. His slumbering faculties must be awakened. Is he kind to you?

Lydia. No; yet I believe him to be, generally, benevolent, and of noble heart; though his habitual haughtiness gives him the appearance of qualities the very reverse.

Dori. Worthy, kind girl! You were born for the consolation of a too unfortunate father!

Lydia. Again you remind me that I have a father. Why am I not allowed to see him? Why am I not suffered to fly into his arms?

Dori. He dreads lest his wretched and pitiable condition should make you meet him with coldness.

Lydia. Oh! how little does he know my heart! Yet speak: tell me, what monster was the cause of his misery?

Dori. The monster, pride.

Lydia. Pride?

Dori. Your mother's pride, which first squandered his wealth, and next endangered his life.

Lydia. How you alarm me!

Dori. A despicable dispute for precedence was the occasion of a duel, in which your father killed his antagonist, whose enraged family, by suborning witnesses, caused him to be convicted of murder; obliged him to fly the kingdom; and, with your mother, wander under a borrowed name, a fugitive in distant countries.

Lydia. Heavens! But why leave me ignorant of my birth?

Dori. That, being unfortunate, you might be humble; that you might not grieve after happiness which you seemed destined not to enjoy. 'Twas the precaution of a fond father, desirous to alleviate, if not to succour, your distress.

Lydia. Oh! how I burn to see him. Is he not in danger? Is his life secure?

Dori. He himself can scarcely say. His enemies have discovered him; are hot in pursuit; and fertile in stratagems and snares. They know that justice is now busied in his behalf; but justice is slow, and revenge is restless. Their activity, I hear, is redoubled.

Lydia. Guard, I conjure you! guard my father's safety! Let me fly to seek him; conduct me to his feet!

Dori. He wished you first to be informed of his true situation; lest, knowing him to be noble, you should expect to see him in all the pomp and affluence, instead of meeting a poor, dejected, forlorn old man.

Lydia. His fears are unjust; injurious to every feeling of filial affection and duty. The little I have,

I will freely partake with him. My clothes, the diamond which my supposed mother left me, whatever I possess, shall instantly be sold for his relief: my life shall be devoted to soften his sorrows. Oh! that I could prove myself worthy to be his daughter. Oh! that I could pour out my soul to secure his felicity.

Dori. Forbear! let me breathe! Affection cannot find utterance! Oh! this melting heart! My child!

Lydia. Sir?

Dori. My Lydia!

Lydia. Heavens!

Dori. My child! my daughter!

Lydia. [Falling at his feet.] Can it be?—My father! Oh, ecstasy!

Dori. Rise, my child! Suffer me to appease my melting heart!—Oh! delight of my eyes! Why is not your brother like you?

Lydia. My brother! Who? Have I a brother?

Dori. The Count is your brother.

Lydia. 'Tis too much!

Dori. He is not worthy such a sister.

Lydia. The sister of the Count! I? Ah! Nature, thy instincts are fabulous; for, were they not, his heart would have beaten as warmly towards me, as mine has done for him.

Dori. I will make him blush at his arrogance. You shall witness his confusion, which shall be public, that it may be effectual.

Lydia. Would you have me avoid explanation with him?

Dori. Yes, for the present. I mean to see him. Our meeting will be warm; but he shall feel the authority of a father.

Lydia. If you be a stranger to him, I fear lest—

Dori. No, no; he knows me, but knows not all his obligations to me. I have secretly supplied him with money, and gained him promotion; which he has vainly attributed to his personal merits. But I must be gone. My burthened heart is eased. Once more, dear child of my affections, be prudent. I have much to apprehend; but, should the present moment prove benign, my future days will all be peace.

[Knocking heard at the chamber-door.]

Lydia. [Alarmed.] Who's there?

Sir P. [Without.] 'Tis I! Open the door.

Lydia. I am busy, sir.

Sir P. Psha! Open the door, I tell you.

Dori. Who is it?

Lydia. Sir Paul.

Dori. And does he take the liberty to come into your apartment?

Lydia. Oh! sir, he will take any liberty he can.

Sir P. Why don't you open the door?

Dori. You are surrounded by danger and temptation.

Lydia. Have no fears for me, sir.

Sir P. Will you open the door, I say?

Dori. Let him come in. [*LYDIA unbolts the door.*]

Enter *Sir PAUL PECKHAM.*

Sir P. What is the reason, you dear little baggage, that you always shut yourself up so carefully?

Lydia. You are one of the reasons, sir.

Sir P. Psha! you need not be afraid of me.

Lydia. I'm not afraid of you, sir.

Sir P. Why, that's right. I'm come to talk matters over with you. My lady's out a-visiting. [*Mimicking.*] The coast is clear. I have secured my graceless dog of a son. I suspect—

Lydia. What, sir?

Sir P. But it won't do. Mind! take the hint; I've heard of an excellent house—

Lydia. You are running on as usual, sir.

Sir P. With a convenient back door. I'll bespeak you a carriage. Choose your own liveries; keep as many footmen as you please; indulge in everything your heart can wish. Operas, balls, routs, masquerades; Rotten-row of a Sunday; town house and country house! Bath, Bristol, or Buxton! Hot-Wells, or cold wells! Only—Hem! Eh?

Lydia. Sir, I must not hear such ribaldry.

Sir P. Indeed but you must, my dear! How will you help it? You can't escape me, now! I have you fast. No scapegrace scoundrel of a—[*MR. DORMONT comes forward.*] And so—

Dori. And so, sir!

Sir P. Zounds! [*Pause.*] And so! [*Looking round.*] Locked up together! You were busy.

Dori. Well, sir?

Sir P. Oh! very, sir. Perhaps you have a house yourself, sir—

Dori. Sir?

Sir P. With a convenient back door?

Dori. So far from offering the lady such an insult, I am almost tempted to chastise that impotent effrontery which has been so daring.

Sir P. Hem!—You are very civil, sir; and, as a return for your compliment, I am ready to do myself the pleasure, sir, to wait on you down stairs.

Lydia. I'll spare you the trouble, sir.

Dori. Though this lady's residence here will be but short, I would have you beware, sir, how you shock her ears again, with a proposal so vile.

Sir P. Your caution is kind, sir.

Dori. I am sorry it is necessary, sir. What! The head of a house; the father of a family! Oh! shame! He who, tottering on the brink of the grave, would gratify appetites which he no longer knows, by reducing the happy to misery, and the innocent to guilt, deserves to sink into that contempt and infamy, into which he would plunge unwary simplicity. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—An elegant Apartment at Count Villars'.

Enter *MAC DERMOT*, and *PICARD* with a letter in his hand, meeting.

Mac D. So, Mr. Picard, what have you got there?

Picard. Un lettre for Monsieur le Comte.

Mac D. Well, give it me, and go about your business.

Picard. No; I not go about my bisaness. My bisaness is to speaka to you.

Mac D. To me! And what is it you want?

Picard. Mon argent; my vage an my congé! My dismiss!

Mac D. How, man alive?

Picard. You are de—de factotum to de Count. He suffare no somebody to speaka to him; so I am come speaka to you.

Mac D. Arrah, now! and are you crazy? Quit the sarvice of a Count! Your reason, man?

Picard. My raison is you talka too mosh enough; he no talk at all. I follow him from France; I yet live vid him by-and-by four month, he no speaka to me four vord.

Mac D. What then?

Picard. Vat den!—*Je suis François, moi!* I ave de tongue for a de speaka; I mus speaka; I vila speaka! He not so mosh do mee de faveur to scold a me! I ave leave de best madame in Paris for Monsieur le Comte.—*Quelle femme!*—Her tongue vas nevare still; nevare! She scold and she clack,

clack, clack, clack, clack, from all day an all night! Oh! it was delight to hear.

Mac D. And so you want to be scolded?

Picard. *Oui*; I love to be scold, I love to scold: to be fall out an to be fall in. *C'est mon gout*. De plaisir of my life. *J'irai crever!* If I no speak I burst.

Mac D. And is it you, now, spalpeen! that would chatter in the prisence of the Count?

Picard. Shatter, shatter! Ha! Vat you mean shatter?

Mac D. Have not you roast beef and plum-pudding?

Picard. Vat is roas beef, vat is plom-boodin, got tam! if I no speaka? I ave a de master in France dat starva me, dat pay me no *gage*, dat leave a me *tout en guenilles*; all rag an tattare; yet I love him better as mosh! *Pourquoi?* [*Affectionately.*] *Helas!* *J'étois son cher ami!* His dear fren! He talka to me, I talka to him. I laugh at his joke, he laugh *aussi*, an I am both togeder so happy as de prince. But, de Count! Oh! he as proud!—Ha!—*Comme ça.*

[*Mimicking.*]

Mac D. Poh! Now, my good fellow, have patience.

Picard. *Patience! Moi?* I no *patience*. If I no speak, I am *enragé*. I am French; I am Picard. Ven de heart is full, de tongue nus run. I give you varu. Let my masta speak, or I shall dismisssa my masta!

Mac D. Here comes the Count. Stand back, man, and hould your tongue.

Enter Count CONOLLY VILLARS, followed by two Footmen in handsome liveries, who place themselves in the back ground. MAC DERMOT comes a little forward.

Count. The more I reflect on my own infatuation, the more I am astonished!

Mac D. My lord—

Count. [*Walking about.*] A man of my birth! My rank! A brewer's daughter!

Mac D. My lord—

Count. [*Gives him a forbidding look.*] The world contains not a woman so lovely!—Neither do they condescend to court my alliance!—I must petition, and fawn, and acknowledge the high honour done. No; if I do—Yet, 'tis false! I shall—I feel I shall be thus abject.

Mac D. If—I might be so bould—

Count. Well, sir!

Mac D. A letter for your lordship.

Count. Oh! What, from the ambassador?

Mac D. No, 'faith, my lord.

Count. Ha? The Duchess?

Mac D. No, my lord; nor the Duchess neither.

Count. Who then, sir?

Mac D. 'Faith, my lord, that is more than I can say. But, perhaps, the letter itself cau tell you.

Count. Sir!—Who brought it?

Picard. *Un pauvre valet* footman, mee lor. His shoe, his stocking, his habit, his chapeau, vas all patch an piece. And he vas—

Mac D. [*Aside, interrupting him.*] Bo!

Count. [*Throwing down the letter, blowing his fingers, and dusting them with his white handkerchief.*] Poh! Open it, and inform me of the contents.

Mac D. Yes, my lord.

Picard. His visage, mee lor—

Count. How now!

Picard. Mee lor—

Mac D. 'Sblood, man!

[*Stopping his mouth, and pushing him back.*]

Count. [*Makes signs to the footmen, who bring an*

arm-chair forward, and again submissively retire.] She is ever uppermost! I cannot banish her my thoughts! Do you hear? Dismiss those—

[*Waving his hand.*]

Mac D. Yes, my lord.—Hark you, spalpeens! [*Waving his hand with the same air as the Count.*]

[*Exeunt Footmen.*]

Picard. [*Advancing.*] *Monsieur le Comte—*

Count. [*After a stare.*] Again!

Picard. I ave von *requête* to beg—

Count. Pay that fellow his wages, immediately.

Mac D. I tould you so. [*Pushing him away.*]

Hush! Silence!

Picard. Silence! I am no English. I hate silence. I—

Mac D. Poh! Boderation! Be aisy!—I will try now to make your pace. [*Pushes him off, and then returns to examining the letter.*]

Count. Insolent menial! Well, sir, the contents?

Mac D. 'Faith, my lord, I am afraid the contents will not please you?

Count. How so, sir?

Mac D. Why, as for the how so, my lord, if your lordship will but be pleased to rade—

Count. Didn't I order you to read?

Mac D. To be sure you did, my lord; but I should take it as a viry particular grate favour, if that your lordship would but be pleased to rade for yoursilf.

Count. Why, sir?

Mac D. Your lordship's timper is a little warm; and—

Count. Read!

Mac D. Well, if I must I must.—“*The person who thinks proper, at present, to address you*”—

Count. Sir!

Mac D. My lord!

Count. Be pleased to begin the letter, sir!

Mac D. Begin! Soira the word of beginning is here—before or after—

Count. “*The person?*”

Mac D. Yes, my lord.

Count. Mighty odd! [*Throws himself in the arm-chair.*] Proceed, sir.

Mac D. [*Reads.*] “*The person who thinks proper, at present, to address you, takes the liberty to inform you that your haughtiness, instead of being dignified, is ridiculous*—”

Count. [*Starting up.*] Sir!

Mac D. Why now, I tould your lordship—

Count. [*Walking about.*] Go on!

Mac D. [*Reads, with hesitating fear.*] “*The little—merit—merit—you have*—”

Count. The little merit I have? The little? The little? [*Mac Dermot holds up the letter.*] Go on!

Mac D. [*Reads.*] “*The little merit you have, cannot convince the world that your pride—is not—is n t—is not*—”

Count. Is not what?

Mac D. [*Reads.*] “*Impertinent.*”

Count. [*Striking Mac Dermot.*] Rascal!

Mac D. Viry well, my lord! [*Throwing down the letter.*] I humbly thank your lordship. By Jasus! but I'll remember the favour.

Count. [*More coolly.*] Read, sir.

Mac D. To the divel I pitch me, if I do!

Count. [*Conscious of having done wrong.*] Read, Mac Dermot.

Mac D. No, my lord; Mac Dermot is a man! An Englishman! Or, an Irishman, by Jasus, which is better still! And, by the holy poker, if but that your lordship was not a lord, now—[*Pulling down his sleeves, and clenching his fist with great agony.*]

Count. [*Carelessly letting his purse fall.*] Pick up that purse, Mac Dermot.

Mac D. 'Tis v'ry well!—Oh!—Well, well, well! [*Lays the purse on the table.*]

Count. You may keep it, Mac Dermot.

Mac D. What! I touch it! No, my lord, don't you think it: I despise your guineas. An Irishman is not to be paid for a blow!

Count. [*With increasing consciousness of error, and struggling with his feelings.*] I—I have been hasty—

Mac D. Well, well!—'Tis v'ry well!

Count. I am—I—I am sorry, Mac Dermot.

Mac D. My lord!

Count. [*Emphatically.*] Very sorry—

Mac D. My lord!

Count. Pray, forget it! [*Taking him by the hand.*] I cannot forgive myself.

Mac D. By the blessed Mary, then, but I can. Your lordship is a noble gentleman. There is many an upstart lord has the courage to strike, when they know their poor starving dependants' hands are chained to their sides, by wretchedness and oppression; but few, indeed, have the courage to own the injury!

Count. I will remember, Mac Dermot, that I am in your debt.

Mac D. 'Faith, and if you do, my lord, your misery will be better than mine. I have lived with your lordship some years; and, though not always a kind, you have always been a generous, master. To be sure, I never before had the honour of a blow from your lordship; but, then, I never before had the satisfaction to be quite sure that, while you remembered yourself to be a lord, you had not forgotten poor Mac Dermot was a man.

Count. Well, well! [*Aside, and his pride returning.*] He thinks he has a license, now, to prate.—There is no teaching servants; nay, indeed, there is no teaching any one a sense of propriety.

Mac D. Did your lordship spake? [*Bowing kindly.*]

Count. Give me that letter. And—take the money: it is yours.

Mac D. Your lordship will be pleased for to pardon me, there. If you think proper, you may give me twice as much to-morrow; but the divel a doit I'll touch for to-day!

Count. Wait within call.

Mac D. [*Going.*] I never before knew he was all together such a jewel of a master. [*Erit.*]

Count. 'Tis this infernal letter that caused me to betray myself thus, to my servant! And who is this insolent, this rash adviser? May I perish if I do not punish the affront! Here is no name! A strange hand, too! [*Reads.*] "*The friend who gives you this useful lesson, has disguised his hand, and concealed his name*"—Anonymous coward!—"His present intention being to awaken reflection, and make you blush at your own own bloated vanity."—Intolerable!—"Or, if not, to prepare you for a visit from one who thinks it his duty to lower your arrogance; and who will undertake the disagreeable task this very day."—Will he? will he?—Mac Dermot!

Enter MAC DERMOT.

Mac D. My lord!

Count. If any stranger inquire for me, inform me instantly.

Mac D. Yes, my lord

Enter EDMUND.

Edmund. Good-morrow, Count.

Count. [*Slightly bowing, and with vexation to MAC*

DERMOT.] Why, where are my fellows? Nobody to shew the gentleman up?

Edmund. Oh! you are too ceremonious by half, Count.

Count. A little ceremony, sir, is the essence of good breeding.

Edmund. Psha!

Count. Psha, sir!

Edmund. Ceremony, like fringe hiding a beautiful face, makes you suspect grace itself of deformity.

Count. Do you hear, Mac Dermot!

Mac D. My lord!

Count. See that those rascals are more attentive.

Edmund. Why, what is the matter with you, Count?

Count. [*Muttering and traversing.*] Count! Count!

Edmund. You seem out of temper.

Count. Oh dear! No, no!—Upon my honour, no! You totally mistake; I assure you, you mistake. I'm very glad to see you; I am, indeed!

[*Taking him eagerly by the hand.*]

Edmund. I'm very glad you are. Though you have an odd mode of expressing your joy. But you are one of the unaccountables. Cast off this formality—

Count. [*Aside.*] Very fine! [*Biting his fingers.*] Formality, sir!

Edmund. Give the heart its genuine flow; throw away constraint, and don't appear as if you were always on the tenter-hooks of imaginary insult.

Count. I! [*Aside.*] This is d—d impertinent! [*Struggling to be over-familiar.*] You entirely misconceive me; my character is frank and open. No man has less constraint; I even study to be, as it were, spontaneous.

Edmund. Ha, ha, ha! I perceive you do.

Count. Really, sir—[*Aside.*] Does he mean to insult me?

Edmund. I thought to have put you in a good humour.

Count. I am in a good humour, sir! I never was in a better humour, sir!—never, sir! S'death! A good humour, indeed!—some little regard to propriety, and such manners as good breeding prescribes to gentlemen—

Edmund. Ha, ha, ha! Well, well, Count, endeavour to forget the gentleman, and—

Count. Sir! No, sir: however you may think proper to act, that is a character I shall never forget.

Edmund. Never, except at such moments as these, I grant, Count.

Count. By—

Edmund. Well gulped! I had a sort of message; but I find I must take some other opportunity, when you are not quite in so good a humour. [*Going.*] I'll tell my sister what—

Count. Sir! Your sister! My divine Lucy!—A message!

Edmund. So, the magic chord is touched.

Count. Dear sir, I—I—I am afraid I am warm. Your sister, you said—I doubt, I—that is—

Edmund. Well, well; make no apologies.

Count. Apologies! No, sir, I didn't mean—that is—yes, I—my Lucy—my Lucy—What message?

Edmund. Nay, I cannot well say myself. You know the madcap. She bade me tell you, if I happened to see you, that she wanted to give you a lecture.

Count. Indeed! I'm lectured by the whole family. [*Aside.*] On what subject?

Edmund. Perhaps you'll take pet again?

Count. I, sir? Take pet! My sense of propriety, sir—

Edmund. Why, ay, your sense of propriety—which, by-the-by, my flippancy sister calls your pride—is always on the watch to catch the moment when it becomes you to take offence.

Count. You—you are determined I shall not want opportunities.

Edmund. You mistake, Count; I have a friendship for you. Why, what a forbidding stare is that, now! Ay, a friendship for you.

Count. Sir, I—I am not insensible of the honour—

Edmund. Yes, you are.

Count. [With great condescension.] Sir, you are exceedingly mistaken; very exceedingly; indeed you are. As I am a man of honour, there is no gentleman whom I should think it a higher—that is—upon my soul—

Sir P. [Without.] Is the Count at home, young man?

Footman. [Without.] Yes, sir.

Edmund. I hear my father: we have had a fracas; I must escape. If you will come and listen to my sister's lecture, so. Good morrow! [Exit.]

Count. 'Tis insufferable! Never, sure, did man of my rank run the gauntlet thus! No respect, no distinction of persons! But with people of this class 'tis ever so: "Hail, fellow, well met!"

Enter Sir PAUL PECKHAM.

Sir P. Ay, "hail, fellow, well met!" eh! you jolly dog? [Shaking him heartily by the hand.]

Count. Hem! Good—good morrow, sir. Here is another family lecturer. [Aside.]

Sir P. Was not that young Mock-modesty that brushed by me on the stairs?

Count. It was your son, sir.

Sir P. "Good morning, sir!" said the scoundrel, when he was out of my reach. D—e! [Feigns to kick.] I would have shewn him the shortest way to the bottom. Well—eh! you have elegant apartments here.

Count. Very indifferent, sir.

Sir P. I shall remain in town for a fortnight, and am glad you live so near. We'll storm the wine-cellar—I hear you are no flincher—eh! When shall we have a set-to, eh? When shall we have a rorytory? A catch, and a toast, and a gallon a man? But, eh! what's the matter? a'n't you well?

Count. [With sudden affability.] Oh! yes, Sir Paul; exceedingly well, Sir Paul; never better, Sir Paul.

Sir P. Why, that's right. I thought you had been struck dumb.

Count. Oh! by no means, Sir Paul. I am very happy to see you; extremely happy; inexpressibly—

Sir P. I knew you would. What say you to my Lucy, eh?

Count. Say! That she—she is a phoenix.

Sir P. D—e; so she is. What is a phoenix?

Count. I adore her.

Sir P. That's right!

Count. The day that makes her mine will be the happiest of my life.

Sir P. So it will; for I'll make you as drunk as an emperor. Hallo, there! get your master's hat. Come, come; you shall dine with me.

[Taking him by the arm.]

Count. Sir?

Sir P. D—e! I'll make you drunk to-day.

Count. Did you speak to me, sir?

Sir P. To you? Why, what the devil! do you think I spoke to your footman? [Quitting his arm.]

Count. [Again endeavouring to be affable.] Oh! no, Sir Paul; no, I—pardon me—I—I was absent.

Sir P. Absent! I smell a rat: your dignity took miff.

Count. No, Sir Paul; by no means. No, I—that is—I will acknowledge, I am not very much accustomed to such familiarities.

Sir P. Are you not? Then you soon must be.

Count. Sir?

Sir P. Ay, sir; a few lessons from me will cure you.

Count. Sir, I—

Sir P. I am the man to make you throw off. I'll teach you to kick your stateliness down stairs, and toss your pride, as I do my wig, behind the fire.

Count. Good breeding, sir—

Sir P. Good breeding, sir, is a blockhead, sir. None of your formal Don Glums; none of your grand pas for me. A friend, good fellowship, and t'other bottle: that's my motto.

Count. People of my rank distinguish—

Sir P. D— distinctions!

Count. They make it a condition, sir—

Sir P. Indeed! Look you, my dear Count, either unbridle, or you and I are two. You tell me you love my daughter: she is the finest girl in England; and I believe the slut has taken a fancy to you. The match pleases me, because it displeases my wife; and, except when you are riding your high horse, I like you, Count. Dismount, and it's a match; if not, turn the peg, and prance; I'm your humble.

Count. [Aside.] I'll not endure it: racks shall not make me bend to this.

Sir P. Lucy is a wench after my own heart. No piping, no pining, no sobbing for her. I have a fine fellow in my eye—

Count. [Alarmed.] Sir?

Sir P. None of your Sir Ramrod Grumble-gizzards.

Count. By heavens! I would cut the villain's throat who should dare impede my happiness.

Sir P. Why, ay, d—e! now you talk.

Count. The loss of my Lucy would render me the most wretched of beings.

Enter MAC DERMOT with the COUNT's hat.

Sir P. To be sure. [Taking the Count by the arm.] Come, come. [Claps the Count's hat on his head.]

Dinner is waiting: I smell the haunch; it perfumes the whole street. Come along. I hate the shackles of ceremony. A smoking table and a replenished sideboard soon put all men on a level. Your hungry and thirsty souls for me! He that enters my house always deposits his graudere, if he have any, at the door. [Sings.] "This brown jug, my dear Tom, which now foams with mild ale."

Mac D. Well said, old Toby! Oh!

[The Count makes disconcerted attempts to preserve his stateliness, wishing to be familiar, but scarcely knowing how to behave; MAC DERMOT not enjoying the COUNT's embarrassment.]

[Exeunt.]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—The Drawing-room of Sir Paul Peckham, elegantly furnished, but hung all round with prints, chiefly caricatures.

EDMUND and LYDIA discovered.

Edmund. I shall never recover from my surprise.

Lydia. Hush!

Edmund. The Count your brother? My sister, my family, must be informed.

Lydia. Not on your life, Edmund. So implacable are his enemies, that my father informs me an exempt, bribed by them, has followed him to England.

Edmund. Impotent malice! The laws will here protect him.

Lydia. Oh! who can say? The wicked cunning of such life-hunters is dreadful. I insist, therefore, upon your promise.

Edmund. My angel! fear nothing.

[*Kissing her hand.*]

Enter Lucy, unperceived.

Lucy. [*Placing herself beside EDMUND.*] Turn about. Now me. [*Holding her hand.*]

Edmund. Oh! sister, I am the happiest of men.

Lucy. And you appear to be very busy, too, with your happiness.

Edmund. Did you but know—

Lucy. Oh! I know a great deal more than you suspect; but not but you seem to be taking measures to inform the whole house.

Edmund. Of what?

Lucy. [*Placing herself between them.*] That you two are never easy apart.

Edmund. Sister, I—I must insist that you speak of this lady with—with every respect.

Lucy. Brother!

Lydia. Edmund!

Edmund. Sister, I don't understand. Are you narrow-minded enough to suppose this young lady unworthy the hand of—

Lucy. Of my brother? No; to call my Lydia sister [*Taking her hand.*] is one of the things on earth I most fervently wish.

Lydia. My generous friend!

Edmund. My charming girl!

Lucy. But, then—

Edmund. There are now no buts; it will be an honour. I say, sister, you—you don't know—in short, I must very earnestly solicit you to treat Miss Lydia with all possible delicacy. I—I—I cannot tell you more at present; but I once again request, I conjure,—nay, I—

Lydia. Hem!

Lucy. Hem! Humph!

Edmund. You—you understand me, sister. [*Exit.*]

Lucy. Indeed, I don't. There now goes one of your lords and masters. Take care of him: he'll make an excellent grand Turk. "Treat Miss Lydia, I say, with all possible delicacy." [*Imitating.*] And have I, Lydia, have I shewn a want of delicacy to my friend?

Lydia. Oh! no; my heart throbs with an oppressive sense of your generous, your affectionate attention to me.

Lucy. Oppressive! Well, this is the proudest world—

Lydia. Nay, I didn't mean—

Lucy. Oh! no matter.

Lydia. Have you had any conversation with the Count?

Lucy. No; there has been no opportunity yet to-day. I am really afraid his pride is quite as absurd as that of my good mamma.

Lydia. And your affection begins to cool.

Lucy. Hum! I—I can't say that. Heigho! He has his faults.

Lydia. I hope he has his virtues, too.

Lucy. So do I. But how to cure those faults?

Lydia. If incurable, 'twould break my heart.

Lucy. Your ardour surprises me. But, hush!

Enter COUNT CONOLLY VILLARS.

Count. [*Bowing.*] I was afraid, madam, love would not have found so much as a moment to speak its anxieties; nay, even now—

[*Looking haughtily towards Lydia.*]

Lydia. Sir, I—I am sensible of my own unworthiness. [*Exit.*]

Lucy. That lady, sir, is my friend.

Count. Madam?

Lucy. Why are you surprised?

Count. Madam? No, no; not surprised—there is a maxim, indeed, which says, "Friendship can only subsist between equals."

Lucy. But where is the inferiority?

Count. Madam?

Lucy. You are above the poor, the pitiful idea, that wealth confers any claims?

Count. Perhaps it does not, madam. But beauty, understanding, wit—in short, the mind confers ten thousand; and in these I never beheld your peer.

Lucy. Very prettily spoken, indeed! And I am almost persuaded that you love me very dearly.

Count. Madam, I adore you.

Lucy. Yes, you are continually thinking of my good qualities.

Count. Eternally, madam; I think of nothing else

Lucy. True; you never remember your own.

Count. Were I totally insensible of my own, madam, I should be unworthy of you.

Lucy. You admire me even in my representatives, my relations, and friends. Affable to all, good-humoured to all, attentive to all, your politeness, ease, and urbanity, extend to every person for whom you think my heart is any way interested. Your passions are all subservient to love.

Count. Yes, madam, subservient is the very word; they are all subservient to love.

Lucy. You never recollect the dignity of your descent, nor accuse mine of meanness. You have too much understanding to plume your thoughts with turgid arrogance; or to presume on the imaginary merit of an accident, which none but ignorance, prejudice, and folly, are so besotted as to attribute to themselves.

Count. Mankind have agreed, madam, to honour the descendants of the wise and the brave.

Lucy. They have so; but you have too much native merit to arrogate to yourself the worth of others. You are no jay, decked in the peacock's feathers; you are not idiot enough to imagine that a skin of parchment, on which are emblazoned the arms and acts of one wise man, with a long list of succeeding fools, is any honour to you. Responsible to mankind for the use or the abuse of such talents as you feel yourself endowed with, you think only of how you may deserve greatly; and disdain to be that secondary thing, that insignificant cipher, which is worthless, except from the situation.

Count. The feelings of injured honour, madam, perhaps, may be too irritable: they shrink from insult, and spurn at contamination. Yet honour is the source of a thousand virtues; the parent of ten thousand glorious deeds. Honour is generous, sincere, and magnanimous; the protector of innocence, the asserter of right, the avenger of wrong. Yes; honour is the patron of arts, the promoter of science, the bulwark of government, the defender of kings, and the saviour of nations: indulge me, then, in cherishing a sentiment so noble.

Lucy. Indulge! Applaud, you mean. Honour

with you never degenerates into ostentation! is never presumptuous; is no boaster; is eager to earn, but scorns to extort pre-eminence. Your honour is not that abject, inflated phantom which usurps contested claims, exacts submission which it does not merit, offends, irritates, and incites disgust, nay, tarnishes even virtue itself. You do not, under the word honour, seek a miserable cobweb covering for exorbitant pride.

Count. Madam, accusation so pointed, so—

Lucy. Nay, now, have not I been reading your panegyric?

Enter a Footman.

Foot. My lady desires you will come to her immediately, madam.

Lucy. Very well. [*Exit Footman.*] I am a thoughtless, flighty girl. What I say can have but little meaning; else, indeed, I would have ventured to have given you a word of advice. But—'tis no matter.

Count. Madam, you have stung me to the soul. If I be, indeed, what you describe, 'twere time I should reform.

Lucy. I must begone. I have, I own, been wildly picturing something to myself, which I greatly fear I could not love. [*Exit.*]

Count. And is it my likeness? Sure! it cannot be! Could not love? Excruciating thought! [*Exit.*]

Enter EDMUND, hastily, and LYDIA, from an inner chamber, meeting.

Edmund. Where is the Count?

Lydia. This moment gone.

Edmund. Which way?

Lydia. Through that door.

Edmund. [*Running, stops at the door.*] Ah! 'tis too late; the footman is telling him.

Lydia. Why are you so much alarmed?

Edmund. The clouds are collected, and the storm is coming.

Lydia. What do you mean?

Edmund. Lady Peckham has watched her opportunity: Sir Paul has dropped asleep in his armchair; she has ordered my sister to her apartment, and has sent to the Count to come and speak with her; that is, to come and be insulted, here in the drawing-room.

Lydia. What can be done?

Edmund. I know not. I dread her intolerable tongue.

Lydia. Perhaps, were you to retire, and, when they grow warm, to interrupt them at the proper moment, the presence of a third person might be some restraint on the workings of pride; of the violent ebullitions of which I am in great apprehension.

Edmund. Had I but met the Count before he had received the message—

Lydia. Here comes Lady Peckham. Begone!

[*Exit EDMUND.*]

Enter Lady PECKHAM, followed by a Footman.

Foot. I have delivered your ladyship's message, and the Count is coming.

Lady P. Wery vell. Go you about your business, feller. [*Exit Footman.*] Your company is not wanted, miss. [*Exit LYDIA.*]

Enter Count CONOLLY VILLARS, bowing.

So, sir, they tells me, sir, that you and my foolish husband are colloquing together, for to marry my daughter: is this true, sir?

Count. [*With polite haughtiness.*] If it were, madam—

Lady P. Do you know who Miss Looey Peckham is, sir?

Count. Not very well, madam.

Lady P. Sir?

Count. Except that she is your daughter.

Lady P. And do you know who I am, sir?

Count. I have been told, madam—

Lady P. Told, sir, told! What have you been told? What have you been told, sir?

Count. That your ladyship was an honest wax-chandler's daughter.

Lady P. Yes, sir, the debbdy of his vard, sir. A common-councilman, and city sword-bearer. Had an aldermand's gownd von year, vus chosen sheriff the next, and died a lord mayor elect. And do you know, sir, that I designs Sir Samooel Sheepy, an English knight and barrowknight, for the spouse of my daughter? A gentleman that is a gentleman—a person of honour and purtensions, and not a papish jesubite.

Count. Of his honours and pretensions I am yet to be informed, madam.

Lady P. Vhat, sir! do you mean for to say, sir, or to insinivate, sir, that Sir Samooel Sheepy is not your betters?

Count. If Sir Samuel himself, madam, had put such a question to me, I would have replied with my sword; or, more properly, with my cane.

Lady P. Cane! Wery vell, sir; I'll let Sir Samooel know that you threatens to cane him. I'll take care to report you. Cane, quotha! He shall talk to you.

Count. Let him, madam.

Lady P. Madam, madam! at every vord. Pray, sir, do you know that Sir Paul Peckham has had the honour to be knighted by the king's own hand?

Count. I have heard as much, madam.

Lady P. Madam, indeed! And for you for to think for to look up to my daughter.

Count. Up, madam!

Lady P. Yes, sir; up, sir. Pray, sir, vhat are your purtensions?

Count. [*With great agitation.*] Madam?

Lady P. Who are you, sir? Where do you come from? Who knows you? Vhat parish do you belong to?

Count. Madam, I am of a family known to history, known to Europe, known to the whole universe.

Lady P. Ah! I believes you are better known nurr trusted.

Count. The names of Conolly and Villars, madam, never before were so degraded as they have been in my person.

Lady P. Oh! I makes no doubt but you are a purson that would degurade any name.

Count. Insult like what I have received from you, madam, no man that breathes should utter, and escape death; but you are—

Lady P. Vhat, sir? Vhat am I, sir?

Count. A woman!

Lady P. A voman, indeed! Sir, I would have you to know, sir, as how I am a lady. A lady, sir, of his majesty's own making. And moreover, sir, don't you go for to flatter yourself that I shall bestow the hand and fortin of Miss Looey Peckham upon any needy, outlandish Count Somebody-nobody. My daughter, sir, is for your betters.

Count. Madam, though scurril—[*Recollecting himself.*]—I say, madam, though such vul—such accusations are beneath all answer, yet I must tell you that, by marrying your daughter—if after this I should sink myself so low—I say, by marrying your

daughter, madam, I should confer an honour on your family, as much superior to its expectations, as the splendour of the glorious sun is to the twinkling of the worthless glow-worm.

Lady P. Vhat, vhat!

Enter EDMUND.

Marry come up! An Irish-French foriner! Not so good as von of our parish porpers. And you—you purtend to compare yourself to the united houses of the Peckhams and the Pringles! Your family, indeed! Youm! Where's your settlement? Youm? Vusn't my great uncle, Mr. Peter Pringle, the cheesemonger of Cateaton-street, a major in the train-bands before you vas born or thought of?

Edmund. [*Aside.*] So, so! I'm too late. [*Aloud.*] Let me entreat your ladyship—

Lady P. Vhat! hasn't I an ownd sister at this day married to Mr. Poladore Spragges, the tip-toppest hot-presser in all Crutched Friars? Isn't my maiden aunt, Miss Angelica Pringle, vorth thirty thousand pounds, in the South Sea funds, every day she rises? And doesn't I myself go to bed, and get up, the greatest lady in this here city? And for to purtend for to talk to me of his family! hisn!

Edmund. [*With warmth.*] I must tell you, my lady, you strangely forget yourself, and expose your family to ridicule.

Lady P. You must tell me, sir! Why, sir, how dare you have the temeracity for to come for to go for to dare for to tell me! Here's fine doings! henpecked by my own chicken!

Edmund. The Count, madam, is a man of the first distinction in his native country!

Lady P. Vhat country is that, sir! Whoever heard of any country but England? A Count among beggars! How much is his countship vorth?

Count. I had determined to be silent, madam; but I find it is impossible.—[*With warmth.*] And, I must inform you, my family is as ancient, as exalted, and as renowned, as you have proved yours to be—what I shall not repeat. That I am the heir to more rich acres than I believe your ladyship ever rode over; that my father's vassals are more numerous than your ladyship's vaunted guineas; that the magnificence in which he has lived, looked with contempt on the petty, paltry strainings of a trader's pride and that in his hall are daily fed—[*Stops short, and betrays a consciousness of inadvertent falsehood, but suddenly continues with increasing vehemence.*]—Yes, madam, are daily fed,—now, at this moment, madam, more faithful adherents, with their menials and followers, than all your boasted wealth could, for a single year, supply!

Edmund. Are? At this moment, say you, Count?

Count. Sir, I—I have said—

Edmund. I know you to be a man of honour, and that you cannot say what is not.

Count. I—I—I have said, sir—

[*Walks about, greatly agitated.*]

Lady P. You have said more in a minute, nur you can prove in a year.

Edmund. [*With warmth.*] Madam, I will pledge my life for the Count's veracity.

Lady P. You pledge! Vhat do you know about the matter? I pledge that he has been telling a pack of the most monstrous—

Edmund. Forbear, madam! Such insult is too gross to be endured, almost, from an angry woman.

—Dear Count,—

Lady P. Voman again! Wery fine! wery pretty! Voman, quotha! To be called a voman by my own vitals!

Count. [*Aside.*] What have I done?—[*With agony.*] A lie!

Lady P. As for you, sir, I doesn't believe von vord you say! I knows the tricks of such sham she-valeers as you too vell!

Count. [*Walking away from her.*] Torture!

Lady P. But I'll take care to have you prognosticated.

Count. [*Aside.*] D—n!

Lady P. I'll have you karakatoored in your troo colours; I'll have you painted in your father's hall; you and your vooden shoe shrug-and-snuffle scarecrows! I'll depicter you! I'll not forget your vassals!

Count. [*Aside.*] I can support it no longer.—

[*Going.*]

Edmund. [*Catches him by the hand.*] My dear Count,—

Count. Sir, I am a dishonoured villain! [*Exit.*]

Lady P. There, there! He tells you himself he is a willin! His conscience flies in his face, and he owns it!

Edmund. [*With great ardour and feeling.*] Madam, he is a noble-hearted gentleman. His agonizing mind deems it villany to suffer insult so gross. Sorry am I, madam, to be obliged to tell you that, humble though your family is, the disgrace with which you have loaded it is indelible: with anguish of heart you force me to repeat, I blush while I listen to you. [*Exit.*]

Lady P. Why, who ever heard the like of this here, now? Here's a prodigal son! here's a regenerate reprobate! here's a graceless gog-magog! to purtend as how he's ashamed of me! Me! a purson of my carriage, connexions, and breeding. I! whose wery entrance, of a ball-night, puts Haberdashers'-hall all in a combustion!

Re-enter Count CONOLLY VILLARS, greatly agitated.

[*Seeing the Count.*] Marry my daughter, indeed! Faugh!

[*Exit.*]

Count. Into what has my impetuous anger hurried me? Guilty of falsehood! I! To recede is impossible. What, stand detected before this city madam! whose tongue, itching with the very scrofula of pride, would iterate liar in my ear! No; falsehood itself is not so foul. Mac Dermot!

Enter MAC DERMOT.

Mac D. My lord?

Count. Mac Dermot, I—you—you have heard of the state which, formerly, my father held; of his household grandeur, of the hinds and servants whom he daily fed, and the train by which he was attended.

Mac D. To be sure I have, my lord. Here, your dukes and your peers know nothing at all of style; abroad, some hundreds starve, that one may ate; but, in England, they have learnt the trick of aich man ating for himsilf.

Count. Psha! Listen: the—the misfortunes that since have befallen us, are little known in this country.

Mac D. To be sure they are not, my lord.

Count. Nor—nor—hem! nor would I have them—a—hem! Do you understand me, Mac Dermot?

Mac D. My lord?

Count. I—I would not be exposed to the insolent taunts of upstart wealth.

Mac D. Faith! then, my lord, you must not live in this city.

Count. Nay, but—attend to me—I—I would—I would have them think—

Mac D. What, my lord?

Count. [*Walking backwards and forwards.*] Mac Dermot, there are situations—I say, it may, sometimes, be wise, at least, prudent, and—and excusable—Have not you remarked, Mac Dermot, that Lydia—

Mac D. Oh! to be sure, I have remarked, my lord, that she is a sweet crater, that Miss Liddy.

Count. Nay, but her influence in the family—

Mac D. Oh! yes, my lord.

Count. Now, if—if—suppose you were to take—an opportunity—Is she proud?

Mac D. Mild as mother's milk, my lord.

Count. If she were persuaded—I say—our family misfortunes—that is—no, no; the family magnificence—Do you comprehend me?

Mac D. My lord?

Count. Psha! D—n!

[*Exit.*]

Mac D. [*Stands some time amazed.*] Why, now, am I Mac Dermot, or am I not? The devil! He would have me take an opportunity with Miss Liddy! 'Faith! and I would very willingly do that. And persuade her—Oh! honey, but she is not so easy to be persuaded. To be sure he must mane something. Oh! *hona mon dioul!* but I have it! Ahoo! What a thickskull have I been all this while! He is a little bit ashamed to be thought poor among this tribe of Balifurnians, who have nothing but their dirty guineas to boast of. And so he would have me persuade—Oh, ho! let me alone. There she goes: I will be alter—Boh! frustration! there is that Mr. Edmund, now, close at her heels. The young royster is always getting the sweet crater up in a corner. Take an opportunity! Sarra the opportunity there is for me to take. [*Exit.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment at Count Villars's.*

DORIMONT and MAC DERMOT discovered.

Dori. Pray, sir, is the Count within?

Mac D. The Count, sir? And pray, why may you ask?

Dori. I want to speak with him, sir.

Mac D. Spake! Oh! the Count is not so easy to be spoken with. Plase to deliver your message to me.

Dori. Inform him I am come for an answer to my letter.

Mac D. Letter, sir! What, the letter brought by a shabby footman?

Dori. Ay, ay; has he read it?

Mac D. Read it! 'Faith! and it has been very well read. But, pray, sir, now, are you the writer?

Dori. I am.

Mac D. There take my advice: make your escape. 'Tis very well for you my master is not at home.

Dori. Why so?

Mac D. Why so, man alive! Have you a mind to be murdered?

Dori. Fear nothing.

[*Knocking heard.*]

Mac D. By the holy phial, but there he is! Why, will you begone now?

Dori. No; I will not.

Mac D. Marcy upon my soul! For the Lord's sake, sir—Why, sir, I tell you he'll have your blood. And won't you begone now?

Dori. No, sir.

Mac D. Lord Jasus! what will I do? If he comes into this room, here will be murder.

Dori. Go; tell him I am waiting for him.

Mac D. Me tell him! I warn you to begone. Remember, I wash my hands of your blood. Make off; make off, I tell you, while I go and keep him to his own apartment. [*Exit.*]

Dori. [*To a Footman crossing.*] Hark you, young man: to tell the Count, your master, that the stranger who wrote the anonymous letter to him is here, waiting for an answer.

Foot. Yes, sir.

[*Exit.*]

Dori. The fears of the servant strongly speak the anger of the master: but that was what I partly feared, and partly wish.

Count. [*Without.*] Where is the rash, the audacious—

Enter Count CONOLLY VILLARS.

The insolent wretch, who—My father! [*Aside.*]

Dori. I scarcely could have expected so kind a welcome, sir: 'tis exemplary.

Count. Passion, sir, is sometimes guilty of improprieties. Pray, pardon me.

Enter MAC DERMOT, behind.

Count. I imagined—[*Seeing MAC DERMOT.*]—How now, sir! Begone!

Dori. Why so? Let him stay.

Count. Begone! or—

Dori. Stay, I say.

Count. And, do you hear? I am not at home.

Mac D. [*Aside.*] Oh lord, oh lord! here will be murder. [*Exit.*]

Dori. What should that mean, sir?

Count. Sir, there are reasons—I ought not to expose my father's safety.

Dori. Rather own, you ought not to blush at your father's poverty. Is this my reception? This the warm welcome of a duteous son?

Count. 'Tis so sudden: yet my heart feels an affection—

Dori. Which is stifled by your vanity. Your father is contemned, because he is unfortunate.

Count. No, sir; I do not merit a reproach so cruel. Contemn my father! You know me not. Tell me, which way can I prove my respect and love?

Dori. By openly acknowledging me: not by concealment; not by disavowing me in the day of my distress.

Count. Think, sir, of your own safety.

Dori. What danger is there with people of honour? Present me to the family of Sir Paul.

Count. Impossible, sir.

Dori. Impossible!

Count. Let me conjure you not to be too precipitate. You know not the vulgar pomp of newly-made gentry; whose suffocating pride treats indigent merit, nay birth itself, with the most imperious disdain.

Dori. Talk not of their pride, but of your own. You complain of others' haughtiness! You! In whom the vice is so intolerable, that you willingly would disown your father.

Count. Sir, you wrong me.

Dori. But, determined to be known for what I am, since you refuse, I'll introduce myself.

Count. For heaven's sake, sir! I entreat—I supplicate—on my knees, I conjure you to forbear.

Dori. Yes; pride, kneeling, conjures a father in poverty to suffer himself to be disclaimed. Your mother's pride was my house's downfall: this she has bequeathed to you.

Count. Sir—

Sir P. [Without.] I tell you, I know he is at home.

Mac D. [Without.] Upon my soul, Sir Paul—

Sir P. [Without.] Zounds! Why, I saw him from my own window.

Count. Here is Sir Paul! You know not, sir, how much is at stake. I have not time to tell you now; but let my intreaties—

Dori. Oh! how humble are the proud! But, remember, I consent only on condition that you restrain your arrogance. If, while I am present, any symptom— [Retires back.]

Enter Sir PAUL PECKHAM.

Sir P. Sblood! I knew you were at home. But to instruct servants how to lie with the most cool, composed, and barefaced impudence, is one branch of modern education.

Count. I am sorry, Sir Paul—

Sir P. Psha! D—n apologies! I have good news for you.

Count. Sir?

Sir P. I do believe (God forgive me!) that my wife is growing reasonable.

Count. Does she consent?

Sir P. Yes; to permit you to ask her pardon.

Count. Sir? Ask pardon?

Dori. Yes, sir; ask pardon.

Sir P. Hem! Zounds! Again! Why, what the plague can he do here? [Aside.]

Dori. Your servant, sir.

Sir P. Sir, your very humble.

Count. [Aside.] What can this mean?

Dori. You seem surprised, sir.

Sir P. Yes; you have a trick of taking people by surprise.

Count. [Aside.] Does he know him?

Sir P. Odd enough! [Aside.] Who is this queer old fellow?

Count. All is safe. [Aside.] Sir, the—the gentleman—[To Sir P.] What shall I say? [Aside.] A gentleman, sir, who— [To Sir P.]

Sir P. A gentleman!

Count. Yes—that is—

Sir P. What, some poor relation, I suppose?

Count. Yes, sir; a relation. The—the family estates have been under his management.

Sir P. Oh! your steward?

Count. No, not absolutely my—my steward—

Sir P. What, your land-bailiff, then?

Count. No, sir; no—that is—

Sir P. Does not seem to have made his fortune by his office. A little weather-beaten.

Count. He is a man of the strictest probity, sir.

Sir P. Nay, his appearance is the pledge of his honesty.

Dori. [Aside.] I can perceive he is practising deceit. Oh, vanity! But I will restrain my anger. The moment of open punishment is not yet come.

Count. [To Dori.] Let me request you, sir, not to reveal yourself.

Dori. Well, sir.

Count. [To Sir P.] His economy and good management are equal to his fidelity.

Sir P. Confounded odd, all this, though. [Aside.] Well, Count, I have exerted my whole authority with Lady Peckham; and her son Edmund, who has more influence over her than anybody else, is your friend. So, be wary; do your duty, and the day is your own.

Count. My duty, sir?

Dori. Yes, sir; your duty, sir.

Sir P. A d—d strange fellow! [Aside.] Is it not

your duty, Count, to serve yourself?

Dori. And would you contend about a word?

Sir P. Very true, sir: you seem a—a plain spoken—a—hem!

Dori. Yes; I think it my duty to tell vice and folly the truth.

Sir P. Hem! You hear, Count?

Dori. His punctilious pride is contemptible.

Count. Sir?

Dori. And, sir! I repeat: do your duty, sir.

Sir P. The most unaccountable—Hem! [Aside.]

Count. [Aside.] I am on the rack: he will betray himself.

Sir P. [To the Count.] The old gentleman does not mince matters.

Count. [Aside to Dori.] You will ruin me.

Dori. Do as he requires, or I will feign no longer.

Sir P. Lady Peckham is expecting you. Come, come; try whether you cannot put on a winning, submissive air.

Count. I shall burst.

[Aside.]

Dori. Submissive, sir! Remember.

Count. I shall not forget, sir.

Sir P. You approve my advice, don't you, sir?

Dori. Entirely. The lesson you gave him, sir, is a useful and a necessary one. I know him.

Count. Fiends!

[Aside.]

Sir P. What, sir—you—have lived long in the family?

Dori. Sir?

Sir P. Nay, don't be affronted.

Count. [To Sir P.] Let us begone, sir. I am ready to attend you.

Sir P. [Aside.] The bluntest, drollest—

Count. We are losing time, sir.

Sir P. Well, well; in a moment.—Pray, under favour, what may be the amount of the Count's rent-roll? [To Dori.]

Dori. Sir! His rent-roll, sir?

Sir P. Ay, his rent-roll: the nett produce of his estates.

Dori. Why that question to me, sir?

Count. For heaven's sake, Sir Paul, let us go.

Sir P. Sblood! What a violent hurry you're in all of a sudden.

Count. [Endeavouring to force Sir P. away.] Lady Peckham is waiting, sir; I beg, I entreat—

Sir P. [Aside.] The mystery thickens!

Dori. Pray, sir, has the Count—

Count. [Interrupting.] For the love of mercy, sir, answer no questions; hear none, ask none, I am frantic.

Dori. Silence, sir! [To the Count.] Has the Count ever talked of his estates? [To Sir P.]

Sir P. Oh! yes.

Count. [Aside.] D—n!

Dori. And told you the amount?

Sir P. No, no; but, as you—

Count. I must insist, sir, on going. [To Sir P.]

Dori. I'm not prepared, sir, just now to answer your question of the rent-roll. I have business, and must leave you; but I will shortly give you the information you require. In the meantime, young gentleman, think on what has passed; observe Sir Paul's advice, and act as becomes you. Put off your vanity: be humble, and know yourself. [Exit.]

Count. [Aside.] Thank heaven he is gone!

Sir P. Your steward is an odd one.

Count. Sir, I—I tell you he is not my steward.

Sir P. No?

Count. No, sir.

Sir P. What is he, then?

Count. Sir, I—

Sir P. I thought you taught everybody to keep their distance; but he treats you with as little ceremony as—as he did me. [*Aside.*] Come, come; Lady Peckham is waiting.

Count. I must own, Sir Paul, I meet with many mortifications. Your daughter is an angel; but solicitation, Sir Paul, does not become me; it is a thing I have not been accustomed to. Do you speak for me. Say all, say everything you please. Your mediation will, I presume, be sufficient.

Sir P. D—, if this is not beyond all human patience! After all I have done in your behalf! What! would you have me and my whole family approach your footstool, there present my daughter, and kneeling, beg your highness to accept her? No, my haughty Count; either my daughter is worth asking for, or not worth having. Carry your pomp to a better market; I'll stoop to it no longer. Your servant, sir. [*Erit.*]

Count. Nay, Sir Paul—Must I endure this? Must I—I, the descendant of an ancient race; the rightful lord of a thousand vassals? What! wait, and fawn on madam; and act the skipjack, and chatter to her parrot, and be of her opinion, and fetch and carry, and praise her taste, and join her scandal, and laugh when she laughs, and kiss her monkey? And to whom? Oh! [*Erit.*]

SCENE III.—*The House of Sir Paul Peckham.*

MAC DERMOT and LYDIA discovered.

Mac D. Oh! yes: stabling for a hundred horses; open house all the year about; servants five-and-twenty to the score; all making work for one another.

Lydia. Then the Count, your master, should be immensely rich.

Mac D. Should be? To be sure he is. Don't I tell you—

Lydia. Yes; you tell me one thing at night, and another in the morning. You had forgotten the colonel's pay, and the secret supplies.

Mac D. [*Aside.*] 'Faith! and so I had.

Lydia. And, pray, was this all your own invention?

Mac D. Why, as to that—And is it me, now, that you would have to betray my master?

Lydia. What, then, he bid you spread this report.

Mac D. Arrah! now, did I say that? Did I say that? I tell you he bid me no such thing! What, and did you think, now, you could get that out of me? By St. Patrick, but I would bite off my tongue if it should dare to blunder out one word against so good a master.

Lydia. [*Aside.*] Honest, affectionate fellow!

Mac D. [*Aside.*] Oh, blarney! She wants to be too cunning for me, the sweet crater! and so, for fear of—Miss Liddy, your servant. [*Erit.*]

Lydia. I almost love him myself, for his love to his master.

Enter SIR PAUL PECKHAM, followed by EDMUND.

Sir P. I tell you, I have done with him. He is a pompous, insolent coxcomb! The Great Mogul himself is a fool to him.

Edmund. All men have their foibles, sir.

Sir P. D—his foibles! I have enough to do with my own. And, do you hear, sir? don't let me be troubled with any of your foibles, either. You understand me. I'll not be trifled with. [*Erit.*]

Lydia. What has put him into so ill a humour?

Edmund. The cursed supercilious haughtiness of the Count: he has insulted Sir Samuel Sheepley, too.

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. Well, brother, have you succeeded with my mamma?

Edmund. I believe so; I can't tell. Where is the Count?

Lucy. I hear him on the stairs.

Edmund. Well, warn him to be careful. [*Erit.*]

Lucy. What's the matter?

Lydia. The old story: the Count's pride. If he should quarrel again with Lady Peckham, all will then be over.

Lucy. You have put me quite in a tremor.

Enter COUNT CONOLLY VILLARS.

I will inform my mamma, sir, that you are here; and she will be with you immediately.

Count. May I not, madam, be indulged with one previous word?

Lucy. Yes, sir; one, and but one. Instead of conciliating, I find your manners offend and disgust every one. Either cast away your *hauteur*, regain the affections and consent of my friends, and, above all, make your peace with Lady Peckham, or this shall be the last meeting of our lives. [*Erit.*]

Lydia. Are you aware, sir, of your danger? Sir Samuel, Sir Paul, Lady Peckham, all affronted! nay, your best friend, Edmund, has this moment left the room to avoid you. Oh! think on that lovely lady; and if you have any affection for her, for yourself, or for your father, recal your reason, discard your folly, and act with a little common sense. [*Erit.*]

Count. This is strange! My father! She know my father? And why am I schooled and tutored thus? The last meeting of our lives! They will absolutely drive me mad among them.

Enter Lady PECKHAM.

Madam, [*Bowing.*] when I last had the honour of a—an interview with your ladyship, I—I am afraid I might, possibly, be inadvertently betrayed into some warmth—

Lady P. Why, sir, seeing as how my son tells me you are a real nobleman, and not von of the ruffraff fortin-hunting fellers, if so be as you think fit to make proper 'pologies, why, sir, I—I—

Count. To a lady, madam, every apology may be made: any concessions, therefore—

Lady P. Oh! sir, as for that there, I vants nothing but what is upright and downright. And I supposes, sir, you are wery villin to own that an outlandish foriner must think himself highly honoured by a connexion with an English family of distinction: because that, I am sure, you cannot deny. And that it vus a most perumpatory pureeedin in you, being as you are but a Frenchman, or of an Irish generation at best, to purtend to the hand and fortin of Miss Looey Peckham, without my connivance.

Count. Madam?

Lady P. As I tells you, sir, I am upright and downright. So do you, or do you not?

Count. Madam, I am ready to acknowledge that the charms of your daughter's mind and person are equal to any rank.

Lady P. Her mind and person, indeed! No, sir; her family and fortin. And I believes, sir, now you are come to your proper senses, you vill own, too, that no outlandish lord whatever can uphold any compargement with the Peckham family and connexions.

Count. [*With warmth.*] Madam, though I am ready to offer every excuse which can reasonably be required, for any former inadvertency; yet, madam, no consideration whatever shall lead me—I say, madam, my own honour, a sense of what is due to my own honour, a sense of what is due to my ancestors, myself, and to truth—that is, madam—no; the world, racks, shall not force me to rank my family with your's.

Lady P. Vhy, sir, what is it that you are talking of? Rank my family with yourn, indeed! Marry come up! No, to be sure. I say rank! I knows very vell what is my doo; and that there, sir, is the thing that I would have you for to know: and I insist upon it, sir, that you shall know it; and shall own that you knows it; or, sir, I rewoke everything I have condescended to specify with my son. So do you, sir, or do you not?

Count. Madam—What, madam?

Lady P. Do you depose that outlandish foriners are all beggars and slaves; and that von Englishman is vorth a hundred Frenchmen?

Count. Madam, whatever you please.

Lady P. Oh! very vell. And do you perdict that this here city is the first city in the whole world?

Count. I—I believe it is, madam.

Lady P. Oh! very vell. And that the moniment, and the tower, and Lunnun bridge, are the most magnanimous and superfluous buildings?

Count. Madam—

Lady P. I'll have no circumbendibus. Are they, or are they not?

Count. Your ladyship is pleased to say so.

Lady P. To be sure I does; because I knows it to be troo. And that the wretches in forin parts are all fed upon bran; seeing as how there is no corn?

Count. As your ladyship thinks. [*Bows.*]

Lady P. And that the whole country could not purvide von lord mayor's feast?

Count. I—certainly not, madam they have few tittle and no aldermen.

Lady P. Ah! a pretty country, indeed! No aldermen! And that it would be the hite of persumption in you for to go for to set yourself up as my equal? Do you own that?

Count. [*Passionately.*] No, madam.

Lady P. Sir?

Count. No force, no temptation shall induce me so to dishonour my great progenitors.

Lady P. Vhy, sir!

Count. My swelling heart can hold no longer. Honour revolts at such baseness. Patience itself cannot brook a fallacy so glaring. No: though destruction were to swallow me, I would assert my house's rights, and its superior claims.

Lady P. Wery vell, sir; wastly vell, sir! And I would have you for to know, sir, while my name is Lady Peckham, I vill dissent my house's rights, and claims: that I despises all—Ha, ha, ha! Wery fine, indeed! Am I to be sent here to be hectorred, and huffed, and bluffed, and bullied, and bounced, and blustered, and brow-beat, and scoffed, and scouted, and—Ha!

Count. [*Recovering his temper and interceding.*] Madam—

Lady P. I ha' brought my hogs to a fine market. But I'll let 'em know who's at home.

Count. My warmth, madam—

Lady P. Your honour and glory, indeed! And for to pretend for to send for me here, to pelaver me over as I supposed—

Count. I am ready to own, madam—

Lady P. But I'll rid the house of you: I'll take good care you shall have no daughter of mine. You may post off to your father's hall, and there starve in state. Varm it with a blaze of dried leaves, and stop up the gaps in the shattered vindows and old groaning doors vith clay; then send your shivering wassals, that stand jabbering behind your von armed vooden chair, to skin the sheep that died of hunger and the rot, to make you a varm vinter surtout.

Count. Madam—

Lady P. My daughter, indeed! I'll karakatoor you. [*Exit.*]

Count. Flames and fury! [*Following, is met by Sir SAMUEL SHEEPY, who shuts the door, and prevents the Count from passing.*] How now, sir?

Sir S. [*Bowing.*] Sir, your humble servant.

Count. What does this mean, sir? Let me pass.

Sir S. A word or two first, if you please, sir.

Count. Let me pass.

[*Putting his hand to his sword.*]
Sir S. [*Bowing, but resolutely guarding the door.*] Sir, I most humbly entreat—

Count. D—n! What is it you want with me, sir? Who are you, sir!

Sir S. My name is Sheepy, sir. [*Bowing.*]

Count. Sheepy! So, so, so! Hell and the devil! At such a moment as this! [*Aside.*]

Sir S. I am told, sir, I have some obligations to you, which it becomes me to discharge.

Count. Well, sir?

Sir S. Not quite so well, sir, as I could wish.

Count. [*Aside.*] Was ever man so tormented!

Sir S. I am informed, sir, that you have condescended to mention me, in my absence.

Count. And so, sir?

Sir S. You did me an honour, sir. [*Bowing.*]

Count. Either speak your business, and suffer me to pass, or I will nail you to the door.

Sir S. Dear sir, you are so warm! I have been told you were so good as to threaten to cane me.

Count. Ay, sir; by whom?

Sir S. By Lady Peckham, sir.

Count. Indeed! Well, suppose it.

Sir S. 'Twas kind of you! Unluckily, I have not been much used to threatening messages, and am really afraid I shall not be very prompt at submission.

Count. Oh! do not doubt yourself, sir.

Sir S. Humble though I am, I do not find that a swaggering look— [*Bowing.*]

Count. Sir?

Sir S. Moderate your anger, kind sir. I have a petition to you. [*Putting on his white gloves.*]

Count. D—n your sneer, sir! speak.

Sir S. Bless me, sir, you are so warm! It is only that you would kindly do me the favour either to cut my throat, or suffer me to cut your's.

[*Draws and flourishes.*]

Count. [*With his hand to his sword.*] Are you mad, sir? Do you recollect where you are? In whose house?

Sir S. Gadso! true, sir: I should be sorry to be interrupted. Luckily, my carriage is at the door; and I know a snug room in a neighbouring tavern, where this business may be effectually settled, as quietly, as coolly, and as privately as possible.

Count. 'Twere well for you, sir, had you chosen another opportunity: but come.

Sir S. Oh! sir, I know my place; after you.

Count. Away, sir! [*Bowing.*]
[*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.—*The Count's Apartment.*

[*A noise of footsteps without, and voices heard calling*
"Here, here! This way! Up, up! Follow!"

Enter DORIMONT, hastily.

Dori. I am pursued, beset, and cannot escape!

Enter MAC DERMOT.

Mac D. Blood and thunder! Why, what's all this? Oh! and is it you, sir?

Dori. Where is the Count?

Mac D. 'Faith! and that is more than I can tell. [*Voices without*, "Here, here, I tell you! This room!"'] Why, what the devil—

Dori. I am hunted: my liberty, perhaps, my life, is in danger.

Mac D. Why, sure, the Count would not—

Dori. Here; take, hide this packet from the eyes of my pursuers: don't lose it; but, if you have any sense of worth and honesty, deliver it safe into the hands of Sir Paul Peckham.

Mac D. Niver fear me, honey!

Enter an EXEMPT and two Bailiffs.

Exempt. That's the man. Seize him!

1 Bail. Sir, you are our prisoner.

Dori. On what authority, sir?

1 Bail. Authority, sir! The authority of law, sir.

Dori. For what crime?

1 Bail. As to crime, sir, I can't tell; but for a trifling debt of fifty thousand pounds.

Dori. At whose suit?

Exempt. At mine, sir.

Dori. Your's! Vile wretch! Gentlemen, he is a spy: the creature of a foreign court. I never had dealings with him in my life.

1 Bail. We know nothing of that, sir. He has sworn to the debt.

Exempt. No parleying; take him away.

1 Bail. Ay, ay; come, sir. [*They drag him out.*

Dori. [*Without*.] Help, rescue, false imprisonment!

Mac D. Why, what is all this now? Poor ould gentleman! [*Voices without*, "Rescue, rescue! Help!"] Where is my shillalagh? Oh! by St. Peter and his crook, but I will be one among you, scoundrels!

[*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The House of Sir Paul Peckham.*

Enter LYDIA and EDMUND.

Edmund. Be pacified; you are too much alarmed.

Lydia. If Sir Paul should have let them pass, what dreadful consequences may have followed! Where can he be?

Edmund. He is here!

Enter Sir PAUL PECKHAM.

Lydia. Oh! sir, where are they? Has anything happened?

Sir P. Happened! D—e! I could not believe my own ears. A silky Simon! The Count was in a right humour—'Sblood! I had a great mind to have let him kill the old fool.

Lydia. Then they have not fought. Are they safe, sir?

Sir P. Yes, yes; they are safe enough. But do you know? the amorous swain, his blood being heated, could only be pacified on condition that he

might have another interview with Lucy. I'm glad on't. I'll go and give her a lesson.

Edmund. Oh! sir, leave him to my sister, she needs no instructions.

Sir P. No? 'Gad! I believe not. She's my own girl: but clear the coast; he's coming.

Edmund. I will go to Lady Peckham; and do you, Lydia, watch for the Count.

Sir P. Ay, ay; he is suddenly grown humble; apologized to me, and promised to come and plead with my lady. But away.

[*Exit EDMUND and LYDIA.*

Enter Sir SAMUEL SHEEPY

Well, Sir Samuel, you are here.

Sir S. Yes, sir.—And I half wish I wish I was anywhere else, already.

Sir P. And so you absolutely have the courage to attack my Lucy? Ha, ha, ha! Why, you are quite a hero! you fear neither man nor woman.

Sir S. [*Aside.*] I wish I didn't.

Sir P. Nay, but don't begin to look so pitiful: she'll be here in a minute. Don't flinch; stand to your guns! she'll not easily strike. Ha, ha, ha! Dio hard, my old boy!

[*Exit.*

Sir S. What is the matter with me? I declare he has talked me into a tremble. Why should I be so terrified at a harmless woman? I can't help it: a pair of beautiful eyes are flaming swords, which no armour can resist.

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. So, Sir Samuel!

Sir S. [*Aside.*] Bless me, my heart is in my mouth.

Lucy. You seem taken by surprise.

Sir S. Madam—hem!—no, madam—yes, madam.

[*Bowing.*

Lucy. My papa informed me you were waiting purposely to disclose this important secret.

Sir S. Madam—hem!—yes, madam.

Lucy. Do you know that I have had you in my mind I don't know how often since I saw you?

Sir S. Hem! have you madam?

Lucy. Yes, I have. 'Tis a pity, nay, indeed a shame, that so famous an English family as that of the Sheepy's should become extinct.

Sir S. Hem! There is no danger of that, madam.

Lucy. No? Why, it is too late in life for you to marry, Sir Samuel.

Sir S. Hem! Yes, madam—no, madam.

Lucy. Indeed! So you—Well, I should like to know your choice: some staid body, I imagine.

Sir S. Madam—hem!—

Lucy. But I would not have her too old and disagreeable.

Sir S. Hem! I can assure you, madam, she—hem!—she is a very beautiful young lady.

Lucy. You surprise me. Oh! then perhaps she is some low-born girl, who has more pride than understanding, and is willing to sacrifice her youth and beauty to the silly vanity of riding in a coach?

Sir S. Quite—hem!—quite the contrary, madam.

Lucy. Then she must be poor, and must think of marrying you for the sake of your riches, hoping you will die soon.

Sir S. Madam!—Hem! She is very rich.

Lucy. Is it possible?

Sir S. And I should flatter myself would not expect me to die too soon.

Lucy. Oh! but she will. Young women never marry old men but with a wish to dance over their graves.

Sir S. Hem!

Lucy. Perhaps the poor girl may—may have made a *faux pas*?

Sir S. Hem! Her virtue is unspotted, madam.

Lucy. You amaze me! Young, rich, beautiful, and virtuous! What can her reason be for making choice of you? Why does not she rather marry some youth, whose rare qualities resemble her own? Oh! I've found the secret, at last: she's an idiot.

Sir S. Hem! No, madam, no—Hem!—I am afraid she has too much wit. *[Aside.]*

Lucy. Nay, then, Sir Samuel, you are the most fortunate gentleman I ever heard or read of. But are you sure she is in love with you?

Sir S. Hem! Not very, madam.

Lucy. No! Oh, oh! I have unriddled it, at last. You have been bargaining for her with her father, or mother, or—Ay, ay! the poor young lady's consent has never been asked. And would you be so selfish as to seek your own single gratification, and be contented to see her condemned to misery, pining to death for the youth she loves, and justly detesting the sight of you, as the wicked author of her wretchedness?

Sir S. Hem! *[Looking towards the door.]* Madam, I—Hem!—I wish you a good evening.

Lucy. *[Preventing him from going.]* Another word, Sir Samuel. Have you ever talked to the young lady on the subject?

Sir S. Hem! No, Madam.

Lucy. But, why?

Sir S. I—I—Hem!—I can't very well tell.

Lucy. But I can. With much folly and depravity, there is still some virtue in you.

Sir S. Madam! *[Looking how to escape.]*

Lucy. Though you could form so unjust a project, you never had the courage to insult the lady, by an avowal of your guilt.

Sir S. Hem! Guilt, madam!

Lucy. Yes, sir, guilt. However, sir, she has perfectly understood your insinuations.

Sir S. Madam!

Lucy. She has infinite respect for filial duties. But, though she would be aware of offending her parents, I know her to be equally determined never to entail misery on herself; nor to accept a husband whom she could neither esteem, admire, nor love.

Sir S. Madam, I—I—Hem!—Your servant, madam.

Lucy. *[Placing herself between him and the door.]* Not till you promise—

Sir S. *[Forgetting his fear.]* I'll promise anything, madam.

Lucy. That you will not render yourself more ridiculous, by persevering in so absurd, so unjust a pursuit.

Sir S. No, madam; I'm quite ridiculous enough already.

Lucy. Nay, more; that you will not seek some less friended, more enslaved, or more timid young creature, whom your misapplied wealth might command.

Sir S. Whatever you please, madam.

Lucy. But, that you will rather apply your superfluous hoards to the protection of youthful innocence.

Sir S. Suffer me but to depart, madam, and I will bequeath my estates in perpetuity, as you shall direct; I'll entail them on the Magdalen; or I'll advertise for marriageable men and maids, and you shall portion out my money among them—I'll—I'll do anything, except marry, or go a courting.

Lucy. Why, then, Sir Samuel—*[Kissing his hand.]* There, that be your reward.

Sir S. Madam, your humble servant

[Exit.]

Lucy. Ha, ha, ha! Poor Sir Samuel! This is the first time he ever forgot his bow.

Enter Count CONOLLY VILLARS.

Well, sir, have you effectually made your peace with my mamma?

Count. I have done my endeavour, madam.—*[Aside.]* Would I were at peace with myself!

Lucy. And are you still, sir, under the dominion of prejudice so weak? Do you still repent of what you so long have deemed your condescension?

Count. Far otherwise, madam. There are beings so peculiarly favoured of heaven, and endowed with such high perfections, both of body and of mind, that they are superior to all the distinctions of men, among whom they walk angels upon earth. You are one of these; and my misery is, I never can deserve you.

Lucy. You may have stumbled; but this self-condemnation shows it was but to rise with ten-fold strength. Persevere, and we will be severed only by death.

Enter EDMUND.

Edmund. At length, my dear Count, Lady Peckham is pacified. To stoop to her ill-placed pride, to overlook her prejudice, and to petition as you did, was noble in you. I have seconded your efforts, have pledged myself for your honour, and guaranteed your veracity.

Count. Then, sir, you have struck a dagger to my heart! I have been guilty of falsehood. That very pride, and that exalted, or, I fear, extravagant sense of honour, which should have preserved me from a stain so hateful, has dashed me down the precipice!

Edmund. You amaze me!

Count. 'Tis true; 'twas inadvertent; but ranking vanity, strengthened by a purer motive,—the trembling alarms of love,—induced me to persist; nay, a second time, to aid deception.

Lucy. You did wrong. But which of us can say they never erred?

Edmund. Ay, who will stand forth and affirm, that, amid the rude whirl, the confused doubts, or the terrors of passion, they never once have been betrayed into your crime? For a crime, I own it is; and, with consequences so wide, so pernicious, and so fatal, that, when it shall be extirpated from the earth, that moment man will be perfect! But, in this poor world's present state, it is so far venial, that—*[painful, humiliating thought!]*—no; the noblest, the purest of us all, cannot strike his heart, and say—I never was a liar! But what have you said that—

Enter Sir PAUL PECKHAM.

Sir P. Come, come, we must strike while the iron is hot. We must take my lady while she is in the humour, since she must necessarily be a party in our deeds. And first, I have agreed, as you know, Count, that my daughter's portion shall be eighty thousand pounds: the remainder will chiefly rest with you. What settlement do you intend to make? and on what estates?

Count. None, sir

Sir P. None!

Count. I have no estates.

Sir P. Sir!—Why, what—Zounds!—After the inquiries I made, I cannot be so deceived. Are not you Count Conolly Villars?

Count. I am, sir.

Sir P. A colonel in the armies of the most Christian king?

Count. I am, sir.

Sir P. Recommended to me by Messieurs Devigny, the great merchants at Marseilles?

Count. The same, sir.

Sir P. Why, then, what do you mean?

Count. When I first paid my addresses to this lady, I imagined my rank and family were a sufficient counterpoise to wealth.

Sir P. Ha! Gold in one scale, honour in t'other. Flimsy ware!—No, no; kick the beam—

Count. But, ardent, violent, and eternal, as my love for your angelic daughter is, and must be, even the loss of her shall not tempt me, any longer, to practise the least imposition.

Sir P. Well, but,—'Sblood! The steward!—the family estates!

Count. I have told you the truth, sir.

Enter LYDIA.

Lucy. What's the matter, Lydia?

Lydia. Poor Mr. Mac Dermot—

Count. What of him? Any harm?

Lydia. He has been in some fray, and is so bruised.

Count. Bruised! Where is he?

Lydia. Below, with a packet, which he wants to deliver to Sir Paul.

Sir P. To me?

Lydia. Yes, sir. Pray go to him.

Sir P. A packet for me! [Going.] I shall never hear the last of this from my lady. [Exit.]

Lucy. Brother, go to my mamma, and endeavour to keep her in temper.—[To the Count.] Be not dejected; I know my father's affection for me, and do not yet despair. [Exit.]

Count. Charming, generous girl! This poor Mac Dermot,—

Lydia. He is afraid of seeing you. He says you will never pardon him, for having taken the part of a man, whom you threatened to murder.

Count. I! I threatened to murder no man.—Will you, madam, be so kind as to tell him I am here, and that I insist on seeing him?

Lydia. With pleasure. [Exit.]

Count. Kingdoms should not tempt me to pass another day like this.

Enter MAC DERMOT, with his left arm in a sling.

How now, Mac Dermot! Where have you been? What's the matter with you?

Mac D. No great matter, my lord; only a little bit of a joint here. [Pointing to his arm.]

Count. Broken?

Mac D. A double tooth or two; not much, my lord.

Count. Much! How? What have you been doing?

Mac D. [Pitifully.] I hope your lordship won't be angry—[Enraged.] But the rascals sazed him neck and heels!

Count. Seized who?

Mac D. [Passionately.] He was as innocent as the babe unborn, my lord; and he tould 'em so, the dirty rascallions!

Count. Who are you talking of?

Mac D. [Pitifully.] To be sure, he sent your lordship a— a viry impertinent letter.

Count. How?

[The Count's perplexities and passions are here effectually roused, and increase through the scene.]

Mac D. There were three of them. Nivir did your lordship set your two good-looking eyes on such a pair of thieves!

Count. For heaven's sake! tell your story straight forward. What letter do you mean? Who?

Mac D. [With great emotion.] I hope your lordship will forget and forgive. It would have moved the bowels of your compassion to have seen the ould gntleman.

Count. Is it possible? What can he mean?—What ould gentleman?

Mac D. [Enraged.] The dirty shaberoons took him by the throat—My viry blood boiled—Upon my soul, my lord, I could not bear it! I hope you will forgive me! By the merciful father, I could not bear it!

Count. Tell me this moment who you mean.

Mac D. He came running back, out of breath, and asked for your lordship; and so, my lord, seeing a fillow-crater in distriss—

Count. Came where?

Mac D. A couple of as ill-looking Tyburn-turn-pike bum-bailiffs as your lordship could wish, with a cowardly complotter at their back. It was he that came behind me with his shillalee, while I was hard at work with both. But the brave ould gentleman stepped in; and, by the virgin's night-cap! but he gave him his dose.

Count. Once more, tell me, instantly, what ould gentleman?

Mac D. Considering his age, he is as active and as brave a fillow, as ever handled a fist.

Count. [Aside.] He cannot, surely, mean my father!—Mac Dermot, I entreat, I command you to tell me of whom you are talking.

Mac D. If your lordship had but seen the noble ould soul, I'm sure you would have forgiven me.

Count. But what letter?

Mac D. Oh! the divel burn the letter! Now, my lord, don't mention it; pray, don't remember it, your lordship; pray, don't! By my soul, now, my lord, he is a fine ould fillow! Oh! how he laid about him!

Count. Was it the person who came this afternoon?

Mac D. My lord,—

Count. Fear nothing. Speak!

Mac D. Why, then, my lord,—To be sure, it was he himself.

Count. And is he safe? Did you free him from them?

Mac D. Why, my lord, I could not hilp it! I could not hilp it! By the holy footstool, but I couldn't!

Count. Mac Dermot,— [Taking him by the hand.]

Mac D. My lord?

Count. Well, well! a time will come—

Mac D. My lord?

Count. Are you much hurt, Mac Dermot?—Here, hallo!

Enter a Footman.

Call a chair! Run for a surgeon and a physician! the best that can be procured.

Mac D. For me, my lord?

Count. For you, my noble fellow!

Mac D. Spare yourself the labour, young man.

Count. Go! do as I order you, instantly.—[Exit Footman.]—Mac Dermot, you must be put to bed.

Mac D. To bed, my lord!

Count. And lose some blood.

Mac D. 'Faith, my lord, that will be a little too much; I've lost quite blood enough already.

Count. Pray,—I request,—I must have you do as I desire. I would not have any ill happen to you, for the world.

Mac D. Oh! and the divle of ill or harm cau

happen to Mac Dermot, the while he has such a generous prince-royal of a master! though, I believe, the best thing that could happen to me, just now, would be a good supper, and a hearty tiff of whisky-punch.

Count. Not for the Indies!

Mac D. Faith, my lord, it was hard work, and has given me a very craving kind of a call.

Re-enter Footman.

Foot. The chair is waiting, sir.

Count. Go, my good fellow! Obey me but this once, and I'll never act the master to you more.

Mac D. Well, well, my lord,—But I hope your lordship won't quite kill me with kindness. [Exit.]

Enter Sir PAUL PECKHAM and LUCY.

Sir P. [With the packet opened.] So, Count, I find, after all your pretended raptures, you never wished to marry my daughter.

Count. Sir!

Sir P. Why did not you retract like a man, and not make a paltry, false excuse of poverty?

Count. Sir, I made no false excuse.

Sir P. How, sir! Shall I not believe my eyes? Have I not bills here in my hand, drawn in your favour, for five hundred thousand crowns?

Count. In mine!

Sir P. In your's; given me this moment by your own servant.

Count. Impossible, sir!

Sir P. Impossible, is it? Why, look you, here are the bills. And, hallo!—

Enter Footman.

Go you, sir, and desire Mr. Mac Dermot to come back.

Count. Stir not for your life, on such an errand! He must not, shall not be disturbed.

Sir P. Nay, my word, it seems, is not to be believed; nor, perhaps, the bills themselves. But, sir, though you vaunt so highly of being a man of honour, the trick was beneath a man of honesty.

Enter Lady PECKHAM and EDMUND.

Lady P. Here's a komakul kind of an obstreperous person, that says he must speak to the Count. You may come in, mister.

Enter DORIMONT and LYDIA.

Sir P. Ah! what, my friend, the steward! I am glad you are come. Never was so amazed in my life. Your master, here, has been telling me he has no estates.

Lady P. How!

Dori. My master, sir!

Count. The feelings of man cannot support this open shame! [Going.]

Dori. Whither now, sir?

Sir P. Ay, talk to him. I'm in a mist.

Count. Suffer me to pass, sir. [Going.] Speak the truth; render me contemptible,—abhorrent; but make me not a witness of my own disgrace!

Dori. Stay, sir!

Count. I cannot.

Dori. Stay; or, dread a father's malediction!

Sir P. [Aside.] His father! The plague!—Hem!—

—Lydia!

Lydia. Hush!

Lady P. Father, indeed! What he! So, so! Here's

a wirago; here's a chouse!

Sir P. My lady—

Lady P. I thought what would be the upshot on't!

Edmund. Madam! [Takes her aside.]

Dori. Spurred on by suppositions and conceits

the most absurd; wholly intent upon yourself; contemning others; exacting respect you did not merit; refusing ceremony where 'twas due; protuberant with pride, yet poorly carping at and holding idiot warfare with the pride of others; forgetful of the dignity of reason, but, with tenacious grasp, clinging to the ludicrous dignity of birth; the heir, indeed, and first-born of folly, ignorance itself has mocked and taunted at you!

Lady P. Wery troo. Give him his own!

Sir P. Zounds! My lady, I wish he would give you your own a little: not but it's right enough.

Lady P. To be sure! I knows wery vell I am right.

Dori. Your father, too, has been avoided, nay, disowned; your father, who, for years, has lived in indigence, that he might secretly supply your wants, support you in splendour, and preserve you from all the misery of which he made himself the willing victim.

Count. Sir,—You?—Was it you? Oh! ingratitude!

Dori. Your father was offensive to your sight. And what was it you despised! Why, this poor garb. You wished no kindred with virtuous poverty. Had I appeared in all my former state, though knave or fool had been blazoned on my brow, yet, decked in the trappings of magnificence, I had received an open welcome. But, blessed be my penury, since it has been your punishment.

Count. Sir, wrung as my heart is by remorse, and guilty as I know myself—for I have still increase of guilt—no words can mitigate my crimes. Yet, though I have erred, I feel I have something in me capable of good; and strong propensities to all the tender ties, the filial duties, and the severer virtues, which I have seemed to want; a mind, which, once convinced, has strength to shun and to subdue its master passion, renounce its folly, and abhor its turpitude. Deep is my offence against you and nature; but let nature plead in my behalf. Here, at your feet, repentant for my faults, I claim that pity, which a father so good, and so affectionate, will not refuse.

Dori. Oh! no; for now you speak like the son of my heart, the image of my brightest hopes. You have stood the fiery trial, and are pure.

Lady P. Why, but, hark you me, mister,—why, what! you are not a count, too, to be sure!

Dori. No, madam.

Lady P. Why, then,—

Dori. If a title can flatter your ladyship, mine is something higher.

Lady P. How!

Dori. I am a marquis.

Lady P. A marquis! You! Vell!—[Aside] For an outlandish marquis!

Edmund. My lady—

Sir P. Well, but the bills? [Holding them out.]

Dori. They are mine.

Count. Your's, sir!

Dori. Remittances for some recovered arrears. But, where is my brave protector,—my hero!

Count. Safe, sir. Every care is taken of the generous fellow. Is the physician come?

Sir P. Yes, yes; I have taken care of that. I have sent him my own physician.—Hem!—[Aside.] My cook!

Count. You know not half his worth.

Dori. Which shall not go unrewarded.

Count. No; by heaven!

Dori. We have now the means; we no longer are oppressed and poor.

Count. Yet, are you not in present danger?

Dori. No; malice has spent its last effort. Our ambassador has just sent me the final decision of the judges: my sentence is reversed, my whole estates are restored, and the power of my persecutors is at an end.

Count. Oh, fortune! Oh, my father!—And, may I hope it? My Lucy, may I?

Lucy. Yes; hope every thing.

Count. Mine?

Lucy. Yours; heart and soul.

Sir P. She is a brave wench!

Lady P. Hold a blow, if you please! What! am I nobody?

Count. Madam, to you a thousand excuses are due.

Lady P. To be sure they are!

Count. I am conscious of my past ridicule, and will no more contend with your ladyship for prejudices so false and weak.

Lady P. I knoo I vus right; I knoo you made yourself ridiculous; I told you so often enough!

Sir P. Well said, my lady. But, hark you, Miss Lydia,—And, sir,—

Dori. *Count.*—[*Aside.*] How shall I tell him?—My son, look at this charming, this virtuous young lady.

Sir P. [*Aside.*] Zounds! what now?

Count. I am conscious of having treated her with proud unkindness, at the very moment, too, when I perceived she was sincerely my friend.

Dori. Your friend! Look at her. Does not your heart throb? Feel you not sensations more tender? Are you not all doubt, all hope, all fear, all perturbation?

Count. Sir!—What!—Who!

Dori. Can you not imagine? Look at her, I say; behold her agitation!

Count. Mercy!

Dori. Open your arms, your heart, to receive her.

Count. Sir!—Madam!—Who?

Dori. Your sister.

Count. My sister!

Lydia. My dearest, best of brothers! [*Running into his arms.*]

Lucy. My friend! my Lydia!

Count. Oh! how culpable have I been!

Sir P. [*Aside.*] 'Sblood! here's a pretty piece of business!

Lady P. What's that you say, sir? Miss Liddy the Count's sister!

Edmund. 'Tis very true, madam.

Lady P. Truo! Vell, I purtest, I'm quite in a quandary.

Dori. [*To Sir P.*] And now, sir,—

Sir P. [*Aside.*] Yes, 'tis my turn, now!—Yes, sir.

Dori. While labouring to reclaim the follies of youth—

Sir P. Yes, sir.

Dori. We ought not to forget the vices of age.

Sir P. Hem!—We'll talk of them after supper, sir. [*Looking round at Lady Peckham and the Company.*]

Dori. Well, sir, on condition—

Sir P. Oh! any condition you please, sir.

Edmund. [*Leading LYDIA.*] My dear father!—

Sir P. My kind son!—[*Aside.*] Sly rascal!

Lydia. [*To Sir P.*] We shall want a house, sir.

Sir P. Hem!—Ay, ay!

Lydia. Somewhere in Mary-le-bone.

Sir P. Very well.

Lydia. With a—

Sir P. Zounds!—[*Apart to LYDIA.*] Hush! don't mention the back door.

Lydia. [*Apart to Sir P.*] Then we are all friends?

Sir P. [*Apart.*] To be sure. But, you may as well not tell Scapegrace.

Lydia. [*Apart.*] Never fear.

Sir P. [*Apart.*] Not a word of the new liveries.

Lydia. [*Apart.*] Depend upon my honour.

Count. My sister and my friend! Can it be?

Edmund. Would you not wish it thus?

Count. Oh! most ardently!

Dori. Chequered are the scenes of life; pleasure and pain, joy and grief, austerity and laughter, intermingling, weave a motley web. Our prejudices are our punishments: they cling about us, warp our actions, distort our manners, render us the food of satire, the mockery of fools, and torture us, as wailing urchins are tormented to make sport for boys. Error and folly impede the progress of perfection. Truth alone can make men wise and happy. Myself the sacrifice of falsehood and mistake, feebly have I striven to stem the torrent; and here my task, and here, I hope, my troubles end. [*Exeunt.*]

SEDUCTION;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS,

BY THOMAS HOLCROFT.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LORD MORDEN
GENERAL BURLAND
SIR FREDERICK FASHION
WILMOT
LAPELLE
Bailiffs
Servants.

LADY MORDEN
MRS. MODELY :
MRS. PINUP
HARRIET :
EMILY.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Drawing-room at Lord Morden's.

Enter LAPELLE.

Lap. [Looking at his watch.] Twenty minutes past ten; a shameful time of the morning for a gentleman's gentleman to be disturbed. My lord has lost his money, can't sleep himself, and won't suffer others to take their natural rest.

Enter Mrs. PINUP.

Mrs. P. I declare, upon my honour, this is a most monstrous time of night for a lady's gentlewoman to be kept up; dozing over a dull novel, or nodding in an antichamber and an arm-chair, while others are taking their pleasure, and losing their estates, among their friends.

Lap. Good morrow, Mrs. Pinup.

Mrs. P. Good morrow, Mr. Lapelle! Good night, you mean. I have not been in bed yet.

Lap. No!

Mrs. P. That vile, bed-side bell! They'll wear me haggard before I am old. Knew I should not rest long, so threw myself down in my clothes; and, just as I was got into a sound sleep, tingle, tingle, tingle; up I must get to dress my lady, who for my part, I believe, never sleeps at all.

Lap. Why, yes; your fashionable folks are a kind of ghosts, that walk of nights, and greatly trouble the repose of valets and ladies' maids; and late hours,

like white paint, are excellent promoters of cracked complexions

Mrs. P. I declare, upon my honour, I am as tired as—as—

Lap. A hackney-coach horse, on a rainy Sunday.

Mrs. P. Yes; and as drowsy as—

Lap. An alderman at an oratorio. Your lady had a deal of company at her rout. Was Sir Frederick Fashion there?

Mrs. P. To be sure.

Lap. He is a prodigious favourite with your lady, I think.

Mrs. P. Favourite! There are strange doings in this world!—Staid, I know not how long, after every body else was gone.

Lap. What! alone with your lady?

Mrs. P. Alone, with my lady.

Lap. Indeed! Was Mrs. Modely at the rout?

Mrs. P. Yes. But don't ask me any questions; it's impossible I should say ten words more: I am talking in my sleep, now. When I get up, in the morning, (that is, about three o'clock in the afternoon,) I'll tell you all. So, good night. [*Exit.*]

Lap. A wonderful change in a short time! Lady Morden, young, handsome, and full of spirits, was, not a month ago, reserved in her conduct, fond of her husband, contented with home,—and, indeed, a miraculous kind of exception among wives of quality; whereas, now, she has suddenly turned fantastical in dress, capricious in temper, free of speech, and, what we half-bred folks should call, light of carriage. She games with the women, coquettes with the men; and seems, in every respect, ambitious to become a woman of fashion. As for my lord, why, he is a—man of fashion.

Enter General BURLAND.

General. Is your lady up, Mr. Lapelle?

Lap. Yes, sir; I believe she has never been in bed.

General. Who? what do you mean?

Lap. My lady had a rout last night.

General. A rout! and never in bed! Impossible.

Lap. Yes; but it's very true, sir.

General. Lady Morden! she whom, but a few weeks since, I left so singular, so eminent an example of simplicity and purity of manners.

Lap. Sir Frederick Fashion was here.

General. Sir Frederick Fashion!

Lap. He staid after every body else had retired.

General. What! alone with Lady Morden?

Lap. So her ladyship's woman, who is scarcely yet undressed, informed me.

General. Why, then, all hopes of goodness, in this world, are vanished! Go; bid my daughter, my Emily, to come to me.

Lap. She is not stirring, I fancy, sir.

General. But I fancy she is, sir; I am sure she is. What, sir, she had not a rout to keep her up all night!

Lap. She was of my lady's party, I believe, sir.

General. Go, go; pray, go, and do as I bid you.

[Exit LAPELLE.]

What will this town, this world, come to! The only perfectly amiable, the only enchantingly virtuous woman I knew, fascinated, at last, and sinking into the gulph of depravity! She will drag down my Emily too. No; I'll hide her in a forest, seclude her in a cave, rather than suffer her to be infected by the pestiferous breath of this contagious town. But is she not already tainted? Of my lady's party! she that I left her with as a pattern; commanded her to observe, to study, to imitate, in all things!

Re-enter LAPELLE.

Well, where is my daughter?

Lap. I have called her woman, and she will call Miss Emily.

General. I'll call her myself; and it shall be the most ungentele call she has long heard from me. [Ex.]

Enter HARRIET, disguised.

Lap. Who comes here? Some foreign sharper, I dare say; one of my lord's morning duns for last night's debts.

Har. [With the brogue.] Harkye! young man, may I be asking you where I will find my Lord Morden?

Lap. He is not come down, sir.

Har. Oh! that, I suppose, is because he is not up.

Lap. My lord told me he expected a gentleman or two would call; but he has had so many calls lately—

Har. That he is a little slow in answering.

Lap. Rather. Riches, regularity, and roast beef, will soon, I fear, take their leave of our house.

Har. Faith! and that may viry will be; for they are all three become great vagabonds. Riches is turned American pedler; regularity a Prussian grenadier; and, as for roast beef, why, the Frinch are now so fond of good ould English fashions, that poor roast beef is transported alive to Paris.

Lap. My lord, I believe, is a little out of cash, at present.

Har. Will, now, that is viry prudent of him to put it out; for, whin a man finds he can't keep his cash himself, he is viry right to lit odther people keep it for him.

Lap. Nay, then, I don't know a more careful gentleman.

Har. Careful! Why, sure, always whin a man of spirit begins to take care of his money, 'tis because he has none.

Lap. Well, sir, if you will please to leave your card, his lordship, I suppose, will know who has called.

Har. Indeed, and he won't.

Lap. How so, pray, sir?

Har. Faith, for a viry good raison,—he niver saw me in his life.

Lap. Who, then, shall I say?

Har. And is it my name you would know?

Lap. If you please.

Har. Let me see: what the white divle is my name, now? Oh! Char-les Phelim O'Fireaway: an Irishman by accident; a gentleman by policy; and a captain of croats in the Austrian sarvis, by design. Do you understand that riddle, now?

Lap. Not clearly.

Har. [Aside.] I did not intend you should.—What time can I see my lord?

Lap. Most likely, about one.

Har. Will, then, give him this litter, and inform his lordship I will take the liberty of calling, this afternoon, to bid him a good-morrow. [Exit.]

Enter LORD MORDEN.

Lord M. [Speaking as he enters.] Lapelle!

Lap. [Aside.] So, here he comes already.—My lord?

Lord M. What time is it?

Lap. Eleven o'clock, my lord.

Lord M. What a d—d night have I passed! Is my coffee ready?

Lap. I'll go and see, my lord. [Exit.]

Lord M. [Throws himself on the sofa.] This headache!—No rest!—Oh! for half an hour's sleep! A cursed, silly course of mine! But, there is no accounting in the morning for the conduct of overnight.

Re-enter LAPELLE, with coffee.

This is not half strong enough. Get me some as strong as possible.—Any message? [Rises.]

Lap. This letter, my lord.

Lord M. From Lady Westbrook, I see.—[Reads.] Um—"A young Lady in disguise—Um—will relate her own story.—Um, um—Rely on your honour to keep her secret, and serve her cause.—Would have addressed myself to Lady Morden, but for reasons which you shall know hereafter."

Enter LAPELLE, with more coffee.

Who brought this letter?

Lap. An Irish gentleman, in a foreign dress.

Lord M. A gentleman!

Lap. Said he would call about one o'clock, my lord.

Lord M. Shew him into my room, and inform me the instant he comes.

Lap. General Burland is here.

Lord M. [Aside.] General Burland! Zounds!

Lap. Came to town late last night, my lord.

Lord M. Tell him I am come down.

[Exit Lapelle.]

Must not let him see the present temper of my mind. My guardian once, he is determined never to think me of age. I need not his reproof to increase my present chagrin; my own follies, and Lady Morden's unexpected, unaccountable reverse of conduct, are sufficient. He will lay it all to me; and, perhaps, with reason. Heigho! Here he comes. Really, one of these very prudent, plain-speaking friends, is a very disagreeable person, in these our moments of folly. Well, I must assume a cheerfulness I don't feel, and ward off his wisdom with raillery.

Enter General BURLAND.

General. Good morrow, my lord.

Lord M. General, good morrow.

General. You seem scarcely awake.

Lord M. [Stretching.] Slept ill; troubled with the night-mare.

General. Your troubles, I am afraid, are rapidly increasing.

Lord M. How so, General?

General. Lady Morden had a rout last night.

Lord M. Oh! and forgot to send you a card, I suppose. Is that my fault?

General. You are merry, my lord; but, he who drinks poison, out of a frolic, will soon be glad to send for a physician, out of fear; and the chances are, the doctor will come too late.

Lord M. Trope and figure!

General. My lord, my lord! this levity is unseasonable: blushes and shame would better become you.

Lord M. They are out of fashion.

General. Yes, you leave your friends to blush for your faults.

Lord M. My friends are very good; nay, indeed, generous; for, were they but to spare a single blush for each of their own faults, they would have none to bestow on mine.

General. Fie! The mirth of a madman is sport only to boys. I was your guardian, I wished to prove myself your friend. 'Twas I first discovered that, then, angelic woman, who is, now, Lady Morden; I was the cause of her union with you; and I am, therefore, accountable to myself, to her, and to society, for her conduct.

Lord M. That is, you are a kind of second-hand sponsor; godfather-in-law, as it were.

General. Very well, sir, proceed. Despise reproof; ridicule advice.

Lord M. Nay, good doctor, you really wrong me; 'tis not the advice, but the physic, I hate: at least, I hate the form under which it is administered.—But, pray, tell me: when last you saw Lady Morden, did you perceive any symptoms of that degeneracy in her ladyship, you now complain so loudly of?

General. None: I thought it impossible.

Lord M. And is it not rather extraordinary, then, that my example should so suddenly subdue what, within this month, seemed so invulnerable?

General. [With great surprise and energy.] It is extraordinary, my lord; most extraordinary! but not less true; and, had you any sense of your duty to yourself, your family, or society, the truth of it would make you tremble.

Lord M. See how differently different people understand things. My acquaintance are, every day, wishing me joy of her ladyship's reformation, and telling me how surprisingly she has retrieved her character in the world.

General. And Sir Frederick Fashion, no doubt, among the rest!

Lord M. [Endeavouring to conceal his feelings.] Hem!—yes—yes. He is one of our very first men, you know; and he is quite in raptures with her: swears she was born to lead and outshine us all.

General. [With continued irony.] The approbation of so great an adept must give you vast pleasure!

Lord M. Hem!—a—infinite!—Not but this sudden change has rather surprised me.

General. How so?

Lord M. Just as you left town, her ladyship's melancholy seemed increasing; wandering over the house, like a perturbed spirit, as the play says, mournfully clanking her chains, and frightening the gentle smiles and pleasures from her, she seemed to way-lay me; and, with moving look and melting eye, entreat compassion; till, egad! I really, at last, began to pity her.

General. You did?

Lord M. Yes. But suddenly forsaking the pen-seroso, she broke in upon me, one morning, and,

with an air of levity and good humour, and a small tincture of reproach, then and there read a very pretty, wife-like remonstrance.

General. To which you listened with a truly pick-tooth insensibility.

Lord M. Yes, you know my way.

General. And what was the subject of her discourse?

Lord M. Why, chapter the first was a recapitulation of my agreeable follies, and her own perverse virtues. She was no partaker in my pleasure; I had forgotten every endearment. She was left to dine, sup, and sleep, by herself; I dined, supped, and slept, nobody knew where. She more recluse than the abbess of a convent; I more uncertain than the price of stocks, or the place of prime minister.

General. [With earnest concern.] And what did you say to this?

Lord M. [Aside.] I must face it out.—Say! What could I say to such a simple woman?

General. You did not attempt to deny the charge, then?

Lord M. What should I deny? 'Twas every syllable true; and every syllable in my praise.

General. Humph!—Then you do not think the sweets of affection ought, sometimes, to alleviate the bitterness of neglect.

Lord M. Sweets! Psha! they are too cloying to the stomach, and ought to be taken sparingly. I am fond of sweet music, but too much of it sets me to sleep. Besides, a wife, like a barrelled organ, can only play one set of tunes.

General. [Sighs.] Well, sir, but the conclusion.

Lord M. A very unexpected one, I assure you. I misunderstood this for a declaration of war; and, with a smile, was very obligingly about to entreat her ladyship would hatch her melancholy into mischief her own way; when, turning short upon me, she curtsied, seemed abashed, began to apologize, applaud my conduct, ridicule the silliness of her own, and promised to become as fashionable a lady as I, or any lord in Christendom, could wish.

General. Your increase of happiness is, then, prodigious?

Lord M. Hem!—a—unspeakable. Lady Morden, I own, was, certainly, a kind of demi-angel, though my wife; but, then, her—her goodness seemed to throw one at such a distance, so much in the back-ground, that there was only one figure noticed in the picture.

General. 'Tis well, sir, you are so perfectly satisfied.

Lord M. Nay, General, I will own I have often felt a kind of inclination, a sort of wish, as it were, to become very prudent, and wise, and—and all that; but, really, one has so much to do, that one does not know where to begin. Besides, you very good kind of people, you—upon my honour, you are, in many respects, the most queer, precise, particular species of beings, and have such notions! Instead of taking one's pleasure, and doing just what one likes best, which, you know, is so natural, one must live for the good of one's country, love one's wife and children, pay tradesmen, look over accounts, reward merit, and a thousand other of the—the most ridiculous whims; and what nobody—absolutely, nobody does.

General. Intolerable profligacy! I have listened to you, my lord, with grief, vexation, astonishment, and pity! Your mind is degraded; and the more dangerously so, because you believe your worst vices to be your greatest merits. You have had honour,

happiness, and pleasure, of the most perfect kind, within your power; and you have rejected them, to clasp their shadows! To merit pity by misconduct is humiliating; but, by misconduct to incur contempt, is, to a manly spirit, insupportable; and the latter will, I fear, be suddenly your lordship's fate. Did not the remembrance of your noble father affect me, I should look upon your approaching punishment with apathy; because you willfully have plunged to perdition; but, for your lady, if I cannot retrieve, if I cannot save her, I shall mourn indeed!

[Exit.

Lord M. 'Faith! this good general is, like a cuckoo, always in a tune. [Sighs.] He has reason. I have laboured to laugh at my own follies; but the farce is over, the forced jest forgotten, and the sorceress recollection conjures up the ugly phantom disgust. Why, what a child am I! Oh! Lady Morden—Psha! absurd! I will not make myself the butt, and by-word, of my acquaintance. I—I—I will laugh—ha, ha, ha!—laugh at my lady's gallantries. I jealous! I! that have daily made jealousy a standing jest; the criterion of an ill-bred, vulgar mind!—No, no, no.—[Sees Lady Morden and Sir Frederick Fashion coming, and is seized with a suspicious anxiety, which he endeavours to conceal.]

Enter LADY MORDEN in an undress, followed by SIR FREDERICK FASHION.

Lady M. [Speaking as she enters.] No, no; Sir Frederick, you are partial.

Sir F. Not in the least, madam.

Lady M. Yes, you are—Good morrow to your lordship—Yes, you are. I feel, I still retain a leaven of former silly prejudices; but, a little collision, among you people of superior fashion, will soon wear these asperities smooth, and bring them to bear a proper polish.

Sir F. Ah! madam, you have a leaven of something celestial, which we inferior people wonder at, but cannot imitate.

Lord M. [Aside.] So!

Lady M. [Taps Sir Frederick Fashion with her fan.] Fie, flatterer! But you are always saying civil things; and that, I fancy, makes you so agreeable.

Sir F. No, Lady Morden, you wrong me; my tongue is forced to give utterance to the effusions of my heart. By heaven, you are an angel! and I am, involuntarily, obliged to repeat, and repeat, and repeat, that you are an angel! You must not be angry with me, for I cannot help it.

Lady M. No, no; angry! no. Though, I really believe, I do improve—don't I, my lord?

Lord M. Certainly, madam, certainly!

Lady M. Yes, I have discovered that one of my most capital errors, formerly, was being too sensible of my own defects. I find that to wear, on one's countenance, an open and avowed consciousness that one possesses every grace and perfection, is the grand secret of really possessing them; or, at least, of persuading the world one really does, which is the same thing.

Sir F. Your ladyship is very right; nothing can put a face of real fashion out of countenance: the placid features are all fixed.

Lady M. Oh! immovable. Like the owners' names, cut in brass, and nailed to their doors.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! Charming!

Lady M. Do but observe one of our well-bred beaux, at a public assembly, and you will see him enter, plant himself in a spot, elevate his eye-brows,

fix his eyes, half open his mouth, and stand like an automaton, with its head turning on a pivot.

[Mimicking.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! Charming, charming!

Lord M. [Smiling.] But, don't you think this a little tending to the ridiculous, madam?

Lady M. Oh dear! no. Nothing can be ridiculous that's fashionable.

Sir F. Oh! no; impossible!

Lady M. Formerly, I should have blushed, if stared at; but now, I find, the only way is to stare again, without looking—that is, without betraying the least indication of knowing whether one is looking towards the man, or the wall:—thus.

Lord M. [With forced pleasantry.] Ha, ha, ha! Your ladyship is very right: modesty—modesty is an obsolete bugbear.

Lady M. Yes; and, like the—the ghost in the tragedy, has been stared out of doors.

Sir F. Oh! the very Quakers despise it, at present.

Lady M. Yes; 'tis a shabby fellow, whose acquaintance every body wishes to drop. To be sure, I was a most absurd creature,—was not I, my lord?

Lord M. I—upon my honour, madam, I—you—no, no; not absurd—no.

Lady M. Oh, fie! not absurd! Why, do you know, Sir Frederick,—ha, ha, ha!—I—ha, ha, ha! I was downright in love with his lordship.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! In love with his lordship!

Lady M. Ha, ha, ha! Upon my honour, 'tis true, is it not, my lord?

Lord M. Ha, ha, ha! Ye—ye—yes, madam, yes.

Lady M. Thought him the most charming man in the whole world!

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! Is that possible?

Lady M. Why, it—it is scarcely credible; but such is the fact. Nay, I doated on him, and continually reproached myself for wanting power and attractions to obtain my lord's affection. For I never blamed him—ha, ha, ha!—I—ha, ha, ha!—I used to sit whole nights, while my lord was out, watching and weeping; and whole days studying which way I could regain his love.

Sir F. Regain, Lady Morden! Why, was his lordship ever so unfashionable as—as—

Lady M. As to love his wife? Why, yes, really, I—I do believe he was so singular, for—for a whole fortnight.

Sir F. Why,—ha, ha, ha!—Why, were you, Lord Morden?

Lord M. Ha, ha, ha!—I—I—I don't know, sir, what I was. [With chagrin.

Lady M. Nay, don't be out of countenance, my lord! You hear I have the justice to relate my own foibles, as well as your lordship's; and mine—mine were infinitely the greater. It is exceedingly strange, but so fascinated was I, that—ha, ha, ha!—I—ha, ha, ha!—[Suddenly becoming very serious.] I am verily persuaded, I could have died with pleasure to have insured his affection.

Lord M. Ha, ha, ha! [Aside.] I cannot bear it.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! These things are unaccountable.

Lady M. [Resuming her levity.] Aye, one wonders how one could be so weak!—Oh! Sir Frederick, I am going to Christie's. There is a painting I have a mind to purchase: they tell me 'tis very fine.

Sir F. What is the story, madam?

Lady M. The Metamorphosis of Actæon.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! A fashionable subject.

Lady M. Yes! that—that—that is the very reason I wish to have it. Poor Actæon is taken at the

precise moment when the—the change is taking place.

Sir F. In his forehead?

Lady M. Yes. I am going down there, now.—Will you go with me, Sir Frederick?

Sir F. With pleasure, madam. Ha, ha, ha! Poor Actæon!

Lady M. Ay, poor Actæon!—Adieu, my lord!

[Exit with Sir F.]

Lord M. Madam! [Following, stops short.]—'Sdeath! what am I about? Shall I, at last, sink into one of the vulgar, and become jealous?—Wretched about a—oh, no! Actæon! [Striking his forehead.] Sure, all men are idiots, and never know the value of that most inestimable jewel, a lovely and a loyal wife, till in danger of having it purloined.

[Exit.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—The same.

LAPELLE discovered coming from the door of the antichamber, as if he had been listening.

Lap. So, Mr. Irishman by accident! A lady in disguise! That's the riddle, is it? But, hush!

Enter Lord MORDEN and HARRIET.

Lord M. [To *LAPELLE*.] Leave the room. [Exit *LAPELLE*.] I am sorry we were disturbed. Your story, madam, has interested me deeply. Though too reprehensible for the irregularities of my own conduct, I cannot but condemn the licentious libertinism of this Sir Frederick. Indeed, I—I have reason, perhaps, to dread it.

Har. A man of honour, among men, the ruin of woman he thinks as necessary to his fame as to his pleasure; and, like too many others of your cruel sex, holds it no crime to make war upon those who cannot defend themselves.

Lord M. But, what do you propose by this disguise, madam?

Har. There is a contract, which I, indeed, refused, but which he forced upon me, to demonstrate, as he said, the purity of his intentions, wherein he bound himself in a penalty of ten thousand pounds, to marry me within a month; for, in his fictitious raptures, he protested no sum, no proofs, could sufficiently express the ardour and sanctity of his affection.

Lord M. And have you this contract?

Har. Oh! no. The day preceding that on which it was my good fortune to discover his real designs, he asked to see, and artfully exchanged it for a counterfeit copy.

Lord M. This contract you wish to regain?

Har. If possible; or some other unequivocal means of detection.

Lord M. And force him to marry you?

Har. Oh! no. To own the truth, I have a generous and a constant lover, who, perhaps, has been a little ill used.

Lord M. As most generous and constant lovers are.

Har. 'Tis too true. To avenge him, and humble the pride of one who thinks himself too cunning for our whole sex, is my determination.

Lord M. Well, madam, ours is a common cause; but, as we have both been imprudent, and invited

misfortune, we must both endeavour to conceal our true feelings, mask our suspicions, and—Hush! here he comes: and with him a lady, whose principles are as free as his own; but who has had the art so well to conceal her intrigues, and preserve appearances, that she is everywhere received in society. I will introduce you in your assumed character.

Har. Not now; let us withdraw; when he is alone. The fewer eyes that are on me, the less liable I shall be to a discovery. [Ereunt.]

Enter Mrs. MODELY and Sir FREDERICK FASHION.

Mrs. M. Really, Sir Frederick, there is no accounting for the strangeness of your present taste. I pity you; I foresee the downfall of your reputation. What, you, who have vanquished so many elegant coquettes, and driven so many happy lovers mad; you, who were the very soul of our first societies, and whose presence made palpitate the hearts of belles and beaux,—the first with hope and delight, the latter with fear and envy; you, sighing at the feet of a prude, and become the rival of a husband!

Sir F. [Laughing.] Deplorable!

Mrs. M. Have not you, for this month past, buried yourself in Lady Morden's sober society, and dozed over crown whist with her, night after night? Nay, have not you attended her even to church; and there, with a twang, joined the amen chorus of charity-children, paupers, and parish-clerks; sitting with your face drawn as long as its shadow at sun-set; and a look as demure and dismal—

Sir F. As poor Doctor Faustus, waiting for the devil to come and fetch him! Ha, ha, ha!—Granted.

Mrs. M. And what do you think has been said of you, meanwhile, in the polite circles you have abandoned? Your very best friends have been the very first to condemn you.

Sir F. That's natural. When we are guilty of any folly, our very best friends are always the very first to condemn us; to shew they neither advise nor countenance us.

Mrs. M. I thought the gay, young beauty, besieged by pleasures, surrounded by flatteries, who believes herself the goddess she is painted, to fix her wandering fancy, to humble and bring her to a sense of frailty; or, to supplant the happy, the adored lover, while yet the breath is warm that vows eternal constancy; these I imagined were the only achievements worthy Sir Frederick Fashion!

Sir F. These have their *éclat*. But, to initiate a youthful, beauteous wife, who, from her childhood, has been accustomed to say her prayers, believe in virtue, and rank conjugal infidelity among the most heinous of the seven deadly sins; to teach her to doubt, fear, wish, tremble, and venture; to be a witness, afterwards, of her repentance; her tears involuntarily falling, her eyes motionless, her form fixed, and the severe saint transformed to a statue of weeping sin; to read her fall in the public papers; be praised, reproached, admired, and cursed, in every family in England; in short, to be for ever immortalized in the annals of gallantry, and the hero of the tea-table for a whole month,—for this will be no common vulgar wonder,—this were glory equal to my ambition! And, this glory I am determined to acquire; nay, it is already within my grasp. This day, or, rather, this night, shall I gain the greatest of all my victories!

Mrs. M. Insulting!

Sir F. Nay, my dear Mrs. Modely, you know my

enthusiasm, and must not take exceptions; nor can I, surely, be blamed. Lady Morden is a concealed hoard of native sweets, that delights the senses; while the made-up beauties we commonly meet, like artificial flowers, are all shew, and no fragrance.

Mrs. M. Raptures!

Sir F. Inferior to her, in form and perfection, as the Venus of a Dutch image-hawker to the genuine Grecian antique!

Mrs. M. It matters not wasting your rhetoric on this topic; for I will not give my consent to your pursuing this affair any further, Sir Frederick.

Sir F. You will not?

Mrs. M. I will not.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! Don't provoke me, my dear Mrs. Modely; don't provoke me!

Mrs. M. Nay, no threatening.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! Well, to arms, then; war is the word.

Mrs. M. The choice remains with you.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha!

Mrs. M. Lady Morden is my relation; and, though I despise prudery, and know the world,—*Sir F.* [*Aside.*] That you do, indeed.

Mrs. M. Yet, you can hardly suppose I will silently acquiesce in her ruin.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! You—you forget yourself, dear madam: these qualms would do vastly well, in some places; but, to me—

Mrs. M. And, why not to you, sir? Though I do allow myself a little liberty of conscience,—

Sir F. [*Aside.*] Not a little.

Mrs. M. And, though you—you know I do, must I—In short, I have another favourite project, which I am determined not to give up.

Sir F. [*Aside.*] Oh, ho! But, it will be best to avoid a rupture.—May I ask what this favourite project may be?

Mrs. M. You know the public affront General Burland gave me, last winter; and you cannot suppose I have forgotten it.

Sir F. [*Aside.*] No; I know you better.—Oh! the General is an eccentric mortal; licensed to say anything; and, instead of being listened to, is laughed at.

Mrs. M. Yes; but I am determined he shall be punished.

Sir F. Which way?

Mrs. M. His daughter Emily is a pretty, simple girl; I mean, untutored in the world.

Sir F. [*Conceiving her design.*] True.

Mrs. M. To see her married to a man of fashion, would, at least, break his heart.

Sir F. [*Laughs.*] Infallibly!

Mrs. M. Your fortune, I believe, Sir Frederick, like your family seat, begins to want repairs; and she is a rich heiress, with twenty thousand pounds at her own disposal, besides the General's estate, which must be hers—Why do you laugh so?

Sir F. Oh! the delights of anticipation!

Mrs. M. An—an—anticipation!

Sir F. [*Still laughing.*] It is a part of my plan to carry her off,—I mean, to let her carry me off this very night.

Mrs. M. Who, Emily?

Sir F. Emily.

Mrs. M. To-night?

Sir F. This active, this important, this blissful night!

Mrs. M. Lend me your *eau de luce*, you divel!

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! This surprise from you, Mrs. Modely, is the supreme of panegyric.

Mrs. M. And have you made any advances to Emily?

Sir F. Yes, yes,—ha, ha, ha!—I made advances to her, and she made advances to me. The conquest was too easy. Were it not for the circumstance of the elopement, which will give the sauce a flavour the food wants, it would scarcely invite my appetite.

Mrs. M. But, Lady Morden—

Sir F. Is mine, whenever I please to make my final attack. I am no bad orator, in general; but, in company with her, I seem inspired; am, absolutely, astonished at my own eloquence; nay, I have several times spoken with such energy, enthusiasm, and momentary conviction, in praise of virtue, that I have, actually, been in imminent danger of making a convert of myself.

Mrs. M. In praise of virtue?

Sir F. In praise of virtue. There is no making one of these virtuous visionaries rational, but by flattering their bigotry, and pretending to adore their idol; by pursuing which method, I have inured her to, and made her as familiar with, what is prudishly called vice and vicious sentiments, as she is with her own thoughts.

Mrs. M. Yes, yes, vile rake!—But, remember, I'll have no concern in this affair. I—

Sir F. Oh, pooh!—Ay, ay, that is understood. You wink, and know nothing of the matter.

Mrs. M. Nay, but, I here publicly protest against your proceedings.—

Sir F. [*Aside.*] And will privately do your utmost to promote them.

Mrs. M. I exclaim against such licentiousness.

Sir F. I know you do. But, if you are thus tender of her ladyship's reputation, you will feel no repugnance at assisting me to irritate his lordship's sensibility.

Mrs. M. What do you mean?

Sir F. To confess the truth, I am a little piqued at Lord Morden's want of feeling. I wish I could make him jealous.

Mrs. M. Jealous! Fie! he is too well bred.

Sir F. That's unfortunate. The antics of a jealous husband add highly to the enjoyment as well as the reputation of an amour. The poor man is so injured, so enraged, so distressed, so industrious to publish his calamity, and is so sincerely pitied and laughed at—must, positively, rouse my lord to a sense of his misfortune, or it will want poignancy: a turtle-feast without French wines!

Mrs. M. Well, should I find any opportunity of aiding you—

Sir F. Ay, ay; I have no doubt of your zeal in the cause.

Mrs. M. Nay, but, don't mistake me: I only mean as far as teasing his lordship is concerned.

Sir F. Oh! certainly, certainly.

Mrs. M. If his lordship had any real cause for jealousy, I should, for Lady Morden's sake, be the—the—the most miserable creature upon earth.

Sir F. To be sure.

Mrs. M. But, you seem mighty secure of your conquest.

Sir F. I am no novice; I can tell when a woman's time is come. Besides, her ladyship has granted me a rendezvous.

Mrs. M. When?

Sir F. Why, this very evening, to be sure.

Mrs. M. Where?

Sir F. Here, in this very house.

Mrs. M. Since you are so very certain, how came you not to take advantage of being alone with her after the rout?

Sir F. I did: that is, should have done, had we not been interrupted.

Mrs. M. By whom?

Sir F. A new footman; an odd kind of—Oh! here the very fellow comes.

Enter GABRIEL, loitering and leering.

Mrs. M. What does the rude lout leer at?

Sir F. Country curiosity.

Gab. [Attempting to go once or twice, then pausing and turning back.] Did—did—did your ladyship's honour call?

Mrs. M. No.

Gab. I—thought, mayhap, you wanted my lord.

Mrs. M. What should I want you for, think you, friend?

Gab. Nay, marry, that's more nur I can tell.

Sir F. What is your name?

Gab. Gabriel, an't please you. In my last place, they used to call me the Sly Simpleton.

Mrs. M. And who did you live with last?

Gab. Why, you an' heard of my lady's brother, the rich nabob, that be just come over fro' the Eastern Indies?

Sir F. Mr. Wilmot?

Gab. Ees; I do come fro' his estate, out o' Staffordshire.

Sir F. You are part of the live stock?

Gab. Anan!

Mrs. M. Were you in his service?

Gab. N—e—es.

Mrs. M. How long?

Gab. Better nur a week.

Sir F. What sort of a man is he?

Gab. Humph! A be well enough when a's pleased; though I canno' say as I do like him much for a measter.

Mrs. M. Why so?

Gab. Because a'll neither let a servant tell lies nor take money.

Sir F. Indeed!

Gab. No, a wo'not; whereof, here, I find, I can no' please my lady, if I do no' tell lies; and, I am sure, I canno' please myself if I do no' take money.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha!

Mrs. M. Ha, ha, ha! So, he did not suit you?

Gab. No; a's too high flown, as 'twere, in's notions.

Sir F. Which way?

Gab. A makes a great case o' what a calls friendship, and honour, and honesty, and such like; and, you know, if a poor sarvant gi's heed to that there sort o' stuff, a's not likely to get rich.

Mrs. M. Upon my word!

Sir F. So, Mr. Wilmot's head is full of such nonsense, is it?

Gab. Oh! a's brimful o' such nonsense, and so were I, while I lived wi' he; which wur the reason, as I do suppose, that they called me a simpleton; but I am not so simple as folk think me.

Sir F. [To Mrs. M.] My dear Mrs. Modely, leave me for a moment with this fellow. You'll be upon the watch, to throw in any hints or aids you happen to see necessary, and apropos.

Mrs. M. Yes, yes; that is, for Emily and the elopement: but be cautious; a defeat would turn the tables upon us, and make us the jest of the whole town, friends and enemies.

Sir F. How can you fear it?

Mrs. M. Nay, I do not; I know my sex, and I know you. [Exit.]

Sir F. Gabriel is your name, you say?

Gab. Ees.

Sir F. You seem a sharp kind of fellow, and one that understands his own interest.

Gab. Ees; I understand my own interest.

Sir F. Are you, if occasion should offer, willing to do me a piece of service?

Gab. Humph! What will you gi' me.

Sir F. I see you are a sensible fellow, and come to the point at once.

Gab. Ees; I love to come to the point.

Sir F. And you would not betray me to anybody?

Gab. Why, not unless somebody were to pay me better.

Sir F. Upon my honour, thou art the honestest rogue I ever met with.

Gab. Ees, that I be.

Sir F. Here, here is money for thee; and, observe, as thou seemest perfectly to understand a bargain, thou shalt have more in proportion to thy fidelity and capacity; and, moreover—Canst thou read and write?

Gab. Ees.

Sir F. Well, then, be faithful, and I will get thee a place in the excise: and now, observe, I—I have a very great respect and friendship for your lady.

Gab. Ees, ees; as we sen i' the country, you have more nur a month's mind to her.

Sir F. How, sirrah! Dare you suppose I have?

Gab. Nay, now, belike you think me a simpleton, too. Your great folk supposen a sarvant has neither ears nor eyes; but, lord! they are mistaken: ecod! their ears are often plaguy long. What, mun, I wur no' so fast asleep as you thought me, i'the passage, this morning.

Sir F. [Aside.] The rascal!

Gab. Belike, because I be a country lad, you reckon I should think it strange, like, that one gentleman should teak a liking to another gentleman's wife; but, lord! I know well enough that's nought here. I ha' learned a little o' what's what.

Sir F. Nay, friend Gabriel, I am more and more convinced thou art a clever, acute fellow.

Gab. Lord! mun, your worship need no' be so shy, like; you do know, you ha' promised me a place; an' places that are no' bought one way, mun be bought another.

Sir F. Well said, friend Gabriel!

Gab. An' as for keeping o' family secrets, do no' you fear me; because why, I do find they be a sarvant's best parkisites; for, an' it wur no' for family secrets, how should so many poor country Johns so very soon become gentlemen?

Sir F. This fellow's thoughts run all in one channel; his ruling passion is money; the love of that sharpens his intellects, and opens his eyes and ears.

[Aside.] Well, Gabriel, you shall find me generous as a prince, provided—here's somebody coming—go into the next room; I'll speak with you presently.

Gab. Ees; but I do hope your honour's worship wanna' forget the place, like?

Sir F. Never fear.

[Exit GABRIEL.]

Enter EMILY.

My angel! my life!—

Emily. Hush! My papa is coming, and wants to take me away with him home.

Sir F. Away!

Emily. Yes; hush! take no notice.

Enter GENERAL BURLAND.

General. Come, Emily, are you ready?

Emily. I am always ready and happy to obey my

dear papa; but surely, sir, you will not let me leave Lady Morden without so much as bidding her adieu?

General. I'll write a card of thanks to her ladyship, with your respects, and as many compliments as you please.

Emily. Nay, but, dear sir, consider; it will seem too abrupt. Lady Morden is so good, so kind! I would not give her a moment's pain for the world. Besides, I have so many obligations to her ladyship.

General. I begin to be afraid, child, lest you should have too many obligations to her ladyship.

Emily. Let me only stay to-night, and to-morrow morning I will go with all my heart, and as early as you please, if you desire me.

Sir F. I protest she is bantering him. Oh! the charming, malicious little angel! [*Aside.*] Ay, General, let Emily stay to-night; I will answer for her she will go to-morrow morning as soon as you please, if you desire her.

General. You will answer for her!

Sir F. Yes; won't you permit me, Emily?

Emily. My dear papa knows I never attempt to break my word.

General. Yes, my child, I do know you have, hitherto, been unspotted and pure as the morn-blown lily; and my anxiety that you should remain so makes me thus desirous of your quitting this house. When I brought you here, these doors did not so easily fly open at the approach of such fine, such accomplished gentlemen, as Sir Frederick Fashion.

Sir F. [*Aside.*] By heavens, he anticipates his misfortunes!

Emily. [*Takes the General's hand.*] Do, my dear papa, consent only for to-day; I don't ask any longer.

Sir F. [*Aside.*] I could hug the charming hypocrite!

General. Well, well, Emmy; you know I never deny you anything; for, indeed, you never yet asked anything that could give the most anxious and affectionate father a moment's pain.

Emily. [*Kisses his hand.*] I thank you, dear, dear sir; you have made me happy.

Sir F. By my life, I shall find this a much more agreeable affair than I hoped. [*Aside.*] Yes, General—you are a very good papa.

General. You think so?

Sir F. Yes, I do, upon my soul!

General. Then I am what you, I am afraid, will never be. [*Exit with EMILY.*]

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! He does not suspect we are so soon to be so nearly related. Ha, ha, ha! I should like to be present when he first hears the news. He—he will foam and bounce like a cork from a bottle of champagne.

Enter Lord MORDEN.

Lord M. Well, Sir Frederick, is her ladyship returned?

Sir F. Yes; she is dressing for dinner. She bought the Actæon.

Lord M. She did?

Sir F. Oh! yes. She is a charming woman! the eyes of the whole room were upon her. There were some smart things said: one observed a likeness between me and Actæon; another thought it bore a far greater resemblance to your lordship.

Lord M. Ha, ha, ha! About the head, no doubt?

Sir F. For my part, I said I thought the likeness was very capable of being improved.

Lord M. You were very kind.

Sir F. Oh! pray, have you heard that Sir Peter Fry is going to sue for a bill of divorce?

Lord M. No.

Sir F. 'Tis very true. I should not have suspected Sir Peter of such vulgar revenge; but, I find, our married men of fashion are far less liberal in their sentiments than the ladies.

Lord M. Ha, ha, ha! Yes; they often want a woman's philosophy in these matters.

Sir F. Yes; they are wasps that fly and feed wherever they can find honey, but retain a sting for any marauder that shall approach their nests.

Lord M. Somewhat selfish, I own.

Sir F. Much more liable to be jealous than the women; and jealousy, your lordship knows, is the most ridiculous, ill-bred, contemptible thing in nature.

Lord M. Ha, ha, ha! Yes, yes. Ha, ha, ha! Perfectly despicable.

Sir F. Oh! nothing so laughable as the vagaries of a jealous husband: no creature suffers so much, or is pitied so little.

Lord M. Ha, ha, ha! Ay, the thefts of love are applauded, not punished.

Sir F. Yes; and the poor, robbed husband, watchman-like, twirls his rattle, alarms the neighbourhood, and collects assistants, who never fail to aid the thief, and laugh at him and his loss.

Lord M. Ye—ye—yes.—Ha, ha, ha!—A husband is a very strange, ignominious animal.

Sir F. A jealous husband!

Lord M. A paltry, mechanical—

Sir F. Without an idea of life or manners!

Lord M. Ha, ha, ha! Very true. But come with me; there's a young gentleman in the antichamber, of a good family, who wishes to be introduced to you. A very pretty fellow! Has an ambition to do something which shall give him *éclat*, and is, therefore, desirous of being known to us men of the world.

Sir F. Well, I am your's for a few minutes; but I must attend Lady Morden at her toilette presently. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Same.*

Enter Lord MORDEN, and GABRIEL introducing General BURLAND.

General. Well, my lord, is Lady Morden to be seen?

Gab. Oh! ees, your worship, hur will be, anon; for yonder is Sir Frederick, helping the maid to dress her ladyship.

General. Helping to dress her ladyship?

Gab. Ees; they sent me for some milk of roses, here; [*shows the phial*] and would you believe it? I wur sich an oaf, I had never heard before that roses gave milk.

General. Ah! you are some half-taught country booby.

Gab. Why, so I do find; for, in the country, the folk do only clear-starch their aprons and ruffles; but here, ecod! they clear-starch their faces.

General. Well, go, carry in your milk; and informing her ladyship I am waiting her leisure. [*Laughing within.*]

Gab. Ecod! here they all come, your honour; and rare and merry they be! but your Londoners do lead a rare ranting life! [*Exit.*]

Enter Sir Frederick FASHION, Lady MORDEN, and Mrs. MODELY.

Lady M. Ha, ha, ha! Oh! you whimsical toad, you! Ha, ha, ha! You have half-killed me! I am glad to see you in town, General. We have been drawing the characters of our acquaintance! and Mrs. Modely and Sir Frederick Fashion have been so droll and so satirical!

General. Ah! no doubt.

Lady M. I could not have thought there was so much satisfaction in remembering the failings of one's friends.

Mrs. M. Oh! it makes one so cheerful!

Sir F. And keeps one so charmingly in countenance!

General. [*Aside.*] Which you stand in very great need of.

Sir F. I assure your ladyship, you have an exquisite turn for satire; you cut with excessive keenness, and yet, with a dexterity that makes the very patient tingle with pleasure.

Lady M. You are partial.

Lord M. I think you had not much company last night.

Lady M. Your lordship was so well-bred, and made your visit so short, else you would have found a great deal.

Mrs. M. Oh! yes, they poured in from all quarters.

Sir F. Sir Nathan Neaptide, the yellow admiral, came.

Lord M. An agreeable guest!

Lady M. Oh! rude as his own boatswain.

Mrs. M. That makes him so much respected.

Lady M. Yes; like a chimney-sweeper in a crowd, he makes his way by being dirty.

Sir F. I protest, your ladyship is prodigiously brilliant to-day.

Lady M. No, no; though I am a vast admirer of wit. A person of wit has one very peculiar and enviable advantage.

Lord M. What is that, madam?

Lady M. Long life.

Lord M. Long life!

Lady M. Yes; a wit has more ideas, consequently lives longer, in one hour, than a fool in seven years.

Sir F. For which reason, your ladyship is already three times the age of old Parr.

Lady M. Dear Sir Frederick, that is so gallant!

Mrs. M. And so new!

General. Why, yes; this is the first time I ever heard a lady told she was old, and receive it as a compliment.

Lord M. But, your visitors—Who had you next?

Mrs. M. There was Sir Jeremy Still-life.

Lady M. And his bouquet. He primmied himself up in one corner, and seemed to think that, like the image of a saint on a holyday, he was powdered and painted on purpose to be adored.

Mrs. M. He was not singular in that.

Lady M. Oh! no; there was a whole row of them, that, like jars and mandarins on a mantel-piece, looked vastly ornamental, and served charmingly to fill up vacancies.

General. Every trifle has its use.

Mrs. M. Lord Index came, and stalked round the rooms, as if he had been loaded with the wisdom of his whole library.

Lady M. Yes, he looked as solemn as a monkey after mischief.

Sir F. [*Mimicking.*] And drew up his face in form, like a writ of inquiry into damages, with a "Take notice" engrossed in front.

Lord M. He would not stay late, for his lordship is as careful of his health as he is vain of his under-standing.

Lady M. And yet, he is but a kind of rush-candle; he may glimmer a long while, but will never give much light.

Lord M. It seems strange that your people who have acquired a little knowledge, always think they possess an infinite deal; while those who are the best informed appear continually conscious of wanting more.

General. Not strange at all, my lord. Amassing knowledge is like viewing the sun through a telescope; you enlarge the object, but you destroy the glare.

Mrs. M. Did not you observe that, notwithstanding the pearl-powder, my Lady Bloom's neck looked remarkably fallow?

Lord M. Oh! as a Jew's face under a green umbrella.

Sir F. The widow Twinkle, as usual, talked a vast deal about reputation.

Lady M. One is apt to admire a thing one wants.

Lord M. She always takes infinite pains to place her reputation, like broken china in a beaufet, with the best side outward.

Lady M. She may plaster and cement, but will never bring it to bear handling.

Mrs. M. Mr. Pensive, the poet, came in, too.

Sir F. Yes; but as nobody took any notice of him, he presently went out again.

General. A great proof of his good sense.

Sir F. Your poets and sheriffs' officers are a kind of people everybody has heard of, but that nobody chooses to know.

Lady M. Or, if you are under the necessity of receiving a private call from them, now and then, it would be quite disgraceful to be seen with them in public.

Lord M. Your ladyship used to be very partial to Mr. Pensive.

General. Yes; her ladyship used to have many singular partialities. She was once partial to merit and virtue wherever she found them; she had a partiality for order, economy, and domestic duties, likewise; nay, she even went so far as to cherish a partiality for your lordship.

Lady M. Ha, ha, ha! Odious partialities!

Sir F. and Mrs. M. Ha, ha, ha!

Lord M. Ma—ma—madam! Odious?

Lady M. Ha, ha, ha! To be sure, sir: is it not odious to be unfashionable?

Mrs. M. Certainly. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! I protest, General, you are too severe.

General. Am I?

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! You are, really.

Mrs. M. Ha, ha, ha! Yes, you are, indeed, General.

Lady M. Ha, ha! Yes, yes; you absolutely are.

General. Humph! Why don't you laugh, my lord?

Lord M. I do. Ha, ha, ha! I—I do, General: though, as to severity, I own I—I don't see it in that light.

General. No?

Lord M. No; I cannot accuse myself of any fault; unless the love of pleasure be one.

General. Ha! And your catalogue of pleasures, I fancy, is pretty extensive.

Lord M. Not half so extensive as one could wish.

General. A dice-box, for instance, is one.

Lord M. A very principal one.

Lady M. My short experience hardly entitles me

to venture an opinion, but I find a wonderful similarity between gaming and a cold bath: you have a—*a tremor, a—*a hesitation, at first; but, having once plunged in, you are thrown into the most delightful glow!

Lord M. Oh! an ardent tingling—

General. Beware, sir, that a shivering fit does not succeed.

[*Mrs. M. and Lady M. laugh.*]

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! You really have no mercy, General. You hit so often, and so hard, egad!

Lord M. I'm vastly happy to see you all so merry, though, upon my soul, I can't find out the jest.

General. That is strange, when you yourself make it.

Lady M. Not in the least: there is many a professed joker who does not understand his own wit.

General. I am tired, disgusted with this mixture of folly and wickedness. [*Aside.*] May I intrude so far upon your ladyship as to obtain half an hour's private conversation?

Lady M. Why, upon my word, General, I—I have so many affairs on hand to-day, that I must beg you to excuse me: to-morrow you may command me, for as long as you please.

Sir F. Ay, do, General, have the complaisance to wait till to-morrow, when my lady will be more at leisure.

General. Well, madam, I did not use to be thought an intruder by your ladyship, and will not begin now; but since I cannot have the honour to tell you privately, I still think myself bound to do my duty, and inform you publicly, you are in the hands of sharpers, "who will filch from you your good name;" nay, perhaps, you are on the very eve of destruction. Oh, guile!—Can it be?—My heart is full!—*Lady Morden*, I have no utterance; but if there be such a thing as sympathy, some small portion of the horror I now feel will communicate itself to you.

[*Exit.*]

Lady M. The—*General* has the strangest way of affecting and harrowing—Has not he, my lord?

Lord M. Ye—yes; upon my honour, he—he—I don't know how—

[*Putting his hand to his heart.*]

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! The *General*—the *General* is a true *Don Quixote*. He first creates giants, and then kills them.

Lady M. Yes. Ha, ha, ha! His head is full of—of windmills to grind moral sentiments. But, come, *Mrs. Modely*, you have not seen my new purchase.

Mrs. M. Oh! what, the *Actæon*?

Sir F. Is it come home?

Lady M. Oh! yes; I could not rest till I had it.

Mrs. M. Come, my lord; I long to see it.

Lady M. The tints are charming!

Mrs. M. So I hear. The grouping excellent!

Lady M. Oh, delightful!

[*Eseunt Lord and Lady M. and Mrs. M.*]

Enter HARRIET.

Har. Hist! *Sir Frederick*!

Sir F. [*Turning back.*] Oh! well, sir, how proceeds your amour? I thought you had been busied in schemes about that affair.

Har. Faith! and I am so; but I don't believe I can succeed without your assistance.

Sir F. Perhaps you are a little scrupulous about the means.

Har. Me! Indeed, and you have mistaken your man. Why, you don't think, *Sir Frederick*, I regard the complaints or tears of women? You and I, sure, seek our own gratification, not their happiness;

for, if the love of man sought only the happiness of woman, 'faith! there would be nothing but dull marriages, fond husbands, and legitimate children; and we should lose all the satisfaction of seducing wives, ruining daughters, and of bringing so many fine, sweet, innocent craters upon the town.

Sir F. Oh! it would strangely reverse the order of things.

Har. Order! 'Faith! and it would occasion a blessed confusion in *Doctors' Commons*.

Sir F. For my part, present pleasure is my pursuit; I never disturb my imagination with dismal conjectures on future consequences.

Har. 'Faith! and you are right: for, as you say, it would be dismal enough to trace these consequences into—into streets, and hospitals, and places that the imagination sickens at.

Sir F. Marriage, you say, is not your object?

Har. Oh! no; I don't like that said matrimony music.

Sir F. A mortgaged rent-roll, only, can make it supportable. A wife is like a child's whistle, which every breath can play upon, but which no art can make melodious.

Har. 'Faith! and you have very proper notions about wives. So, when the dare crater gave a marriage hint, why, I told her a dale of boister, consarnin an old cross father, and being under age, and that I could not marry these three months. For, you know, one does not stand for a good double handful of oaths and lies, when one wants to ruin a sweet, kind angel that one loves.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! Suppose you were to make a sham marriage.

Har. A sham marriage! 'Faith! and I would make that, if there were not a parcel of low rascals that make balsters.

Sir F. Psha! That's a paltry, mechanical fear.

Har. But you—you were telling me, you know, of a scheme—

Sir F. Oh! the contract.

Har. Ay, 'faith! the contract. You said you would shew it me.

Sir F. I will; I have brought it for that purpose. I lately found it an efficacious expedient.

Har. And successful?

Sir F. Would have been, but for an unlucky accident.

Har. But there is one small impediment.

Sir F. What is that?

Har. Westminster-hall.

Sir F. Psha! A house of cards.

Har. Oh! and that it is; for 'tis supported by knaves, and full of tricks.

Sir F. Here—here is the very contract I myself gave.

[*Producing it.*]

Har. Ay!

Sir F. And here a counterfeit copy, with a few slight, but essential, alterations.

Har. I understand!—to put the charge upon her. [*With an anxious eye continually toward the contract.*]

Sir F. Which you may easily take, or make, an opportunity to do.

Har. Will, then, find them both to me; and, 'faith! you shall see fine diversion.

Sir F. No, I—I'll have them copied for you. This is signed and sealed.

Har. Arrah! what of that! Ha, ha, ha! Sure, you are not afraid you would be obliged to marry a man?

Sir F. No; the only danger in trusting them to you is that of losing them. And even then, there

could be no ill consequence, except by falling into the hands of one who is far enough from London.

Har. Ay, ay; let me have them. I give you my honour to make a proper use of them.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! You are a promising youth, and it would be a pity such talents should be baulked, so, here—here.

Har. Promising! Oh, 'faith! and I hope to surprise even you, yourself. You shall presently hear of the success of your schemes. *[Exit.]*

Enter GABRIEL.

Gab. *[Looking after HARRIET.]* There a' goes! Hop, step, and jump! Ecod! she does it fealty!

Sir F. She! What's that you say?

Gab. How a' skipped into the carriage! There! Off it drives! Whur! Rattling away!

Sir F. What does the fellow mean? 'Sdeath!—Sure—Who are you talking of?

Gab. Why, of that Irish gentleman-like lady.

Sir F. Lady!

Gab. I wur coming straight to tell you. There is a plot, mun, against you.

Sir F. A plot! *[Runs toward the door.]*

Gab. Nay, you are too late; a's gone; three streets off by this.

Sir F. Confusion!

Gab. Ees, she means to breed a confusion.

Sir F. Who?

Gab. Miss Harriet.

Sir F. Harriet! By heavens, 'tis she!

Gab. Ees, 'tis she.

Sir F. Secure fool! Ineffable idiot! And, yet, in that disguise, Lucifer himself could not have discovered her. And who told you?

Gab. Why, his worship's gentleman, Mr. Lapelle; a' o'erheard her tell my lord aw her plot.

Sir F. What course shall I take?

Gab. Suppose I wur to watch, and, when she comes back, let your worship know?

Sir F. Do so; but be very careful, and be very secret.

Gab. Ees, ees; I remember the place, mun.

Sir F. Away; be watchful, and be rewarded. *[Exit GABRIEL.]* This is a thunder-stroke! Lord Morden in the plot, too! It will come to Lady Morden's ears; I shall be blown, all my plans disconcerted, myself laughed at, and my reputation eternally ruined. *[Walks about.]* Ha! There is one way to prevent the mischief yet:—by heavens, it cannot fail!—I will go to Lady Morden, and, with feigned penitence, tell her every circumstance myself; only making her believe I knew Harriet when I returned the contract. She will admire my candour, think my contrition real, and thus will I turn this seeming disaster to excellent account, by making it an additional proof of sincerity and affection for her ladyship. Dear wit, I thank thee! thou never forsakest me at a crisis! Indeed, my lord, and my young lady! Ah, ha! But you shall find one, perhaps, who can plot as deeply as yourselves. *[Exit.]*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The same.*

Enter Lord MORDEN and LAPELLE.

Lord M. Into what an abyss of evils have I

plunged through inexperience, want of reflection, and an absurd imitation of fashionable follies!—Lapelle!

Lap. My lord?

Lord M. Is the young—young gentleman returned?

Lap. No, my lord.

Lord M. I am on the rack! The liberties in which Lady Morden permits this Sir Frederick are insupportable! Unable to be silent, and ashamed to complain, I am tortured by contending passions. *[Aside.]* Lapelle, let me know the instant the—

the young gentleman comes back.

Lap. Yes, my lord. *[Going.]*

Lord M. Stay!—What if I were to inform Lady Morden of this affair? Surely, she could not shut her eyes against such a palpable, such an unprincipled attempt at seduction! *[Aside.]* Go, and tell your lady I beg to speak with her a moment. *[Exit LAPELLE.]* What an absurd being is man! Not a fortnight ago, Lady Morden was totally indifferent to me; and now I am in danger of losing her, I find I love her—to distraction love her. Yet to sink into a civil, sober, domestic man; to become the standing jest of all those high-spirited companions whose society I have courted, whose maxims I have pretended to admire—

Enter Lady MORDEN.

Lady M. So, my lord, in melancholy contemplation; and at home, too!

Lord M. Yes, madam.

Lady M. Lud! I wonder how your lordship can endure home! Of all places in the world, home is, certainly, the most disagreeable.

Lord M. Did not your ladyship meet Lapelle?

Lady M. Lapelle! No.

Lord M. I—I wished to see your ladyship.

Lady M. To see me! What can your lordship possibly want with me?

Lord M. To speak to you.

Lady M. Speak to me! You perfectly surprise me.

Lord M. On a subject which I—I scarcely know how to begin.

Lady M. Ha, ha, ha! What can have made your lordship so serious? Ha, ha, ha! I declare, I never saw you look so grave before. This must be some very important secret, that can occasion your lordship to look so very dismal. I vow, I am quite impatient. Come, my lord, why don't you proceed?

Lord M. I—I begin to find I have been very foolish.

Lady M. Ha, ha, ha! Is that the secret?

Lord M. I—I feel I have been to blame.

Lady M. To blame, my lord! How? Which way? Or, if you have, how does it concern me?

Lord M. Your ladyship used to think our interests inseparable.

Lady M. For which your lordship always laughed at me; and, I freely own, I was a very silly, out-of-the-way woman.

Lord M. Perhaps not, madam.

Lady M. How, my lord! not? Your lordship is very polite, but you know very well I was.

Lord M. Lady Morden, you once loved me. You yourself, not long since, kindly owned you did.

Lady M. Very true, my lord; but why—why, now, should you reproach me with my follies?

Lord M. I feel the severity of your reproof; it is no more than I merit.

Lady M. *[Affecting surprise.]* I really don't understand your lordship; I—I meant no reproof. We loved each other as long as it was agreeable to

us, and if my passion happened to outlast your lordship's, that was none of your fault. These are the principles of all rational people, you know, my lord.

Lord M. They are principles, madam, that from my soul I wish I had never heard.

Lady M. Upon my honour, you astonish me. Have not I learnt them from yourself?

Lord M. Unjustifiable, madam, as my conduct may have been, I never carried them to the same excess as Sir Frederick Fashion.

Lady M. Sir Frederick Fashion, may, perhaps, be as capable of reformation as your lordship.

Lord M. Your ladyship may—may be partial.

Lady M. Partial!

Lord M. Who so great a libertine as this Sir Frederick?

Lady M. Has been. He has candour enough to confess it.

Lord M. Has been! Madam, there exists a present proof of deliberate seduction: an injured lady—

Lady M. Oh! what, the—the croat?

Lord M. Madam!

Lady M. What's your surprise, my lord? Don't I tell you he has confessed all his follies to me?

Lord M. But, madam, did he mention the contract?

Lady M. To be sure: and the counterfeit copy; with the generous manner in which he, just now, returned Harriet the original; though she thought he did not know her.

Lord M. I am petrified! Lady Morden, I perceive I have lost your affections.

Lady M. My lord, I am above dissimulation. Yes, I own I have a passion, too permanent to be shaken; and the satisfaction of a self-assurance that he who, at present, possesses my heart, will not so soon be weary of me as he who had it before.

Lord M. You cut me to the soul! Did you know what I feel—

Lady M. Feel, my lord! Ha, ha, ha! Oh, fie! Your lordship is a man of fashion, not of feeling.

Lord M. Hovering mischief, madam, has quickened benumbed nature in me. [*Kneels and takes her hand.*] Oh! let me conjure you, Lady Morden, to reflect on your present situation! I have conducted you to the horrid precipice of guilt and destruction! Oh! suffer me to save, to snatch you from danger. [*Lady M. laughs.*]

Enter Sir FREDERICK FASHION.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! How now, my lord! Ha, ha, ha! Making love to your wife?

Lady M. Ha, ha, ha! Oh! Sir Frederick, if you had but come a little sooner, you would have heard the most delightful morality.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! Morality from my lord?

Lord M. Yes, sir, morality from my lord.

Lady M. Ha, ha, ha! Nay, I assure you, he is quite serious. [*Retires coquetting with Sir F.*]

Lord M. Rejected, ridiculed, despised! their sport, their scorn! their subject for open sarcasm, laughter, and contempt! Oh, insupportable! [*Exit.*]

Lady M. Ha, ha, ha! My lord has a mind to fall in love with me once more.

Sir F. Nobody but my lord, madam, would ever have ceased a moment to love you.

Lady M. Well, Sir Frederick, and may I, then, at last, flatter myself I have found that sympathy of soul for which I have so long sighed?

Sir F. Alas! madam, I dare not rank myself your equal; no, I dare not. There is such infinitude of perfection in your every thought, look, and expression, that to merit you, were to be, as you are, some-

thing celestial. Yet, such virtue as mere humanity may arrive at, I will exhaust nature with endeavours, and weary heaven with prayers, to acquire.

Lady M. There is, surely, some secret charm in your words.

Sir F. Did I think the gratification of any sinister passion influenced my present conduct; were it not my hope to remove you from the cold embrace of satiated apathy, to the sweet and endless transports of love, founded on, permit me to say, on a congeniality of soul and sentiment; did I not feel an innate conviction that there already subsists between us a tie of the most indissoluble nature, an immaculate tie, a marriage of the mind, superior infinitely to all human institutions; did I not think and feel thus, I would instantly, dreadful as the image is to thought, renounce that heaven which I have had the presumption to contemplate, nay, aspire to possess.

Lady M. And if, after all this, you should prove false, Sir Frederick?

Sir F. False, madam! Oh! let me conjure you to inflict any punishment on me, rather than that of suspecting my sincerity. Thus, kneeling, on this angelic hand, I vow—

Enter Lord MORDEN.

Lord M. I cannot resist the impulse which—How, Sir Frederick!

Sir F. [*Rising.*] My lord?

Lord M. So, madam—

Lady M. So, sir!

Lord M. You can listen to morality from others, madam, if not from me.

Lady M. Oh! I—I have no dislike to a sermon when I admire the preacher.

Lord M. Madam, if you have no respect for my honour, you might have some for my feelings, and—

Lady M. A—a—hold, hold, my lord! You are beginning your discourse again; but I am in a hurry, and will hear you draw your conclusions some other opportunity.

Lord M. Madam—

Lady M. Nay, I will, upon my honour. [*Exit.*]

Lord M. Hold! sir, a word with you, if you please.

Sir F. With me, my lord?

Lord M. With you.

Sir F. Willingly. Your lordship seems in so pleasant a humour—

Lord M. Sir, I am in a humour neither to be trifled with nor sneered at.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! I can assure you—Ha, ha, ha!—your lordship, no man is happier to see you in your present temper than I am.

Lord M. Look you! Sir Frederick, you and I have been too long of the same school for me to be ignorant of your principles; but I begin to detest them. [*Sir F. laughs.*] They are now, at this very moment, rending my heart. They have planted a nest of adders in my bosom. In short, sir, you must forbear your visits to Lady Morden.

Sir F. My lord—

Lord M. I am serious—determined.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! When her ladyship gives me this advice, it may, perhaps, be followed.

Lord M. It must and shall be followed, sir, when I give it. [*Sir F. laughs.*] Ridiculous as it may appear to you, and such as you, I feel and will assert a husband's rights.

Sir F. Ha, ha, ha! I congratulate your lordship on the keenness and delicacy of your feelings; they give me great pleasure; infinite pleasure, upon my soul. Ha, ha, ha! As to a husband's rights, I have

no doubt you will very shortly be in full possession of them all.

Lord M. Sir, I will have you know, I am, at present, in full possession of them all.

Sir F. May be so, egad!

Lord M. And can no longer forbear telling you I believe you to be a villain.

Sir F. Ah! now your lordship is perfectly explicit. [*They draw and fight.*]

Enter GABRIEL, who runs fearlessly between them, and looks first at one, then at the other.

Lord M. How now, sirrah! How dare you take this liberty?

Gab. Nay, ecod! there do seem to be some danger in it; an' I had not dared to dare, but that I thought your lordship would na stick I.

Lord M. Begone, sirrah!

Gab. Nay, but my lady sent me, and would be glad to speak wi' your honour's worship.

Lord M. With me?

Gab. Oh! no; not wi' your lordship's honour's worship; but wi' his worship's honour, Sir Frederick Fashion.

Sir F. This is no place, my lord; we'll settle this business to-morrow. To-morrow, my lord, to-morrow. [*Exit.*]

Lord M. D——n!—Torture! To-morrow!—He has some concealed meaning. How now, sirrah! What do you stand gaping at? How dare you come between us?

Gab. Why, ecod! I knew that, wi' us, i'th' country, murder would have been against the commandments; and I had forgotten that here, in town, you have no commandments.

Lord M. [*Aside.*] This fool can see the excesses of passion in their true light.

Gab. I'm sorry 'at I angered your lordship's worship; because as why, I wur determined to do like the rest of my neighbours; for, sartinly, wur a body to keep the commandments, while every body else is breaking them—a'd be a poor devil, indeed. [*LORD MORDEN walks about.*] Belike, your lordship be a bit jealousy, like?

Lord M. How, sirrah!

Gab. Nay, I should no' a'wondered an you wur, an I had no' been told that your Londoneers be never jealousy, like.

Lord M. Should not have wondered! Why not, sirrah?

Gab. Nay, ecod! I munna tell.

Lord M. Tell what?

Gab. Nay, that's it. As I said, I munna tell.

Lord M. [*Puts his hand to his sword.*] Speak all you know, instantly, or—

Gab. [*With half serious and half sulky reproof.*] Nay, nay, donna be in a passion, your worship: I be no goose, you munna spit me.

Lord M. Speak, I say; I'll have your secret, or your soul.

Gab. Ecod! I believe your worship will be puzzled to find either—though that Sir Frederick be an old fox, a's used to steal chicken.

Lord M. Be explicit. What has he done?

Gab. Done! Oh! a's—

Lord M. What?

Gab. Promised me a piece.

Lord M. Zounds!

Gab. And, moreover, a' ga' me a purse; which is better still: for, your worship's grace do know that an egg in hand is better nur a hen in expectation

Lord M. Suppose, sirrah, I give you my purse, too.

Gab. Nay, ecod! an you gi' it me, I b'lieve, I shall—I shall take it.

Lord M. There, sir.

Gab. Thank your worship's lordship. [*GABRIEL puts up the purse and walks leisurely off.*]

Enter HARRIET.

Lord M. [*Following GABRIEL.*] Why, hark you, sirrah!—Come back!—Why, rascal!

Har. [*Calling.*] Hist! My Lord! My Lord!

Lord M. [*Looking back to HARRIET, and then recollecting GABRIEL.*] Astonishing effrontery!

Har. My lord!

Lord M. [*Returning.*] Oh! madam, I am distracted.

Har. Have patience, but for one quarter of an hour, and I hope to rid you of all your fears, and inflict that punishment on the author of them, which he dreads most.

Lord M. How, madam?

Har. By exposing him; making him what he delights to make others—a subject of laughter and contempt.

Lord M. Which way, madam?

Har. We may be overheard. Step with me into the antichamber, and I'll inform you. [*Exit.*]

Enter GABRIEL.

Gab. [*Peeping after LORD MORDEN and HARRIET, and then calling.*] Sir Frederick! Sir Frederick!

Sir F. Well, what's the matter? How camest thou off with his lordship?

Gab. Off!—Ecod! I—wish you may come off as well.

Sir F. I?

Gab. Ees. Why, mun, there be the bailiffs below.

Sir F. Bailiffs!

Gab. Ees; sent by the Irish gentleman,—lady I mean, after your worship. Ecod! hur is determined to ha' you, safe.

Sir F. The devil! What's to be done! Is she with them?

Gab. No; hur be come back, and is gone into the antichamber wi' my lord.

Sir F. And has not seen them?

Gab. Likely not.

Sir F. Here! quick, change clothes with me, and tell them you are Sir Frederick Fashion.

Gab. Me!—Ecod! thank you for that. No, no; I would na' be in your coat for fifty pound.

Sir F. Fool! they dare not detain you.

Gab. I'll take care they sha'n't.

Sir F. 'Sdeath! What's to be done?

Gab. Ecod! Suppose—suppose I wur to go, and tell the Irish gentleman somebody wanted hur; and so make 'em arrest she?

Sir F. Ha! exquisite fellow, I conceive. Away, send her instantly.

Enter two Bailiffs.

Bailiff. Is your name Sir Frederick Fashion, sir?

Sir F. No, sir; but Sir Frederick will be here directly: if you have any business with him.

Bailiff. [*Aside to his companion.*] Have your handkerchief ready, should he make any noise, for fear of a rescue. This is a very serious affair.—[*To Sir FREDERICK.*] Pray, sir, what kind of person is Sir Frederick?

Sir F. Um—a handsome—agreeable little gentleman, and very young.

Bailiff. May I ask, sir, how he is dressed?
Sir F. [*Aside.*] Gad! well remember'd.—[*To the Bailiffs.*] Dressed!—Oh! he is dressed for—for the masquerade. Here he comes.

[*The Bailiffs retire a little upon the watch.*]

Enter HARRIET.

[*To HARRIET.*] Well, Sir Frederick! Ha, ha, ha! How goes your scheme?

Har. Oh, ho! Faith! and are you so jocular?

Sir F. I have been thinking this is a dangerous business, and would advise you not to give the girl that contract; it may bring you into trouble.

Bailiff. [*Aside to his companion.*] You hear.

Har. Oh! faith! and she has it safe enough.

Bailiff. [*Advances.*] Sir Frederick Fashion,—[*Touches HARRIET on the shoulder.*]—you are my prisoner, sir. I have a special writ against you.

Har. Ha, ha, ha! Against me! Arrah, frind, but you are making a bit of a bull, here.

Bailiff. We know what we are about, sir. My carriage is below; you shall be treated like a gentleman; but we must beg you to go with us instantly, and without a noise.

Har. [*Alarmed and forgetting the brogue.*] I tell you, friend, you mistake the person.

Enter GABRIEL.

Gab. [*Goes up to HARRIET.*] Here, Sir Frederick, here be card from Colonel Castoff, wi' his compliments.

Har. Sirrah! Me!

Gab. [*With pretended astonishment.*] Ees, to be sure.

Bailiff. Sir, we must be gone.

Har. This is a concerted trick. Here!

[*As soon as HARRIET begins to call, the Bailiffs clap the handkerchief over her mouth, and hurry off with her.*]

Gab. Did not I do it rarely?

Sir F. Do! I could wonder and worship thee. In half a year, thou wouldest make an ass of Machiavel. Oh! that I could but retrieve that cursed contract.

Gab. I do think I could get it.

Sir F. Ay! Nay, I do, almost, begin to believe in miracles. Which way?

Gab. No matter for that. What will gi' me?

Sir F. Whatever thou canst wish: a hundred guineas—

Gab. And the place in the excise?

Sir F. Anything, everything!—Run, try, fly!—Think, succeed, and I'll make an emperor of thee.

Gab. Ees; I'll be emperor of excise-men. [*Exit.*]

Sir F. The shrewdness and abilities of this fellow are amazing.

Enter Mrs. MODELY, followed by EMILY.

Mrs. M. [*Speaking as she enters.*] Yes, my sweet little Emily, the greatest beauty in London would be envied, had she made such a conquest.

Emily. Ah! you say so.

Mrs. M. Say! why, to-morrow morning, the whole town will be in a flame.

Emily. Well, that will be pure!

Mrs. M. Oh! Sir Frederick—

Sir F. [*Runs to EMILY.*] My life! my soul! my transport.

Emily. [*To Mrs. MODELY.*] What sweet words!

Mrs. M. You are very much obliged to me, I assure you. I have been speaking to my sweet, dear, little Emily here in your behalf.

Sir F. Then, madam, I am inexpressibly obliged to you.

Emily. Yes; Mrs. Modely is very much your friend, and very much my friend—a'n't you, Mrs. Modely?

Mrs. M. Yes, my little dear, I am, indeed, very much your friend: and, if I had not the best opinion in the world of Sir Frederick, would not have spoken as I have.

Emily. Well, Sir Frederick, have you ordered the chaise and four?

Sir F. [*Pretending to be afraid Mrs. MODELY should overhear.*] Yes. Hush!

Emily. Nay, you may say anything before Mrs. Modely. I have told her all; for, you know, she is my friend.

Mrs. M. Yes, yes, Sir Frederick; be assured I will not betray any secret, the keeping of which will make my dear Emily so happy.

Emily. Yes, we shall be so happy! You know, Sir Frederick, you swear to marry me.

Sir F. Solemnly.

[*All through the scene he looks anxiously round, at intervals, fearful of being surprised.*]

Emily. Well, but, swear it again; now, before Mrs. Modely.

Sir F. By all the saints—

Emily. Saints! Psha! you should swear by—by my bright eyes that dim the stars.

Sir F. Oh! By those bright eyes, that dim the blazing sun.

Emily. And—and, my beauties that eclipse the blushing moon!

Sir F. Ay, by those, and all your burning charms, I swear.

Emily. To marry me the moment we come to Scotland?

Sir F. The moment we come to Scotland.

Emily. And, if we be pursued—

Sir F. To fight for you! die for you!

Emily. Oh! that will be delightful.

Sir F. [*Aside.*] The devil it will!

Emily. Come, let us set off! My band-box is ready.

Sir F. That is impossible, my angel.

Emily. Impossible!

Sir F. I have not ordered the chaise till ten o'clock.

Emily. Oh, dear! What, two whole hours longer?

Sir F. They are two ages, I grant. [*Looking round.*] Forgive my fears, my dearest Emily; but, though the pleasure of your company is the most precious thing on earth—a—a—yet—

Emily. What, you want me gone?

Sir F. Rather than you should think so unkindly, I will run the hazard of being surprised, and eternally separated from you.

Emily. Will you? I am sure you don't love me, then. However, I'll go. You will be sure to be ready, the moment the clock strikes ten. [*Exit.*]

Sir F. Time is precious. Here have been such plots against me.

Mrs. M. Plots!

Sir F. Oh! I have escaped Scylla and Charybdis: but wind and tide are now both with me. Lady Morden is to meet me here in half an hour. Through that door is her chamber.

Mrs. M. Oh! you vile creature.

Sir F. What prude, to-morrow, will dare pretend that woman and education are a match for man and nature?

Mrs. M. And so you will persist in your wickedness, in spite of my persuasions.

Sir F. Lady Morden has still all the rhodomontade of love in her brain: thinks of nothing but cooing-constancy, and eternal raptures.

Mrs. M. Simple woman!

Sir F. Except, indeed, tormenting her husband; which seems to give the sin a double sweetness.

Mrs. M. Or she would be no wife.

Sir F. So, as soon as I am gone off with Emily, I will have a consolatory epistle delivered to her.

Mrs. M. Compassionate toad!

Sir F. Here it is, ready written; and, if I don't flatter myself, a master-piece.

Mrs. M. Let me see! let me see!

Sir F. No, you shall hear. [*Reads.*] "*Dear madam,—Though you are an angel, if there be other angels, am I to blame?*"

Mrs. M. Certainly not.

Sir F. [*Reads.*] "*If man is naturally inconstant, and if I am a man, am I to blame?*"

Mrs. M. Certainly not.

Sir F. [*Reads.*] "*If nature has made variety the highest enjoyment, am I to blame?*"

Mrs. M. Certainly not.

Sir F. [*Reads.*] "*If, since happiness is the pursuit of us all, I am happy as often as I can, am I to blame?*"

Mrs. M. Certainly not.

Sir F. [*Reads.*] "*Farewell, madam; circumstances, as you will find, force me, thus suddenly, from your arms, in which, I own, I found heaven centred; but, if you should call me cruel, perjured, and ungrateful, because I act naturally, and therefore rationally, am I to blame?*"

Mrs. M. Certainly not. Well, as I live, this is a master-stroke! Perfectly as I thought I knew you, you have astonished me.

Sir F. Yes; 'tis the true Socratic mode. But, now, my dear Mrs. Modely, go you to Emily, prevent her disturbing us, and keep her in readiness.

Mrs. M. Well!—remember, everything is at stake, and be yourself.

Sir F. Fear me not; that prescience, which, they say, is the forerunner of all great events, gives me a happy assurance of success; a confidence, that makes success certain.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The same.*

General BURLAND *discovered.*

General. I cannot keep from this house! There is a foreboding of mischief which haunts and perturbs my imagination; and, I fear, with reason. The malignant joy, the smothered exult, the obscure, ironical, satire, which ran through the discourse of that Sir Frederick, were not without a meaning. I wish I had not consented to let Emily stay. He sneered, I remember, at the moment: nay, it seemed the sneer of triumph. I wish she were safe, at my own house. Poor Lady Morden! And, is it possible? Such rectitude of heart, such purity of sentiment! I wish Emily were at home. Should my child, my darling fall, I were a wretch indeed!

Enter Lord MORDEN.

Lord M. I am miserable! distracted! racked! The thunderbolt has struck before I heard it. Oh! that its exterminating power had been final! But it

has maimed, and deformed, and left a full feeling of wretchedness.

General. How now, my lord?

Lord M. General, I am a wretch! an irretrievable, eternal wretch!

General. What! and are you come to a sense of this, now it is too late?

Lord M. There's the misery!—The curse is accomplished, and hope is fled!

General. Why, ay; such is the infatuation of folly and vice, they will not believe vengeance has an arm, till its fatal gripe is felt!

Lord M. I cannot support these tortures.—Oh! that it were possible—

General. What?

Lord M. To reclaim Lady Morden.

General. What, then? Another month, and Sir Frederick Fashion, or any other libertine of fashion, might take her.

Lord M. Never, never! Were her affections once again mine, the stroke of death only should separate us.

General. Well, my lord, if you are, at last, convinced of the immensity of your loss,—I pity you!

Lord M. Oh! would you could relieve!

General. Would I could! But, you were a witness how ineffectual my endeavours were. However, walk with me into the antichamber, and let us consult what is best to be done. Her principles, I fear, are shaken; the only rock on which virtue can stand secure.

Lord M. Sapped, destroyed! She avows her intents; unblushingly avows them! And recapitulating my errors, my crimes, dares me to complain of or notice her's! Scorns and contemns me, and justly, too, that such a thing as I should pretend to repeat, or respect, the word virtue.

General. It is what every husband, every father of a family must expect. His smallest foibles will stand as precedents for a swarm of follies; and, if he have any vices, they will propagate a hideous brood, that shall extirpate his name from the earth, or overwhelm it with obloquy.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter GABRIEL and Sir FREDERICK.

Gab. Come, mun!—Your worship, come!

Sir F. Are they gone?

Gab. Ees.

Sir F. Well, what hast thou done? Where is Harriet?

Gab. Oh! I ha' her safe.

Sir F. Thou?

Gab. Ees, mun; for, when the bailiffs found out a wur a woman, they wur partly ravenous.

Sir F. And let her go?

Gab. Ees.

Sir F. 'Sdeath!

Gab. But, I secured her.

Sir F. Secured! Impossible! How?

Gab. Nay, never do you mind how; I tell'ee, I ha' her safe.

Sir F. But where are the bailiffs?

Gab. In this house.

Sir F. The devil they are!

Gab. Ees, they be; waiting for your worship.

Sir F. Death and destruction!

Gab. But what o'that? I ha' got the contract, mun.

Sir F. Hast thou?

Gab. Ees, here it is.

Sir F. Precious fellow! I could worship thee!—Give it me.

Gab. Nay, hold there; I wanna do that.

Sir F. Won't?

Gab. No, I wanna.

Sir F. Psha! make no words, but deliver it;—and, here—here is—

Gab. Nay, put up your paper; for I wanna part w' mine.

Sir F. 'Sdeath, fellow!

Gab. Nay, be mild tempered!—Stand where you be; for an you stir another step, I'll call the bailiffs.

Sir F. [*Aside.*] Cunning scoundrel! He has me in his power, and time presses.—Well, Gabriel, be faithful, and, depend on't, I'll make thee a clever fellow.

Gab. Why, ecod! I think I am like a Monmouth-street coat—ready made.

Sir F. Thou rememberest the instructions I gave thee?

Gab. Parfitly.

Sir F. The chaise is to wait at the corner of the street.

Gab. Ees.

Sir F. Thou art to convey Emily's bandbox away, privately; and, if any questions be asked, to say it is Lady Morden's.

Gab. Ees.

Sir F. Hast thou taken care of the letter I gave thee?

Gab. Care! Ees, ees; I a' ta'en good care on't.

Sir F. Observe, thou art to deliver it to Lady Morden, half an hour after we are departed.

Gab. Half an hour before you are departed?

Sir F. Zounds! No, half an hour after, man.

Gab. Oh! Ees, ees; half an hour after.

Sir F. Now begone.

Gab. But—but how will your worship get by the bailiffs?

Sir F. 'Sdeath, that's true!—Is there no disguise?

Gab. Why—ees—there be a long great-coat i'the hall.

Sir F. Ay, true.—Bring it me.

Gab. Nay, nay; I'll put it on first, and let 'em see me; so, then, when they see you, they'll think it be I.

Sir F. Excellent! Where are Lord Morden and the General?

Gab. I'th' t'other chamber.

Sir F. Unlucky! I wish they were any where else.

Gab. Oh! an that be all, I'll soon make 'em budge.

Sir F. How?

Gab. Nay; lord, you're so quisitive!—I tell you, I'll do't. I'll saunter through this door, lock it, and send 'em packing through t'other.

Sir F. Thou art the prince of plotters. Away! be vigilant.

Gab. Oh! never do you fear me! [*Exit.*]

Enter LADY MORDEN.

Sir F. This fellow would outwit a whole conclave of cardinals!

Lady M. Well, Sir Frederick, here I am, you see; punctual to my promise.

Sir F. [*With vast insinuation, seeming sincerity, and humble rapture, all through the scene.*] Oh! madam, how can I repay this bounty!—this condescension!—Never!—My life were a poor sacrifice, to such sweetness and such charms!

Lady M. Sir Frederick, this is a trying, a decisive moment! I am going to be either the most happy or the most wretched of women! You tell me, it is your wish, your resolution, to be no longer that general lover, that man of the world, you have, hitherto, been thought.

Sir F. Say not, dear lady, it is either my wish or resolution! Heaven can testify, I have not the power to be any thing, but what it shall please you to make me!

Lady M. I have owed to you, that the levity I have lately affected is not natural to me! that my heart sighs for an acquaintance, a mate, that, like itself, is subject to all the sweet emotions of sensibility!—Yes, it was the first wish of my soul to find this correspondent heart. A heart beating with the same ardour, vibrating to the same sensations, panting for the same pleasures, shrinking from the same pangs; pliant, yet firm; gentle, yet aspiring; passionate, yet pure!—Such I once thought Lord Morden's. Should I a second time be deceived—

Sir F. I am poor in proofs of sincerity! I have none to offer! My former errors are present punishments! To deny or even palliate them would imply intentional deceit; and this is a moment in which I would wish for men and gods to be witnesses of my truth! I have had, I must own, most libertine opinions of your gentle sex; but these I, now, solemnly renounce! Had I, before, met with a Lady Morden, I should, before, have made this renunciation! But, perhaps, the women it has been my misfortune to know, deserved, in part, the light esteem in which I held them. Never, till now, did I find one who could mutually inspire such passion and respect! Such agitated, burning hopes! Such excruciating fears, or thoughts so sanctified, as those I, this moment, feel!

Lady M. Yet, Sir Frederick, I cannot help observing your conversation, in society, seems still tinged with the impurity of your former libertine principles.

Sir F. I own, Lady Morden, with confusion own, I have not hitherto had the courage, or, perhaps, I have wanted strength to stem the torrent: but, aided by you, I feel, I dare promise any thing!

Lady M. I confess, Sir Frederick, the mind finds some difficulty in rooting out fears, planted in it by reiterated accusations. The stories the world tells of you are dreadful. And, yet, there is such heartfelt conviction attends your present words that, to me, it is impossible to listen and retain a doubt.

Sir F. This generous confidence transports me, fills me with gratitude, and inspires rapturous hope! [*Clasps her round the waist.*] Oh, gently suffer me to conduct you, where love lies, in panting, breathless ecstasy—

Enter GABRIEL, abruptly, in a great-coat, stands fixed, and staring.

[*Sternly.*] How now!

Gab. [*Deliberately.*] Belike, you dunna want company?

Sir F. No, sir.

Gab. I thought as much.

Sir F. [*Laying hold of him.*] Begone, instantly!

Gab. Nay! hands off! [*Throws him from him.*] I sha'n't stir till I have delivered my message.

Sir F. What message? what have you to say?

Gab. [*Aloud.*] Why, the chaise and four be come.

Sir F. How?

Gab. [*Still louder.*] The bandbox ready.

Sir F. Infernal booby!

Gab. Miss Emily waiting.

Sir F. [*Violently.*] Begone, I say.

Gab. Gone! Nay, sartinly, you would no' ha' I run away w' her.

Lady M. [*With contempt.*] Ha, ha, ha!

Sir F. Lady Morden!

Lady M. Ha, ha, ha!—Why, surely, you—the never failing victor, the fertile-brained Sir Frederick Fashion, who knows not defeat, and who never, yet, was at a loss for stratagems!—though you are taken somewhat unawares, you cannot want invention!

Sir F. You'll pardon me, madam, if I want understanding to comprehend your meaning.

Lady M. Indeed!—Well, if you be so dull of apprehension—"am I to blame?"

Sir F. Madam!

Lady M. Oh!—Do you recollect this letter?

Sir F. How!—Faithless fiend! [*Goes to assault GABRIEL, who throws back his great-coat and appears dressed as a gentleman.*]

Gab. Keep off, or dread the chastisement I am prompted, instantaneously, to inflict!

Sir F. Chastisement!—What is this? Who are you?

Gab. A man!—You are—

Lady M. For heaven's sake, brother—

Sir F. Brother!

Gab. Gabriel Wilmot; whose head is so full of the nonsense of friendship, honour, and honesty.—

Sir F. I'll be revenged, however. [*Attacks WILMOT again.*]

Enter LORD MORDEN and GENERAL BURLAND.

Lord M. Turn, wretch, and receive your punishment from this arm! [*Sir FREDERICK turns on Lord MORDEN.*]

General. [*Beating down their swords.*] Oh! for shame!—Look to the lady.

Lady M. Oh, general!—Oh! my Lord! [*Runs to Lord MORDEN and falls on his neck.*]

Lord M. My life! my ecstasy! my saviour!

Enter MRS. MODELY and EMILY.

Mrs. M. Bless me, what uproar!—Heyday!—*[Aside.]* So, so! Here is a very pretty denouement to our plot, indeed!—*[Aloud.]* I see, good folks, you are all embroiled here; and, as it is a very disagreeable thing to be present at family disputes, I'll—*[Is going; the General plants himself against the door.]*

General. Pray, madam, stay, and receive the compliments of the company: mine, and your friend Emily's in particular.

Mrs. M. Oh, with pleasure!

Lord M. Mr. Wilmot! My best brother; though you have, in part, acquainted me with what is past, yet, it is so sudden—and you, my dearest lady, to find you still the same is joy unspeakable.

Lady M. The task of making you suppose I had effectually become what I seemed, was, indeed, most painful; but the loss of your affection were not pain—twere horror! I told you my passion was too permanent to be shaken.—Ah! how could you imagine I meant another? Or, think it possible I ever could forget that chaste, that ardent, that eternal love, I have so repeatedly avowed?

Lord M. Oh! for words!—I am all love, gratitude, rapture, and amazement!

General. And so is Sir Frederick apparently; nay, even you, madam, seem a little surprised. [*To MRS. MODELY.*]

Mrs. M. Me! Oh, dear! no.

Lady M. [*To Sir FREDERICK.*] Dear sir, though

you are a deep and excellent plotter, if there have been counterplots—"am I to blame?" [*Curtseys.*]

Mrs. M. [*With affected candour.*] Certainly not.

Lady M. If man is sometimes vain, presumptuous and unprincipled, and if you are a man—"am I to blame?"

Mrs. M. Certainly not.

Wil. If I assumed a mean disguise, that I might aid a sister to detect and expose the mean machinations of seduction—"am I to blame?"

Mrs. M. Certainly not.

Emily. If, following the advice of this dear lady, [*to Lady MORDEN*] simplicity has made cunning outwit itself, "am I to blame?" [*Curtysing first to Sir FREDERICK, and then to Mrs. MODELY.*]

General. [*With vast pleasure.*] Certainly not.

Lady M. If, since happiness is the pursuit of us all, I wish to be as happy as possible—*[Most affectionately taking Lord MORDEN's hand.]* "am I to blame?"

Omnes. Certainly not.

Sir F. [*With affected ease.*] Certainly not—So, the catechism being ended, the scholars may depart.

Wil. Certainly not.

Sir F. Sir!

Wil. You forget the bailiffs.

Lady M. Besides, Sir Frederick, before you go, you must give me leave to introduce you to—

Enter HARRIET in woman's clothes, presented by LADY MORDEN.

—This lady.

Sir F. Harriet!

Har. Yes, sir; that Harriet, whom, hearing, she had happiness in view, and proportioning your ideal triumph to the weight of misery you might entail, you raised heaven and earth to bring to wretchedness and ruin.

Mrs. M. Upon my honour, you—you are a sad man, Sir Frederick!—A very sad man! [*The company by their looks show they understand Mrs. MODELY's real character.*]

Har. But your vanity is humbled; you, now, stand detected; and, instead of envied, you will be sneered at by the depraved, pitied by the good, and henceforth, avoided by the credulous young creatures you, so manfully, have delighted to involve in guilt and destruction!

Mrs. M. A very dangerous man, indeed, Sir Frederick!

General. [*Ironically.*] Ay, beware of him, madam.

Mrs. M. Oh! I—I will.

Har. Yes, sir, the finger of scorn points where it ought: you are exposed, and my resentment is appeased.

Sir F. Then, madam—the—the contract—

Har. There it is, sir. [*Returns it.*] I never meant to make any other use of it than what has been better effected, by different means. [*Curtysing to Lady MORDEN and Mr. WILMOT.*]

Sir F. Madam!—

Har. No thanks, sir.

General. No; they would sit a little awkwardly.

Lady M. And now, Sir Frederick, if, after this lesson, you should still retain your former principles and practices, and, hereafter, receive a still severer punishment, I hope you will acknowledge—we are "not to blame." [*Eceunt.*]

EVERY MAN IN HIS HUMOUR;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS;

ALTERED FROM BEN JONSON,

BY DAVID GARRICK.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

JUSTICE CLEMENT
CAPTAIN BOBADIL
KITELY
MASTER STEPHEN
MASTER MATTHEW
KNO'WELL
YOUNG KNO'WELL
BRAINWORM
DOWNRIGHT
WELLBRED
CASH
COB
FORMAL.

DAME KITELY
BRIDGET
TIB.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Court-yard before Kno'well's House.*

Enter KNO'WELL and BRAINWORM.

Kno. A goodly day toward, and a fresh morning.
Brainworm,

Call up young master. Bid him rise, sir.
Tell him I have some business to employ him.

Brain. I will, sir, presently.

Kno. But hear you, sirrah,
If he be at his book, disturb him not.

Brain. Well, sir.

[Exit.]

Kno. How happy, yet, should I esteem myself,
Could I, by any practice, wean the boy
From one vain course of study he affects!
He is a scholar, if a man may trust
The liberal voice of fame in her report,
Of good account in both our universities;
Either of which have favour'd him with graces;
But their indulgence must not spring in me
A fond opinion, that he cannot err.

Enter Master STEPHEN.

Cousin Stephen,

What news with you, that you are here so early?
Step. Nothing; but e'en come to see how you do, uncle.

Kno. That's kindly done: you are welcome, coz.
Step. Ay, I know that, sir, I would not ha' come else. How doth my cousin Edward, uncle?

Kno. Oh! well, coz; go in and see: I doubt he be scarcely stirring yet.

Step. Uncle, afore I go in, can you tell me an' he have e'er a book of the sciences of hawking and hunting? I would fain borrow it.

Kno. Why, I hope you will not a hawking now, will you?

Step. No wosse, but I'll practise against the next year, uncle. I have bought me a hawk, and a hood, and bells, and all; I lack nothing but a book to keep it by.

Kno. Oh! most ridiculous!

Step. Nay, look you now, you are angry, uncle. Why, you know, an' a man have not skill in the hawking and hunting languages, now-a-days, I'll not give a rush for him. They are more studied than the Greek or the Latin. What, do you talk on it? Because I dwell at Hogsden, I shall keep company with none but citizens! A fine jest, i'faith! 'Slid! a gentleman mun shew himself like a gentleman. Uncle, I pray you, be not angry. I know what I have to do, I trow; I am no novice.

Kno. You are a prodigal, absurd coxcomb! go to! Nay, never look at me, it's I that speak.

Take't as you will, sir, I'll not flatter you.

Ha' you not yet found means enow, to waste

That which your friends have left you, but you must go cast away your money on a kite,

And know not how to keep it, when you've done?

So, now you're told on it, you look another way.

Step. What would you ha' me do?

Kno. What would I have you do? I'll tell you, kinsman;

Learn to be wise, and practise how to thrive;

That would I have thee do; and not to spend

Your coin on every bauble that you fancy,

Or every foolish brain that humours you.

Who comes here?

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Save you, gentlemen!

Step. Nay, we do not stand much on our gentility, friend; yet, you are welcome; and I assure you, mine uncle here is a man of a thousand a-year Midlesex land: he has but one son in all the world; I am his next heir at the common law, Master Stephen, as simple as I stand here; if my cousin die, as there's hope he will. I have a pretty living o' my own too, beside, hard by here.

Serv. In good time, sir.

Step. In good time, sir! Why? And in very good time, sir. You do not flout, friend, do you?

Serv. Not I, sir.

Step. Not you, sir! You were not best, sir; an' you should, here be them can perceive it, and that quickly, too. Go to! And they can give it again soundly, too, an' need be.

Serv. Why, sir, let this satisfy you: good faith, I had no such intent.

Step. Sir, an' I thought you had, I would talk with you, and that presently.

Serv. Good Master Stephen, so you may, sir, at your pleasure.

Step. And so I would, sir, good my saucy companion, an' you were out o' my uncle's ground, I can tell you; though I do not stand upon my gentility neither in't.

Kno. Cousin, cousin! will this ne'er be left?

Step. Whoreson, base fellow! A mechanical serving-man! By this cudgel, and 'twere not for shame, I would—

Kno. What would you do, you peremptory gull?

If you cannot be quiet, get you hence.

You see the honest man demeans himself

Modestly towards you, giving no reply

To your unseason'd, quarrelling, rude fashion:

And still you huff it, with a kind of carriage

As void of wit as of humanity.

Go, get you in; 'fore heaven! I am asham'd

Thou hast a kinsman's interest in me. [*Exit STEP.*]

Serv. I pray you, sir, is this Master Kno'well's house?

Kno. Yes, marry, is't, sir.

Serv. I should inquire for a gentleman here, one Master Edward Kno'well. Do you know any such, sir, I pray you?

Kno. I should forget myself else, sir.

Serv. Are you the gentleman? 'Cry you mercy, sir, I was required by a gentleman i'the city, as I rode out at this end of the town, to deliver you this letter, sir.

Kno. To me, sir? [*Reads.*] "*To his most selected friend, Master Edward Kno'well.*" What might the gentleman's name be, sir, that sent it?

Serv. One Master Wellbred, sir.

Kno. Master Wellbred! A young gentleman, is he not?

Serv. The same, sir; Master Kitley married his sister: the rich merchant i'the Old Jewry.

Kno. You say very true. Brainworm!

Re-enter BRAINWORM.

Brain. Sir?

Kno. Make this honest friend drink here. Pray you, go in. [*Exeunt BRAIN and Serv.*]

This letter is directed to my son:

Yet I am Edward Kno'well too, and may, With the safe conscience of goodmanners, use The fellow's error to my satisfaction.

Well, I will break it ope; old men are curious.

What's this? [*Reads.*]

"Why, Ned, I beseech thee, hast thou forsworn all thy friends in the Old Jewry? or dost thou think us all Jews that inhabit there? Leave thy vigilant father alone, to number over his green apricots, evening and morning, o'the north-west wall: an' I had been his son, I had saved him the labour long since; if taking in all the young wenches that pass by, at the back door, and coddling every kernel of the fruit for 'em would ha' served. But, pr'ythee, come over to me quickly this morning: I have such a present for thee. One is a rhymers, sir, o' your own batch, your own leaven; but doth think himself poet-major o'the town; willing to be shewn, and worthy to be seen. The other—I will not venture his description with you till you come, because I would ha' you make hither with an appetite. If the worst of 'em be not worth your journey, draw your bill of charges as unconscionable as any Guildhall verdict will give it you, and you shall be allowed your viaticum.—From the Windmill."

From the Burdello, it might come as well!

The Spital! Is this the man,

My son hath sung so, for the happiest wit,

The choicest brain, the times hath sent us forth?

I know not what he may be in the arts,

Nor what in schools; but, surely, for his manners,

I judge him a profane and dissolute wretch.

Brainworm!

Re-enter BRAINWORM.

Brain. Sir?

Kno. Is the fellow gone that brought this letter?

Brain. Yes, sir, a pretty while since.

Kno. And where's your young master?

Brain. In his chamber, sir.

Kno. He spake not with the fellow, did he?

Brain. No, sir, he saw him not.

Kno. Take you this letter, seal it, and deliver it my son; [*liffe.*]

But with no notice that I have open'd it, on your *Brain.* Oh, lord! sir, that were a jest, indeed!

Kno. I am resolv'd I will not stop his journey;

Nor practise any violent means to stay

The unbridled course of youth in him: for that,

Restrain'd, grows more inpatient.

There is a way of winning more by love,

And urging of the modesty, than fear:

Force works on servile natures, not the free:

He, that's compell'd to goodness, may be good;

But 'tis but for that fit; where others, drawn;

By softness and example, get a habit,

Then if they stray, but warn 'em; and the same

They would for virtue do, they'll do for shame.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—Young Kno'well's Study.]

Enter YOUNG KNO'WELL and BRAINWORM.

Young K. Did he open it, say'st thou?

Brain. Yes, o'my word, sir, and read the contents,

Young K. That's bad. What countenance, pray thee, made he i'the reading of it? Was he angry or pleased?

Brain. Nay, sir, I saw him not read it, nor open it, I assure your worship.

Young K. No! how know'st thou, then, that he did either?

Brain. Marry, sir, because he charged me, on my life, to tell nobody that he opened it; which, unless he had done, he would never fear to have it revealed.

Young K. That's true; well, I thank thee, Brainworm. [*Exit.*]

Enter Master STEPHEN.

Step. Oh, Brainworm, didst thou not see a fellow here in a what-sha'-call-him doublet? He brought mine uncle a letter, e'en now.

Brain. Yes, Master Stephen; what of him?

Step. Oh! I ha' such a mind to beat him—where is he? canst thou tell?

Brain. Faith! he is not of that mind: he is gone, Master Stephen.

Step. Gone! Which way? When went he? How long since?

Brain. He is rid hence. He took horse at the street-door.

Step. And I staid i'the fields! Whoreson, Scanderbeg rogue! Oh! that I had but a horse to fetch him back again!

Brain. Why, you may ha' my master's gelding to save your longing, sir.

Step. But I have no boots, that's the spite on't.

Brain. Why, a fine whisp of hay, rolled hard, Master Stephen.

Step. No, faith! it's no boot to follow him now; let him e'en go and hang. Prythee, help to truss me a little. He does so vex me—

Brain. You'll be worse vexed when you are trussed, Master Stephen; best keep unbraced, and walk yourself till you be cold, your choler may founder you else.

Step. By my faith, and so I will, now thou tell'st me on't. How dost thou like my leg, Brainworm?

Brain. A very good leg, Master Stephen; but the woollen stocking does not commend it so well.

Step. Foh! the stockings be good enough, now summer is coming on, for the dust: I'll have a pair of silk against the winter, that I go to dwell i'the town. I think my leg would shew in a silk hose.

Brain. Believe me, Master Stephen, rarely well.

Step. In sadness, I think it would; I have a reasonable good leg.

Brain. You have an excellent good leg, Master Stephen; but I cannot stay to praise it longer now; I am very sorry for't. [*Exit.*]

Step. Another time will serve, Brainworm. Gramercy, for this.

Re-enter YOUNG KNO'WELL.

Young K. Ha, ha, ha!

Step. 'Slid! I hope he laughs not at me; an' he do—[*Aside.*]

Young K. Here was a letter, indeed, to be intercepted by a man's father! He cannot but think most virtuously both of me and the sender, sure, that make the careful coster-monger of him in our familiar epistles. I wish I knew the end of it, which now is doubtful, and threatens—What, my wise cousin? Nay, then I'll furnish our feast with one gull more toward the mess. He writes to me of a brace, and here's one, that's three; oh! for a fourth! Fortune, if ever thou'lt use thine eyes, I entreat thee—[*Aside.*]

Step. Oh! now I see who he laughs at. He laughs at somebody in that letter. By this good light, an' he had laughed at me—[*Aside.*]

Young K. How now, cousin Stephen, melancholy?

Step. Yes, a little. I thought you had laughed at me, cousin.

Young K. Why, what an' I had, coz, what would you ha' done?

Step. By this light, I would ha' told mine uncle.

Young K. Nay, if you would ha' told your uncle, I did laugh at you, coz.

Step. Did you, indeed?

Young K. Yes, indeed.

Step. Why, then—

Young K. What then?

Step. I am satisfied; it is sufficient.

Young K. Why, be so, gentle coz. And I pray you, let me entreat a courtesy of you. I am sent for this morning, by a friend i'the Old-jewry, to come to him; it's but crossing over the fields to Moorgate: will you bear me company? I protest it is not to draw you into bond, or any plot against the state, coz.

Step. Sir, that's all one, an' 'twere; you shall command me twice so far as Moorgate to do you good in such a matter. Do you think I would leave you? I protest—

Young K. No, no, you shall not protest, coz.

Step. By my fackins! but I will, by your leave; I'll protest more to my friend than I'll speak of at this time.

Young K. You speak very well, coz.

Step. Nay, not so, neither; you shall pardon me: but I speak to serve my turn.

Young K. Your turn, coz! Do you know what you say? A gentleman of your sort, parts, carriage, and estimation, to talk o'your turn i'this company, and to me alone, like a water-bearer at a conduit! Come, come, wrong not the quality of your desert with looking downward, coz; but hold up your head so; and let the idea of what you are, be portrayed i'your face, that men may read i'your physiognomy,—“here, within this place, is to be seen, the true and accomplished monster,” or “miracle of nature,” which is all one. What think you of this, coz?

Step. Why, I do think of it; and I will be more proud, and melancholy, and gentleman-like, than I have been, I'll assure you.

Young K. Why, that's resolute, Master Stephen! Now, if I can but hold him up to his height, as it is happily begun, it will do well for a suburb humour: we may hap have a match with the city, and play him for forty pounds. [*Aside.*] Come, coz.

Step. I'll follow you.

Young K. Follow me! you must go before.

Step. Nay, an' I must, I will. Pray you, shew me, good cousin. [*Ereunt.*]

SCENE III.—*The Street before Cob's house.*

Enter Master MATTHEW.

Mat. I think this be the house. What, ho!

Enter Con, from the house.

Cob. Who's there? Oh! Master Matthew, gi' your worship good morrow.

Mat. What, Cob! How dost thou, good Cob? Dost thou inhabit here, Cob?

Cob. Ay, sir; I and my lineage ha' kept a poor house here in our days.

Mat. Cob, canst thou shew me of a gentleman, one Captain Bobadil, where his lodging is?

Cob. Oh! my guest, sir, you mean.

Mat. Thy guest! alas!—Ha, ha!

Cob. Why do you laugh, sir? do you not mean Captain Bobadil?

Mat. Cob, pray thee, advise thyself well; do not wrong the gentleman and thyself too. I dare be sworn, he scorns thy house. He! he lodge in such a base, obscure place as thy house! Tut! I know his disposition so well, he would not lie in thy bed, if thou'dst gi' it him.

Cob. I will not give it him, though, sir. Mass! I thought somewhat was in't, we could not get him to bed all night. Well, sir, though he lie not o' my bed, he lies o' my bench. An't please you to go up, sir, you shall find him with two cushions under his head, and his cloak wrapped about him, as though he had neither won nor lost; and yet, I warrant, he ne'er cast better in his life, than he has done to-night.

Mat. Why, was he drunk?

Cob. Drunk, sir! you hear not me say so. Perhaps he swallowed a tavern-token, or some such device, sir; I have nothing to do withal. I deal with water, and not with wine. Gi' me my bucket there, ho! God b'w'i' you, sir, it's six o'clock; I should ha' carried two turns by this. What, ho! my stopple, come!

Mat. Lie in a water-bearer's house! A gentleman of his havings! well, I'll tell him my mind. [*Aside.*]

Enter Tib.

Cob. What, Tib, shew this gentleman up to the Captain. [*Tib shews Master Matthew into the house.*] You should ha' some now, would take this Mr. Matthew to be a gentleman at the least. His father is an honest man, a worshipful fishmonger, and so forth; and now does he creep and wriggle into acquaintance with all the brave gallants about the town, such as my guest is. Oh! my guest is a fine man! he does swear the legiblest of any man christened: by Saint George—the foot of Pharaoh—the body of me—as I am a gentleman and a soldier—such dainty oaths! And, withal, he does take this same filthy roguish tobacco, the finest and cleanliest! it would do a man good to see the fume come forth out at's tunnels! Well, he owes me forty shillings, my wife lent him out of her purse by sixpence a time, besides his lodging: I would I had it. I shall ha' it, he says, the next action. Helter-skelter, hang sorrow, care'll kill a cat, up-tails all, and a louse for the hangman! [*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.—A Room in Cob's house.

CAPTAIN BOBADIL, discovered upon a bench. *Enter Tib.*

Capt. B. Hostess, hostess!

Tib. What say you, sir?

Capt. B. A cup o'thy small beer, sweet hostess.

Tib. Sir, there's a gentleman below would speak with you.

Capt. B. A gentleman! Odso! I am not within.

Tib. My husband told him you were, sir.

Capt. B. What a plague—what meant he?

Mat. [*Within.*] Captain Bobadil!

Capt. B. Who's there? Take away the basin, good hostess. Come up, sir.

Tib. He would desire you to come up, sir. You come into a cleanly house here. [*Exit.*]

Enter Master MATTHEW.

Mat. Save you, sir; save you, Captain.

Capt. B. Gentle Master Matthew, is it you, sir? Please you, sit down.

Mat. Thank you, good Captain; you may see I am somewhat audacious.

Capt. B. Not so, sir. I was requested to supper last night, by a sort of gallants, where you were wished for, and drunk to, I assure you.

Mat. Vouchsafe me, by who, good Captain.

Capt. B. Marry, by young Wellbred and others. Why, hostess, a stool here for this gentleman.

Mat. No, haste, sir; 'tis very well.

Capt. B. Body o'me! it was so late ere we parted last night, I can scarcely open my eyes yet; I was but newly risen as you came. How passes the day abroad, sir? you can tell.

•*Mat.* Faith! some half-hour to seven. Now, trust me, you have an exceedingly fine lodging here; very neat and private.

Capt. B. Ay, sir; sit down. I pray you, Master Matthew, in any case, possess no gentlemen of our acquaintance with notice of my lodging.

Mat. Who, I, sir? No.

Capt. B. Not that I need to care who know it, for the cabin is convenient; but in regard I would not be too popular and generally visited, as some are.

Mat. True, Captain; I conceive you.

Capt. B. For, do you see, sir? by the heart of valour in me, except it be to some peculiar and choice spirits, to whom I am extraordinarily engaged, as yourself, or so, I could not extend thus far.

Mat. Oh, lord! sir, I resolve so. [*Pulls out a paper and reads.*]

Capt. B. I confess, I love a cleanly and quiet privacy, above all the tumult and roar of fortune. What new piece ha' you there? Read it.

Mat. [*Reads.*]

*"To thee, the purest object of my sense,
The most refined essence heaven covers,
Send I these lines, wherein I do commence
The happy state of turtle-billing lovers."*

Capt. B. 'Tis good; proceed, proceed. What's this?

Mat. This, sir? a toy o'mine own, in my nonage; the infancy of my muses. But, when will you come and see my study? Good faith! I can shew you some very good things I have done of late.—That boot becomes your leg passing well, Captain, methinks.

Capt. B. So, so; it's the fashion gentlemen now use.

Mat. Troth, Captain, and now you speak o'the fashion, Master Wellbred's elder brother and I are fallen out exceedingly: this other day I happened to enter into some discourse of a hanger, which I assure you, both for fashion and workmanship, was most peremptory beautiful and gentleman-like; yet he condemned, and cried it down, for the most pried and ridiculous that ever he saw.

Capt. B. 'Squire Downright, the half-brother, was't not?

Mat. Ay, sir, George Downright.

Capt. B. Hang him, rook! He! Why, he has no more judgment than a malt-horse. By St. George! I wonder you'd lose a thought upon such an animal! The most peremptory, absurd clown of Christendom, this day, he is holden. I protest to you, as I am a gentleman and a soldier, I ne'er changed words with his like. By his discourse he should eat nothing but hay. He was born for the manger, pannier, or pack-saddle. He has not so much as a good phrase in his belly, but all old iron and rusty proverbs; a good commodity for some smith to make hob-nails of.

Mat. Ay, and he thinks to carry it away with his manhood still; where he comes, he brags he will gi' me the bastinado, as I hear.

Capt. B. How? He, the bastinado? How came he by that word, I trow?

Mat. Nay, indeed, he said, cudgel me; I termed it so, for my more grace.

Capt. B. That may be; for I was sure it was none of his word. But when? when said he so?

Mat. Faith! yesterday, they say; a young gallant, a friend of mine, told me so.

Capt. B. By the foot of Pharaoh! an' 'twere my case now, I should send him a challenge presently. The bastinado! a most proper and sufficient dependence, warranted by the great Caranza. Come hither, you shall challenge him. I'll shew you a trick or two, you shall kill him with at pleasure; the first stoccata, if you will, by this air.

Mat. Indeed, you have absolute knowledge i'the mystery, I have heard, sir.

Capt. B. Of whom? of whom ha' you heard it, I beseech you?

Mat. Troth, I have heard it spoken of by divers, that you have very rare and un-in-one-breath-utterable skill, sir.

Capt. B. By heaven! no, not I; no skill i'the earth; some small rudiments i'the science, as to know my time, distance, or so. I have professed it more for noblemen and gentlemen's use than mine own practice, I assure you. I'll give you a lesson. Look you, sir! exalt not your point above this state, at any hand; so, sir, come on! Oh! twine your body more about, that you may fall to a more sweet, comely, gentleman-like guard. So, indifferent. Hollow your body more, sir, thus. Now, stand fast o' your left leg; note your distance; keep your due proportion of time. Oh! you disorder your point most irregularly! Come, put on your cloak, and we'll go to some private place, where you are acquainted, some tavern or so—and have a bit—What money ha' you about you, Mr. Matthew?

Mat. Faith! I ha' not past a two shillings, or so.

Capt. B. 'Tis somewhat with the least; but come, we will have a bunch of radishes, and salt, to taste our wine; and a pipe of tobacco to close the orifice of the stomach; and then we'll call upon young Wellbred. Perhaps we shall meet the Corydon, his brother, there, and put him to the question. Come along, Mr. Matthew. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Warehouse belonging to Kitley.

Enter KITELY, CASH, and DOWNRIGHT.

Kite. Thomas, come hither.

There lies a note within, upon my desk:
Here, take the key—It is no matter, neither.
Where is the boy?

Cash. Within, sir, i'the warehouse.

Kite. Let him tell over straight that Spanish gold,

And weigh it with the pieces of eight. Do you
See the delivery of those silver stuffs
To Mr. Lucar. Tell him, if he will,
He shall ha' the programs at the rate I told him;
And I will meet him on the Exchange anon.

Cash. Good, sir. [*E. B.*]

Kite. Do you see that fellow, brother Downright?

Down. I, what of him?

Kite. He is a jewel, brother.

I took him of a child, up, at my door,
And christened him: gave him my own name,
Thomas;

Since bred him at the hospital; where proving
A toward imp, I call'd him home, and taught him
So much, as I have made him my cashier;

And find him, in his faith, so full of faith,
That I durst trust my life into his hands.

Down. So would not I, in any bastard's brother,
As it is like he is, although I knew
Myself his father. But you said you'd somewhat
To tell me, gentle brother. What is't! what is't?

Kite. Faith! I am very loath to utter it,
As fearing it may hurt your patience;
But that I know your judgment is of strength
Against the nearness of affection—

Down. What need this circumstance? Pray you,
be direct. Come to the matter, the matter!

Kite. Then, without further ceremony, thus:

My brother Wellbred, sir, I know not how,
Of late is much declin'd in what he was,
And greatly alter'd in his disposition.
When he came first to lodge here in my house,
Ne'er trust me, if I were not proud of him:
But now his course is so irregular,
So loose, affected, and depriv'd of grace;
He makes my house here common as a mart,
A theatre, a public receptacle
For giddy humour, and diseased riot;
And here, as in a tavern or a stew,
He and his wild associates spend their hours
In repetition of lascivious jests;
Swear, leap, drink, dance, and revel night by night;
Control my servants, and indeed what not.

Down. 'Sdains! I know not what I should say to
him i' the whole world! He values me at a cracked
three-farthings, for aught I see. It will never out
of the flesh that's bred i' the bone! I have told him
enough, one would think, if that would serve.
Well! he knows what to trust to, for George. Let
him spend and spend, and domineer, till his heart
ache; an' he thinks to be relieved by me, when he
is got into one o' your city pounds, the counters, he
has the wrong sow by the ear, i' faith! and claps his
dish at a wrong man's door. I'll lay my hand on
my halfpenny, ere I part with't to fetch him out, I'll
assure him.

Kite. Nay, good brother, let it not trouble you
thus.

Down. 'Sdeath! he made me—I could eat my
very spur-leathers for anger! But, why are you so
tame? Why do you not speak to him, and tell him
how he disquiets your house?

Kite. Oh! there are divers reasons to dissuade,
brother;

But, would yourself vouchsafe to travail in it,
(Though but with plain and easy circumstance,)
It would both come much better to his sense,
And savour less of stomach or of passion.
You are his elder brother, and that title
Both gives and warrants you authority:
Whereas, if I should intimate the least,
It would but add contempt to his neglect:
Nay, more than this, brother, if I should speak,
He would be ready, from his heat of humour
And overflowing of the vapour in him,
To blow the ears of his familiars
With the false breath of telling what disgraces
And low disparagements I had put on him:
Whilst they, sir, to relieve him in the fable,
Make their loose comments upon ev'ry word,
Gesture, or look, I use; mock me all o'er;
And, out of their impetuous, rioting phant'asies,
Beget some slander that shall dwell with me.
And what would that be, think you? Marry, this:
They would give out, because my wife is fair,
Myself but newly married, and my sister
Here sojourning a virgin in my house,

That I were jealous; nay, as sure as death,
That they would say. And how that I had quarrell'd
My brother purposely, thereby to find
An apt pretext to banish them my house. [to do it.
Down. Mass! perhaps so: they're like enough
Kite. Brother, they would believe it: so should I
Try experiments upon myself:
Lend scorn and envy opportunity
To stab my reputation and good name.

Enter Master MATTHEW and Captain BOBADIL.

Mat. I will speak to him—
Capt. B. Speak to him! Away! by the foot of Pharaoh! you shall not; you shall not do him that grace.
Kite. What's the matter, sirs?
Capt. B. The time of day to you, gentleman o'the house. Is Mr. Wellbred stirring?
Down. How then? what should he do?
Capt. B. Gentleman of the house, it is you: is he within, sir?
Kite. He came not to his lodging to-night, sir, I assure you.

Down. Why, do you hear, you?
Capt. B. The gentleman-citizen hath satisfied me. I'll talk to no scavenger. [*Exit with Matthew.*
Down. How, scavenger? Stay, sir, stay!
Kite. Nay, brother Downright.
Down. 'Heart! stand you away, an' you love me.
Kite. You shall not follow him now, I pray you, brother; good faith! you shall not. I will overrule you.

Down. Ha! scavenger! Well, go to, I say little; but, by this good day, (God forgive me I should swear) if I put it up so, say I am the rankest coward ever lived. 'Sdains! an' I swallow this, I'll ne'er draw my sword in the sight of Fleet-street again, while I live; I'll sit in a barn with Madge Howlet, and catch mice first. Scavenger!

Kite. Oh! do not fret yourself thus, never think on't.
Down. These are my brother's comforts, these! these are his comrades, his walking mates! he's a gallant, a cavaliero, too; right hangman-cut! Let me not live, an' I could not find in my heart to swinge the whole gang of 'em, one after another, and begin with him first. I am grieved it should be said he is my brother, and take these courses. Well, as he brews, so he shall drink, for George again. Yet he shall hear on't, and that tightly, too, an' I live, i'faith!

Kite. But, brother, let your reprehension, then, Run in an easy current; not o'er high Carried with rashness, or devouring choler; But rather use the soft persuading way, More winning than enforcing the consent.

Down. Ay, ay, let me alone for that, I warrant you. [*Bell rings.*]

Kite. How now? Oh! the bell rings to breakfast. Brother, I pray you, go in, and bear my wife Company till I come: I'll but give order For some despatch of business to my servant.

Down. I will. Scavenger, scavenger! [*Exit.*

Kite. Well, though my troubled spirit's somewhat eas'd,

It's not repos'd in that security
As I could wish; but I must be content,
Howe'er I set a face on't to the world.
Would I had lost this finger, at a venture,
So Wellbred had ne'er lodged within my house.
Why 't cannot be, where there is such resort
Of wanton gallants and young revellers,
That any woman should be honest long.
Well, to be plain, if I but thought the time

Had answered their affections; all the world
Should not persuade me but I were a cuckold!
Marry, I hope they ha' not got that start;
For opportunity hath balk'd 'em yet,
And shall do still, while I have eyes and ears
To attend the impositions of my heart

Enter Dame KITELY.

Dame K. Sister Bridget, pray you, fetch down the rose-water above in the closet. Sweetheart, will you come in to breakfast?

Kite. An' she overheard me now! [*Aside.*

Dame K. I pray thee, good Muss, we stay for you.

Kite. By heav'n! I would not for a thousand angels. [*Aside.*

Dame K. What ails you, sweetheart? are you not well? Speak, good Muss.

Kite. Troth, my head aches extremely, on a sudden.

Dame K. Oh, the lord!

Kite. How now? what?

Dame K. Alas! how it burns! Muss keep you warm; good truth, it is this new disease, there's a number are troubled withal. For love's sake, sweetheart, come in out of the air.

Kite. How simple and how subtle are her answers!

A new disease, and many troubled with it!
Why, true! she heard me, all the world to nothing.

[*Aside.*

Dame K. I pray thee, good sweetheart, come in; the air will do you harm, in troth.

Kite. I'll come to you presently; 'twill away, I hope.

Dame K. Pray heav'n it do! [*Exit.*

Kite. A new disease! I know not, new or old, But it may well be call'd poor mortals' plague; For, like a pestilence, it doth infect The houses of the brain. Well, I will once more strive,

In spite of this black cloud, myself to be,
And shake the fever off, that thus shakes me. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—Moorfields.

Enter BRAINWORM, disguised as a soldier.

Brain. 'Slid! I cannot choose but laugh to see myself translated thus. Now must I create an intolerable sort of lies, or my present profession loses the grace; and yet the lie to a man of my coat, is as ominous a fruit as the fig. Oh! sir, it holds for good polity ever to have that outwardly in vilest estimation that inwardly is most dear to us. So much for my borrowed shape. Well, the truth is, my old master intends to follow my young, dry-foot, over Moorfields to London this morning: now I, knowing of this hunting-match, or rather conspiracy, and to insinuate with my young master, (for so must we that are blue waiters, and men of hope and service do,) have got me afore in this disguise, determining here to lie in ambuscade, and intercept him in the midway. If I can but get his cloak, his purse, his hat, nay, any thing to cut him off, that is, to stay his journey—"Veni, vidi, vici," I may say with Captain Cæsar; I am made for ever, i'faith! Well, now must I practise to get the true garb of one of those lance-knights, my arm here, and my—young master, and his cousin, Mr. Stephen, as I am a true counterfeit man of war, and no soldier! [*Retires.*]

Enter Young KNO'WELL and Master STEPHEN.

Young K. So, sir, and how, then, coz?

Step. 'Sfoot! I have lost my purse, I think.

Young K. How? lost your purse? Where? when had you it?

Step. I cannot tell: stay.

Brain. 'Slid! I am afraid they will know me: would I could get by them!

[*Aside.*

Young K. What! ha! you it?

Step. No, I think I was bewitched, I—

Young K. Nay, do not weep the loss; hang it! let it go.

Step. Oh! it's here. No, an' it had been lost, I had not cared, but for a jet ring mistress Mary sent me.

Young K. A jet ring! Oh! the poesy, the poesy!

Step. Fine, i'faith! "Though fancy sleep, my love is deep;" meaning that though I did not fancy her, yet she loved me dearly.

Young K. Most excellent!

Step. And then I sent her another, and my poesy was, "The deeper the sweeter, I'll be judged by St. Peter."

Young K. How by St. Peter? I do not conceive that.

Step. Marry, St. Peter, to make up the metre.

Young K. Well, there the saint was your good patron; he helped you at your need: thank him, thank him.

Brain. I cannot take leave of 'em so; I will venture, come what will. [*Aside. Comes forward.*] Gentlemen, please you change a few crowns for a very excellent good blade, here. I am a poor gentleman, a soldier, that in the better state of my fortunes, scorned so mean a refuge, but now it is the humour of necessity to have it so. You seem to be, gentlemen, well affected to martial men, else I should rather die with silence than live with shame; however, vouchsafe to remember, it is my want speaks, not myself. This condition agrees not with my spirit.

Young K. Where hast thou served?

Brain. May it please you, sir, in all the late wars of Bohemia, Hungaria, Dalmatia, Poland; where not, sir? I have been a poor servitor by sea and land, any time this fourteen years, and followed the fortunes of the best commanders in Christendom. I was twice shot at the taking of Aleppo; once at the relief of Vienna. I have been at Marseilles, Naples, and the Adriatic gulf; a gentleman-slave in the galleys thrice, where I was most dangerously shot in the head, through both thighs, and yet, being thus maimed, I am void of maintenance; nothing left me but my scars, the noted marks of my resolution.

Step. How will you sell this rapier, friend?

Brain. Generous sir, I refer it to your own judgment; you are a gentleman, give me what you please.

Step. True, I am a gentleman, I know that, friend; but what though, I pray you say, what would you ask?

Brain. I assure you the blade may become the side or thigh of the best prince in Europe.

Young K. Ay, with a velvet scabbard.

Step. Nay, and it be mine, it shall have a velvet scabbard, coz, that's flat: I'd not wear it as 'tis, an' you would give me an angel.

Brain. At your worship's pleasure, sir; nay, 'tis a most pure Toledo.

Step. I had rather it were a Spaniard. But tell me what shall I give you for it? An' it had a silver hilt—

Young K. Come, come; you shall not buy it. Hold! there's a shilling, fellow:—take thy rapier.

Step. Why, but I will buy it now, because you say so; and there's another shilling, fellow; I scorn to be outbidden. What, shall I walk with a cudgel, like a higgibottom, and may have a rapier for money?

Young K. You may buy one in the city.

Step. Tut! I'll buy this i'the field, so I will; I have a mind to't, because 'tis a field rapier. Tell me your lowest price.

Young K. You shall not buy it, I say.

Step. By this money but I will, though I give more than 'tis worth.

Young K. Come away; you are a fool. [*Exit.*

Step. Friend, I am a fool, that's granted; but I'll have it for that word's sake. Follow me for your money. He says I am a fool. [*Exit.*

Brain. The gentleman seems to know you, sir. I follow. [*Exit.*

Enter KNO'WELL.

* *Kno.* I cannot lose the thought yet of this letter Sent to my son; nor leave to admire the change Of manners and the breeding of our youth, Within the kingdom, since myself was one. When I was young, he liv'd not in the stews, Durst have conceiv'd a scorn, and utter'd it, On a grey head; and a man had then A certain reverence paid unto his years That had none due unto his life. But now we are fall'n; youth from their fear, And age from that which bred it, good example.

Re-enter BRAINWORM.

Brain. My master! Nay, faith! have at you; I am fleshed now, I have sped so well; though I must attack you in a different way. [*Aside.*] Worshipful sir, I beseech you respect the state of a poor soldier! I am ashamed of this base course of life, (God's my comfort,) but extremity provokes me to't—what remedy?

Kno. I have not for you now.

Brain. By the faith I bear unto truth, gentlemen, it is no ordinary custom in me, but only to preserve manhood. I protest to you, a man I have been, a man I may be, by your sweet bounty.

Kno. Pr'ythee, good friend, be satisfied.

Brain. Good sir, by that hand, you may do the part of a kind gentleman, in lending a poor soldier the price of two cans of beer, a matter of small value; the king of heaven shall pay you, and I shall rest thankful: sweet worship—

Kno. Nay, an' you be so importunate—

Brain. Oh! tender sir, need will have its course: I was not made to this vile use. Well, the edge of the enemy could not have abated me so much. [*Weeps.*] It's hard, when a man has served in his prince's cause, and be thus—Honourable worship, let me derive a small piece of silver from you; it shall not be given in the course of time. By this good ground, I was fain to pawn my rapier last night for a poor supper; I had sucked the hilts long before, I am a pagan else, sweet honour.

Kno. Believe me, I am taken with some wonder, To think a fellow of thy outward presence, Should, in the frame and fashion of his mind, Be so degenerate and sordid base! Art thou a man, and sham'st thou not to beg? To practise such a servile kind of life? Why, were thy education ne'er so mean, Having thy limbs, a thousand fairer courses Offer themselves to thy election; Either the wars might still supply thy wants,

Or service of some virtuous gentleman,
Or honest labour.

Brain. Faith! sir, I would gladly find some other course, if so—

Kno. Ay, you'd gladly find it, but you will not seek it.

Brain. Alas! sir, where should a man seek? In the wars there's no ascent by desert in these days, but—and for service, would it were as soon purchased as wished for!—The air's my comfort.—I know what I would say.

Kno. What's thy name?

Brain. Please you, Fitz-sword, sir.

Kno. Fitz-sword,

Say that a man should entertain thee now,
Wouldst thou be honest, humble, just, and true?

Brain. Sir, by the place and honour of a soldier—

Kno. Nay, nay, I like not those affected oaths!

Speak plainly, man; what think'st thou of my words?

Brain. Nothing, sir; but wish my fortunes were as happy, as my service should be honest.

Kno. Well, follow me; I'll prove thee, if thy deeds will carry a proportion to thy words. [*Exit.*]

Brain. Yes, sir, straight; I'll but garter my hose.—Oh! that my belly were hooped now, for I am ready to burst with laughing! Never was bottle or bagpipe fuller. 'Slid! was there ever seen a fox in years to betray himself thus? Now I shall be possessed of all his counsels; and by that conduct my young master. Well, he is resolved to prove my honesty: faith! and I am resolved to prove his patience. Oh! I shall abuse him intolerably! It's no matter; let the world think me a bad counterfeit, if I cannot give him the slip at an instant. Why, this is better than to have staid his journey. Well, I'll follow him. Oh! how I long to be employed! With change of voice, these scars, and many an oath, I'll follow son and sire, and serve 'em both. [*Exit.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—Stocks-market.

Enter Master MATTHEW, WELLBRED, and Captain BOBADIL.

Mat. Yes, faith! sir, we were at your lodging to seek you, too.

Well. Oh! I came not there to-night.

Capt. B. Your brother delivered us as much.

Well. Who? My brother Downright?

Capt. B. He. Mr. Wellbred, I know not in what kind you hold me, but let me say to you this: as sure as honour, I esteem it so much out of the sunshine of reputation to throw the least beam of regard upon such a—

Well. Sir, I must hear no ill words of my brother.

Capt. B. I protest to you, as I have a thing to be said about me, I never saw any gentleman-like part—

Well. Good Captain, [*faces about*] to some other discourse.

Capt. B. With your leave, sir, an' there were no more men living upon the face of the earth, I should not fancy him, by St. George.

Mat. Troth! nor I; he is of a rustical cut, I know not how; he doth not carry himself like a gentleman of fashion.

Well. Oh! Mr. Matthew, that's a grace peculiar but to few.

Enter Young KNO'WELL and Master STEPHEN.

Ned Kno'well! by my soul, welcome! How dost thou, sweet spirit, my genius? 'Slid! I shall love Apollo, and the mad Thespian girls, the better while I live for this, my dear fury. Now I see there's some love in thee. Sirrah, these be the two I write to you of. Nay, what a drowsy humour is this now? Why dost thou not speak?

Young K. Oh! you are a fine gallant; you sent me a rare letter.

Well. Why, was't not rare?

Young K. Yes, I'll be sworn, I was never guilty of reading the like. But I marvel what camel it was that had the carriage of it; for doubtless he was no ordinary beast that brought it.

Well. Why?

Young K. Why, sayest thou? Why, dost thou think that any reasonable creature, especially in the morning, the sober time of the day, too, could have mistaken my father for me?

Well. 'Slid! you jest, I hope.

Young K. Indeed, the best use we can turn it to, is to make a jest on't now; but I'll assure you my father had the full view o'your flourishing style, before I saw it.

Well. What a dull slave was this! But, sirrah, what said he to it, i'faith?

Young K. Nay, I know not what he said; but I have a shrewd guess what he thought.

Well. What, what?

Young K. Marry, that thou art some strange, dis-solute, young fellow, and I not a grain or two better for keeping thee company.

Well. Tut! that thought is like the moon in her last quarter, 'twill change shortly. But, sirrah, I pray thee, be acquainted with my two hang-bys here; thou wilt take exceeding pleasure in 'em, if thou hearest 'em once go: my wind-instruments. I'll wind 'em up. But what strange piece of silence is this? The sign of the dumb man?

Young K. Oh! sir, a kinsman of mine, one that may make your music the fuller, an' he please; he has his humour, sir.

Well. Oh! what is't, what is't?

Young K. Nay, I'll neither do your judgment, nor his folly that wrong, as to prepare your apprehensions. I'll leave him to the mercy o'your search, if you can take him so.

Well. Well, Captain Bobadil, Mr. Matthew, I pray you, know this gentleman here: he is a friend of mine, and one that will deserve your affection. I know not your name, sir, but shall be glad of any occasion to render me more familiar to you.

[To Master STEPHEN.]

Step. My name is Mr. Stephen, sir; I am this gentleman's own cousin, sir: his father is mine uncle, sir. I am somewhat melancholy; but you shall command me, sir, in whatsoever is incident to a gentleman.

Capt. B. I must tell you this, I am no general man; but for Mr. Wellbred's sake, (you may embrace it at what height of favour you please,) I do communicate with you, and conceive you to be a gentleman of some parts. I love few words.

Young K. And I fewer, sir. I have scarce enow to thank you.

Mat. But are you, indeed, sir, so given to it?

[To Master STEPHEN.]

Step. Ay, truly, sir, I am mightily given to melancholy.

Mat. Oh! 'tis your only fine humour, sir; your

true melancholy breeds you perfect fine wit, sir. I am melancholy myself divers times, sir; and then I do no more but take a pen and paper presently, and overflow you half-a-score or a dozen of sonnets at a sitting.

Step. Cousin, it is well; am I melancholy enough?

[*Apart to Young Kno'well.*]

Young K. Oh! ay, excellent!

Well. Captain Bobadil, why muse you so?

Young K. He is melancholy, too.

Capt. B. Faith! sir, I was thinking of a most honourable piece of service was performed to-morrow, being St. Mark's day, shall be some ten years now.

Young K. In what place, Captain?

Capt. B. Why, at the beleag'ring of Strigonium, where, in less than two hours, seven hundred resolute gentlemen, as any were in Europe, lost their lives upon the breach. I'll tell you, gentlemen, it was the first, but the best leaguer that I ever beheld with these eyes, except the taking of—what do you call it? last year, by the Genoese! but that (of all others) was the most fatal and dangerous exploit that ever I was ranged in, since I first bore arms before the face of the enemy, as I am a gentleman and a soldier.

Step. So I had as lief as an angel, I could swear as well as that gentleman.

[*Aside.*]

Young K. Then you were a servitor at both, it seems; at Strigonium, and What-do-you-call-it?

Capt. B. Oh, lord! sir, by St. George! I was the first man that entered the breach: had I not effected it with resolution, I had been slain, if I had had a million of lives.

Young K. 'Twere pity you had not ten; a cat's and your own, i'faith! But was it possible?

Capt. B. I assure you, upon my reputation, 'tis true, and yourself shall confess.

Young K. You must bring me to the rack first.

Capt. B. Observe me judiciously, sweet sir; they had planted me three demi-culverins, just in the mouth of the breach: now, sir, as we were to give on, their master-gunner (a man of no mean skill and mark, you must think) confronts me with his linstock, ready to give fire: I, spying his intentment, discharged my petronel in his bosom, and with these single arms, my poor rapier, ran violently upon the Moors that guarded the ordnance, and put them all pell-mell to the sword.

Well. To the sword! to the rapier, Captain.

Young K. Oh! it was a good figure observed, sir. But did you all this, Captain, without hurting your blade?

Capt. B. Without any impeach o'the earth. You shall perceive, sir. It is the most fortunate weapon that ever rid on poor gentleman's thigh. Shall I tell you, sir? You talk of Morglay, Excalibur, Durindina, or so—Tut! I lend no credit to that is fabled of 'em; I know the virtue of mine own, and, therefore, I dare the bolder maintain it.

Step. I marvel whether it be a Toledo or no?

Capt. B. A most perfect Toledo, I assure you, sir.

Step. I have a countryman of his here.

Mat. Pray you, let's see, sir. Yes, faith! it is.

Capt. B. This a Toledo? 'Pish!

[*Bends the blade double.*]

Step. Why do you pish, Captain?

Capt. B. A Fleming, by heaven! I'll buy them for a guilder a-piece, an' I would have a thousand of them.

Young K. How say you, cousin? I told you thus much.

Well. Where bought you it, Mr. Stephen?

Step. Of a scurvy rogue soldier; he swore it was a Toledo.

Capt. B. A poor provant rapier, no better.

Mat. Mass! I think it be, indeed, now I look on't better.

Young K. Nay, the longer you look on't the worse. Put it up, put it up.

Step. Well, I will put it up; but by—I ha' forgot the Captain's oath—I thought to ha' sworn by it—[*Aside.*—an' e'er I meet him—

Well. Oh! 'tis past help now, sir; you must ha' patience.

Step. I could eat the very hilts for anger.

Young K. A sign of good digestion; you have an ostrich stomach, cousin.

Step. A stomach! I would I had him here, you should see an' I had a stomach.

Well. It's better as it is. Come, gentlemen, shall we go?

Enter BRAINWORM.

Young K. A miracle, cousin! look here, look here!

Step. Oh, god'slid! by your leave, do you know me, sir?

Brain. Ay, sir, I know you by sight.

Step. You sold me a rapier, did you not?

Brain. Yes, marry, did I, sir.

Step. You said it was a Toledo, eh?

Brain. True, I did so.

Step. But it is none.

Brain. No, sir, I confess it is none.

Step. Do you confess it? Gentlemen, bear witness he has confessed it. By God's will, an' you had not confessed it—

Young K. Oh! cousin, forbear, forbear!

Step. Nay, I have done, cousin.

Well. Why, you have done like a gentleman; he has confessed it; what would you more?

Step. Yet, by his leave, he is a rascal, under his favour, do you see?

Young K. Ay, by his leave he is, and under favour. Pretty piece of civility! Sirrah, how dost thou like him?

[*Apart to WELLBRED.*]

Well. Oh! it's a most precious fool! make much on him. I can compare him to nothing more happily than a drum; for every one may play upon him.

[*Apart.*]

Young K. No, no; a child's whistle were far the fitter.

[*Apart.*]

Brain. Sir, shall I entreat a word with you?

[*To Young Kno'well.*]

Young K. With me, sir? You have not another Toledo to sell, ha' you?

Brain. You are conceited, sir. Your name is Mr. Kno'well, as I take it?

Young K. You are i'the right. You mean not to proceed in the catechism, do you?

Brain. No, sir, I am none of that coat.

Young K. Of as bare coat, though. Well, say sir.

Brain. Faith! sir, I am but a servant to the drum extraordinary; and, indeed, this smoky varnish being washed off, and three or four patches removed, I appear your worship's in reversion, after the decease of your good father—Brainworm.

Young K. Brainworm! 'Slight! what breath of a conjurer hath blown thee hither in this shape?

Brain. The breath o'your letter, sir, this morning: the same that blew you to the Windmill, and your father after you.

Young K. My father!

Brain. Nay, never start; 'tis true! he has followed you over the fields by the foot, as you would do a hare i' the snow.

Young K. Sirrah, Wellbred, what shall we do, sirrah? My father is come over after me.

Well. Thy father! Where is he?

Brain. At Justice Clement's house here, in Coleman-street, where he but stays my return, and then—

Well. Who's this? Brainworm?

Brain. The same, sir.

Well. Why, how, i' the name of wit, comest thou transmuted thus?

Brain. Faith! a device, a device! Nay, for the love of reason, gentlemen, and avoiding the danger, stand not here: withdraw, and I'll tell you all.

Young K. Come, cousin. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—The Warehouse.

Enter KITELY and CASH.

Kite. What says he, Thomas? Did you speak with him?

Cash. He will expect you, sir, within this half-hour.

Kite. Has he the money ready, can you tell?

Cash. Yes, sir, the money was brought in last night. [cloak.]

Kite. Oh! that's well: fetch me my cloak, my

Stay, let me see: an hour to go and come;

Ay, that will be the least; and then 'twill be

An hour before I can despatch him,

Or very near: well, I will say two hours.

Two hours! Ha! things never dreamt of yet,

May be contriv'd, ay, and effected too,

In two hours' absence. Well, I will not go.

Two hours! no, fleeing opportunity,

I will not give your subtlety that scope.

Who will not judge him worthy to be robb'd,

That sets his doors wide open to a thief,

And shews the felon where his treasure lies?

Again, what earthly spirit but will attempt

To taste the fruit of beauty's golden tree,

When leaden sleep seals up the dragon's eyes?

I will not go. Business, go by for once.

No, beauty, no; you are too, too precious

To be left so, without a guard, or open.

You then must be kept up close, and well watch'd!

For, give you opportunity, no quicksand

Devours or swallows swifter! He that lends

His wife, if she be fair, or time, or place,

Compels her to be false. I will not go,

The dangers are too many. I am resolv'd for that.

Carry in my cloak again. Yet stay—yet do, too,

I will defer going on all occasions.

Cash. Sir, Snare, your scrivener, will be there

with the bonds.

Kite. That's true. Fool on me! I had clean forgotten it. I must go. What's o'clock?

Cash. Exchange time, sir. [here, too,

Kite. 'Heart! then will Wellbred presently be

With one or other of his loose consorts.

I am a knave if I know what to say,

What course to take, or which way to resolve.

My brain, methinks, is like an hour-glass,

Wherein my imagination runs, like sands

Filling up time: but then are turn'd and turn'd;

So that I know not what to stay upon,

And less to put in act. It shall be so.

Nay, I dare build upon his secrecy,

He knows not to deceive me. [Aside] Thomas!

Cash. Sir?

Kite. Yet now I have bethought me, I will not.

[Aside.]

Thomas, is Cob within?

Cash. I think he be, sir.

[him.]

Kite. But he'll prate, too; there's no speech of

No, there were no man o'the earth to Thomas,

If I durst trust him; there is all the doubt.

But should he have a chink in him, I were gone,

Lost i' my fame for ever; talk for th' Exchange.

The manner he hath stood with, till this present,

Doth promise no such change. What should I fear,

then?

Well, come what will, I'll tempt my fortune once;

[Aside.]

Thomas, you may deceive me, but I hope—

Your love to me is more—

Cash. Sir, if a servant's

Duty, with faith, may be call'd love, you are

More than in hope; you are possess'd of it.

Kite. I thank you heartily, Thomas; gi' me your hand.

With all my heart, good Thomas. I have, Thomas,

A secret to impart to you—but

When once you have it, I must seal your lips up.

So far I tell you, Thomas.

Cash. Sir, for that—

[Thomas,

Kite. Nay, hear me out. Think I esteem you,

When I will let you in thus to my private.

It is a thing stir's nearer to my crest

Than thou'rt aware of, Thomas. If thou shouldst

Reveal it, but—

Cash. How! I reveal it?

Kite. Nay,

I do not think thou wouldst; but if thou shouldst,

'Twere a great weakness.

Cash. A great treachery.

Give it no other name.

Kite. Thou wilt not do't, then?

Cash. Sir, if I do, mankind disclaim me ever.

Kite. He will not swear; he has some reservation,

Some conceal'd purpose, and close meaning, sure;

Else, being urg'd so much, how should he choose

But lend an oath to all this protestation?

He's no fanatic; I have heard him swear.

What should I think of it? Urge him again,

And by some other way? I will do so. [Aside.]

Well, Thomas, thou hast sworn not to disclose—

Yes, you did swear.

Cash. Not yet, sir, but I will,

Please you—

Kite. No, Thomas, I dare take thy word;

But if thou wilt swear, do, as thou think'st good:

I am resolv'd without it, at thy pleasure.

Cash. By my soul's safety, then, sir, I protest

My tongue shall ne'er take knowledge of a word,

Deliver'd me in nature of your trust.

Kite. It is too much; these ceremonies need not;

I know thy faith to be as firm as rock.

Thomas, come hither, near; we cannot be

Too private in this business. So it is.

Now he has sworn, I dare the safelier venture:

I have of late, by divers observations—

But whether his oath can bind him, there it is.

I will bethink me ere I do proceed. [Aside.]

Thomas, it will be now too long to stay,

I'll spy some fitter time soon, or to-morrow.

Cash. Sir, at your pleasure.

Kite. I will think. Give me my cloak. And, Thomas,

I pray you, search the books, 'gainst my return,

For the receipts 'twixt me and Traps.

Cash. I will, sir.

Kite. And, hear you; if your mistress' brother, Wellbred,

Chance to bring hither any gentlemen

Ere I come back, let one straight bring me word—

Cash. Very well, sir.

Kite. To the Exchange; do you hear?

Or here in Coleman-street, to Justice Clement's;

Forget it not, nor be out of the way.

Cash. I will not, sir.

Kite. I pray you, have a care on't.

Or whether he come or no, if any other

Stranger, or else, fail not to send me word.

Cash. I shall not, sir.

Kite. Be't your special business

Now to remember it.

Cash. Sir, I warrant you.

Kite. But, Thomas, this is not the secret, Thomas, I told you of.

Cash. No, sir, I do suppose it.

Kite. Believe me, it is not.

Cash. Sir, I do believe you.

[*Thomas,*

Kite. By heaven, it is not! That's enough. But,

I would not you should utter it, do you see?

To any creature living; yet I care not.

Well, I must hence. Thomas, conceive thus much;

It was a trial of you, when I meant

So deep a secret to you: I meant not this,

But that I have to tell you. This is nothing, this.

But, Thomas, keep this from my wife, I charge you,

Lock'd up in silence, midnight, buried here,

No greater hell than to be slave to fear.

[*Exit.*

Cash. Lock'd up in silence, midnight, buried here!

Whence should this flood of passion, trow, take head, eh?

Best dream no longer of this running humour,

For fear I sink. But soft,

Here is company; now must I—

[*Exit.*

Enter WELLBRED, Young KNO'WELL, BRAINWORM,

Master MATTHEW, Master STEPHEN, and Captain BOBADIL.

Well. Beshrew me, but it was an absolute good jest, and exceedingly well carried.

Young K. Ay, and our ignorance maintained it as well, did it not?

Well. Yes, faith! But wasn't possible thou shouldst not know him? I forgive Mr. Stephen, for he is stupidity itself. Why, Brainworm, who would have thought thou hadst been such an artificer?

Young K. An artificer! an architect! Except a man had studied begging all his life-time, and been a weaver of language from his infancy, for the clothing of it, I never saw his rival.

Well. Where got'st thou this coat, I marvel?

Brain. Of a Houndsditch man, sir; one of the devil's near kinsmen, a broker.

Re-enter CASH.

Cash. Francis! Martin! Ne'er a one to be found now? What a spite's this?

Well. How now, Thomas, is my brother Kitley within?

Cash. No, sir; my master went forth e'en now: but Master Downtight is within. Cob! What, Cob! Is he gone, too?

Well. Whither went your master, Thomas; canst thou tell?

Cash. I know not; to Justice Clement's, I think, sir. Cob!

[*Exit.*

Young K. Justice Clement! What's he?

Well. Why, dost thou not know him? He is a city magistrate, a justice here; an excellent good

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lawyer, and a great scholar; but the only mad and merry old fellow in Europe! I shewed you him the other day.

Young K. Oh! is that he? I remember him now. Good faith! and he has a very strange presence, methinks; it shews as if he stood out of the rank from other men. I have heard many of his jests i' the university. They say, he will commit a man for taking the wall of his horse.

Well. Ay, or wearing his cloak on one shoulder, or serving of God. Anything, indeed, if it come in the way of his humour.

Re-enter CASH.

Cash. Gasper, Martin, Cob! 'Heart! where should they be, I trow?

Capt. B. Master Kitley's man, pr'ythee, vouchsafe us the lighting of this match.

Cash. Fire on your match! no time but now to vouchsafe? Francis! Cob!

[*Exit.*

Capt. B. Body of me! Here's the remainder of seven pounds since yesterday was seven night. 'Tis your right Trinidado! Did you never take any, Master Stephen?

Step. No, truly, sir! but I'll learn to take it now, since you recommend it so.

Capt. B. Sir, believe me, upon my relation, for what I tell you the world shall not reprove. I have been in the Indies, where this herb grows, where neither myself, nor a dozen gentlemen more, of my knowledge, have received the taste of any other nutriment in the world for the space of one-and-twenty weeks, but the fume of this simple only. Therefore it cannot be but 'tis most divine, especially your Trinidado. Your Nicotian is good, too. I do hold it, and will affirm it before any prince in Europe, to be the most sovereign and precious weed that ever the earth tendered to the use of man.

Young K. This speech would have done decently in a tobacco-trader's mouth.

[*Aside.*

Re-enter CASH, with COB.

Cash. At Justice Clement's he is, in the middle of Coleman-street.

Cob. Oh, ho!

Capt. B. Where's the match I gave thee, Master Kitley's man?

Cash. Here it is, sir.

Cob. By God's-me! I marvel what pleasure or felicity they have in taking this roguish tobacco! It's good for nothing but to choke a man, and fill him full of smoke and embers. [*Captain BOBADIL beats COB with a cudgel; MATTHEW runs away.*]

All. Oh! good captain! hold, hold!

Capt. B. You base scullion, you.

Cash. Come, thou must need be talking, too; thou'rt well enough served.

Cob. Well, it shall be a dear beating, an' I live! I will have justice for this.

Capt. B. Do you prate? Do you murmur?

[*Beats COB off.*

Young K. Nay, good Captain, will you regard the humour of a fool?

Capt. B. A whoreson, filthy slave, a dung-worm, an excrement! Body o' Cæsar, but that I scorn to let forth so mean a spirit, I'd have stabbed him to the earth.

Well. Marry, the law forbid, sir.

Capt. B. By Pharaoh's foot, I would have done it.

[*Exit.*

Step. Oh! he swears admirably! By Pharaoh's foot, body of Cæsar; I shall never do it, sure; upon

mine honour, and by St. George; no I ha'n't the right grace.

[*Aside.*]

Well. But, soft, where's Mr. Matthew—gone?

Brain. No, sir; they went in here.

Well. Oh! let's follow them: Master Matthew is gone to salute his mistress in verse. We shall have the happiness to hear some of his poetry now. He never comes unfurnished. Brainworm!

Step. Brainworm! Where is this Brainworm?

Young K. Ay, cousin, no words of it, upon your gentility.

Step. Not I, body of me! by this air, St. George, and the foot of Pharaoh!

Well. Rare! your cousin's discourse is simply drawn out with oaths.

Young K. 'Tis larded with 'em: a kind of French dressing, if you love it. Come, let's in; come, cousin.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—A Hall in Justice Clement's house.

Enter KITELY and COB.

Kite. Ah! How many are there, say'st thou?

Cob. Marry, sir, your brother, Master Wellbred—
Kite. Tut! beside him: what strangers are there, man?

Cob. Strangers! let me see; one, two—Mass! I know not well, there are so many.

Kite. How, so many?

Cob. Ay, there's some five or six of them at the most.

Kite. A swarm, a swarm!

Spite of the devil, how they sting my head
With forked stings, thus wide and large! But Cob,
How long hast thou been coming hither, Cob?

Cob. A little while, sir.

Kite. Didst thou come running?

Cob. No, sir.

Kite. Nay, then I am familiar with thy haste!
Bane to my fortunes. What meant I to marry?
I, that before was rank'd in such content;

My mind at rest, too, in so soft a peace,
Being free master of my own free thoughts,
And now become a slave? What, never sigh!
Be of good cheer, man, for thou art a cuckold.

'Tis done! 'tis done! Nay, when such flowing store,
Plenty itself falls into my wife's lap,

The cornucopia will be mine, I know. But, Cob,
What entertainment had they? I am sure
My sister and my wife would bid them welcome, eh!

Cob. Like enough, sir; yet I heard not a word of it.

Kite. No; their lips were seal'd with kisses, and
Drown'd in a flood of joy at their arrival,
Had lost its motion, state, and faculty.

Cob. Which of them was't that first kiss'd my wife?
My sister, I should say—my wife, alas!

I fear not her. Ha! who was it, say'st thou?

Cob. By my troth, sir, will you have the truth of it?

Kite. Ay, good Cob, I pray thee heartily.

Cob. Then I am a vagabond, and fitter for Bride-
well than your worship's company, if I saw any-
body to be kissed, unless they would have kissed
the post in the middle of the warehouse; for there
I left them all at their tobacco, with a plague.

Kite. How! were they not gone in, then, ere
thou cam'st?

Cob. Oh! no, sir.

Kite. Spite o'the devil! What do I stay here,
then? Cob, follow me.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Room in Kitley's house.

Enter DOWNRIGHT and Dame KITELY.

Down. Well, sister, I tell you true; and you'll find it so in the end.

Dame K. Alas! brother, what would you have me to do? I cannot help it. You see my brother brings 'em in here; they are his friends.

Down. His friends! his friends! 'Slud, they do nothing but haunt him up and down, like a sort of unlucky spirits, and tempt him to all manner of villany that can be thought of. Well, by this light, a little thing would make me play the devil with some of 'em. And 'twere not more for your husband's sake, than any thing else, I'd make the house too hot for the best of 'em. They should say, and swear, hell were broken loose ere they went hence. But, by God's will, 'tis nobody's fault but your's; for an' you had done as you might have done, they should have been parboiled and baked too, every mother's son, ere they should ha' come in, e'er a one of 'em.

Dame K. God's my life! did you ever hear the like? What a strange man is this! Could I keep out all them, think you? I should put myself against half a dozen men, should I? Good faith, you'd mad the patientest body in the world to hear you talk so, without any sense or reason.

Enter BRIDGET, Master MATTHEW, WELLBRED, STEPHEN, Young KNO'WELL, Captain BOBADIL, and CASH.

Brid. Servant, in troth, you are too prodigal
Of your wit's treasure, thus to pour it forth
Upon so mean a subject as my worth.

Mat. You say well, mistress; and I mean as well.

Down. Heyday, here is stuff!

Well. Oh! now stand close. Pray heaven she can get him to read; he should do it of his own natural impudence.

Brid. Servant, what is this same, I pray you?

Mat. Marry, an elegy! an elegy! an odd toy—I'll read it, if you please.

Brid. Pray you do, servant.

Down. Oh! here's no foppery. Death! I can endure the stocks better.

Young K. What ails thy brother? Can he not bear the reading of a ballad?

[*To WELLBRED.*]

Well. Oh! no; a rhyme to him is worse than cheese, or a bagpipe. But mark, you lose the protestation.

Capt. B. Master Matthew, you abuse the expectation of your dear mistress and her fair sister. Fie! while you live, avoid this prolixity.

Mat. I shall, sir. [*Reads.*]

"Rare creature, let me speak without offence;
Would heav'n my rude words had the influence
To rule thy thoughts, as thy fair looks do mine;
Then shouldst thou be his prisoner, who is thine."

[*Master STEPHEN shakes his head.*]

Young K. 'Slight, he shakes his head like a bottle, to feel an' there be any brain in it!

Well. Sister, what ha' you here? verses? Pray you, let's see. Who made these verses? They are excellently good.

Mat. Oh! Master Wellbred, 'tis your disposition to say so, sir. They were good i' the morning; I made 'em extempore this morning.

Well. How, extempore?

Mat. I would I might be hanged else; ask Captain Bobadil; he saw me write them at the—*the* Star yonder.

Step. Cousin, how do you like this gentleman's verses?

Young K. Oh, admirable! the best that ever I heard, coz.

Step. Body o'Caesar! they are admirable! The best that ever I heard, as I am a soldier.

Down. I am vexed; I can hold ne'er a bone of me still! 'Heart, I think they mean to build and breed here.

Well. Sister Kately, I marvel you get you not a servant that can rhyme and do tricks, too.

Down. Oh, monster! Impudence itself! Tricks! Come, you might practise your ruffian tricks somewhere else, and not here, I wuss. This is no tavern, nor drinking-school, to vent your exploits in.

Well. How now! Whose cow has calved?

Down. Marry, that has mine, sir. Nay, boy, never look askance at me for the matter; I'll tell you of it; ay, sir, you and your companions! Mend yourselves, when I ha' done!

Well. My companions?

Down. Yes, sir, your companions; so I say. I am not afraid of you nor them neither, your hangbys here. You must have your poets and your potlings, your soldados and foolados, to follow you up and down the city; and here they must come to domineer and swagger. Sirrah, you ballad-singer, and slops, your fellow there, get you out; get you home; or, by this steel, I'll cut off your ears, and that presently.

Well. 'Slight! stay, and let's see what he dare do. Cut off his ears! cut a whetstone. You are an ass, do you see; touch any man here, and by this hand, I'll run my rapier to the hilts in you.

Down. Yea, that would I fain see, boy. [*They all draw, and they of the house part them.*]

Dame K. Oh, Jesu! Murder! Thomas! Gasper!

Brid. Help, help! Thomas!

Young K. Gentlemen, forbear, I pray you.

Capt. B. Well, sirrah! you Holofernes! By my hand, I will pink your flesh full of holes with my rapier, for this; I will, by this good heaven. Nay, let him come, gentleman, by the body of St. George, I'll not kill him. [*They offer to fight again, and are parted.*]

Cash. Hold, hold! good gentlemen.

Down. You whoreson, bragging coistril.

Enter KITELY.

Kite. Why, how now! what's the matter? What's the stir here?

Put up your weapons, and put off this rage.

My wife and sister, they're the cause of this.

What, Thomas; where is the knave?

Cash. Here, sir.

Well. Come, let's go; this is one of my brother's ancient humours, this.

[*Ereunt* Master MATTHEW, Captain BOBADIL,

Young KNO'WELL, and WELLBRED.

Step. I am glad nobody was hurt by his ancient humour.

Kite. Why, how now, brother; who enforced this brawl?

Down. A sort of lewd rake. And they must come here to read ballads, and roguery, and trash! I'll mar the knot of 'em ere I sleep, perhaps; especially Bob there, he that's all manner of shapes; and songs and sonnets, his fellow. But I'll follow 'em.

[*Erit.*]

Brid. Brother, indeed you are too violent, Too sudden in your humour.

There was one, a civil gentleman,

And very worthily demean'd himself.

Kite. Oh! that was some love of your's, sister.

Brid. A love of mine? I would it were no worse, brother? You'd pay my portion sooner than you think for.

[*Erit.*]

Dame K. Indeed, he seemed to be a gentleman of exceeding fair disposition, and of very excellent parts. What a coil and stir is here!

[*Erit.*]

Kite. Her love, by heav'n! my wife's minion! Death, these phrases are intolerable!

Well, well, well, well, well!

It is too plain, too clear. Thomas, come hither.

What, are they gone?

Cash. Ay, sir, they went in.

My mistress and your sister—

Kite. Are any of the gallants within

Cash. No, sir, they are all gone.

Kite. Art thou sure of it?

Cash. I can assure you, sir.

Kite. What gentleman was it that they praised so, Thomas?

Cash. One, they call him Master Kno'well, a handsome young gentleman, sir.

[*much.*]

Kite. Ay, I thought so. My mind gave me as I'll die, but they have hid him in the house Somewhere; I'll go and search. Go with me,

Thomas;

Be true to me, and thou shalt find me a master.

[*Ereunt.*]

SCENE II.—*Moorfields.*

Enter Young KNO'WELL, WELLBRED, and BRAINWORM.

Young K. Well, Brainworm, perform this business happily, and thou makest a purchase of my love for ever.

Well. I'faith, now let thy spirits use their best faculties; by this time, and at my hand, remember the message to my brother; for there's no other means to start him out of his house.

Brain. I warrant you, sir; fear nothing. I have a nimble soul has waked all forces of my phantasy by this time, and put 'em in true motion. What you have possessed me withal, I'll discharge it amply, sir; make it no question.

[*Erit.*]

Well. Forth, and prosper, Brainworm. Faith! Ned, how dost thou approve of my abilities in this device?

Young K. Troth, well, howsoever; but it will come excellent if it take.

Well. Take, man! Why, it cannot choose but take, if the circumstances miscarry not. But tell me ingenuously, dost thou affect my sister Bridget, as thou pretendest?

Young K. Friend, am I worthy of belief?

Well. Come, do not protest. In faith, she is a maid of good ornament, and much modesty; and except I conceived very worthily of her, thou shouldst not have her.

Young K. Nay, that I'm afraid will be a question yet, whether I shall have her or no.

Well. 'Slid, thou shalt have her; by this light thou shalt.

Young K. I am satisfied; and do believe thou wilt omit no offered occasion to make my desire complete.

Well. Thou shalt see and know I will not.

[*Ereunt.*]

Enter FORMAL and KNO'WELL.

For. Was your man a soldier, sir?

Kno. Ay, a knave; I took him begging o'the way, This morning, as I came over Moorfields.

Re-enter BRAINWORM.

Oh! here he is.—You have made fair speed, believe me;

Where i'th name of sloth could you be thus—

Brain. Marry, peace be my comfort, where I thought I should have had little comfort of your worship's service.

Kno. How so?

Brain. Oh, sir! your coming to the city, your entertainment of me, and your sending me to watch—indeed, all the circumstances either of your charge, or any employment, are as open to your son as to yourself.

Kno. How should that be, unless that villain, Have told him of the letter, and discovered

All that I strictly charged him to conceal! 'Tis so!

Brain. I am partly o'that faith; 'tis so, indeed.

Kno. But how should he know you to be my man?

Brain. Nay, sir, I cannot tell; unless it be by the black art! Is not your son a scholar, sir?

Kno. Yes; but I hope his soul is not allied

Unto such hellish practice; if it were,

I had just cause to weep my part in him,

And curse the time of his creation.

But where didst thou find them, Fitz-sword?

Brain. You should rather ask where they found me, sir; for I'll be sworn, I was going along in the street, thinking nothing, when, of a sudden, a voice calls, "Mr. Kno'well's man!" another cries, "soldier!" and then, half a dozen of 'em, till they had called me within a house, where I no sooner came, but out flew all their rapiers at my bosom, with some three or four score oaths to accompany 'em; and all to tell me, I was a dead man if I did not confess where you were, and how I was employed, and about what; which, when they could not get out of me, as I protest they must have dissected me, and made an anatomy of me first, and so I told 'em, they locked me up into a room i'th top of a high house; whence, by great miracle, having a light heart, I slid down by a bottom of packthread into the street, and so escaped. But, sir, thus much I can assure you, for I heard it while I was locked up, there were a great many rich merchants' and brave citizens' wives with 'em at a feast; and your son, Mr. Edward, withdrew with one of 'em, and has 'pointed to meet her anon, at one Cob's house, a water-bearer, that dwells by the wall. Now, there your worship shall be sure to take him; for there he preys, and fail he will not.

[not.

Kno. Nor will I fail to break his match, I doubt Go thou along with Justice Clement's man, [thou? And stay there for me. At one Cob's house say'st

Brain. Ay, sir, there you shall have him. [*Exit Kno'WELL.*] Yes! Invisible! Much wench, or much son! 'Slight! when he has staid there three or four hours, trawling with the expectation of wonders, and at length be delivered of air! Oh! the sport that I should then take to look on him, if I durst! But now I mean to appear no more before him in this shape. I have another trick to act yet. [*Aside.*] Sir, I make you stay somewhat long.

For. Not a whit, sir.

You have been lately in the wars, sir, it seems?

Brain. Marry have I, sir, to my loss, and expense of all, almost—

For. Troth, sir, I would be glad to bestow a bottle o'you, if it please you to accept it—

Brain. Oh! sir—

For. But to hear the manner of your services and your devices in the wars; they say they be very strange, and not like those a man reads in Roman histories, or sees at Mile-end.

Brain. No, I assure you, sir; why, at any time when it pleases you, I shall be ready to discourse with you all I know—and more too, somewhat.

[*Aside.*

For. No better time than now, sir. We'll go to the Windmill; there we shall have a cup of neat grist, as we call it. I pray you, sir, let me request you to the Windmill.

Brain. I'll follow you, sir; and make grist o'you, if I have good luck.

[*Aside.—Exeunt.*

Re-enter Young Kno'WELL, with Master MATTHEW, Captain BOBADIL, and STEPHEN.

Mat. Sir, did your eyes ever taste the like clown of him, where we were to-day, Mr. Wellbred's half-brother? I think the whole earth cannot shew his parallel, by this day-light.

Young K. We are now speaking of him. Captain Bobadil tells me he is fallen foul o'you, too.

Mat. Oh! ay, sir! he threatened me with the bastinado.

Capt. B. Ay, but I think I taught you prevention this morning for that. You shall kill him, beyond question, if you be so generously minded.

Mat. Indeed, it is a most excellent trick.

Capt. B. Oh! you do not give spirit enough to your motion; you are too tardy, too heavy! Oh! it must be done like lightning, boy! Tut! 'tis nothing, an't be not done in a punto.

Young K. Captain, did you ever prove yourself upon any of our masters of defence here?

Mat. Oh, good sir! yes, I hope he has.

Capt. B. I will tell you, sir. They have assaulted me some three, four, five, six of them together, as I have walked alone in divers skirts o'the town, where I have driven them before me the whole length of a street, in the open view of all our gallants, pitying to hurt them, believe me. Yet all this lenity will not overcome their spleen; they will be doing with the pismire, raising a hill a man may spurn abroad with his foot at pleasure. By myself I could have slain them all; but I delight not in murder. I am loath to bear any other than this bastinado for 'em; yet I hold it good policy not to go disarmed; for though I be skilful, I may be oppressed with multitudes.

Young K. Ay, believe me, may you, sir; and, in my conceit, our whole nation should sustain the loss by it, if it were so.

Capt. B. Alas! no. What's a peculiar man to a nation? Not seen.

Young K. Oh! but your skill, sir!

Capt. B. Indeed, that might be some loss; but who respects it? I will tell you, sir, by the way of private, and under seal, I am a gentleman, and live here obscure, and to myself; but were I known to his majesty and the lords, observe me, I would undertake, upon this poor head and life, for the public benefit of the state, not only to spare the entire lives of his subjects in general, but to save the one half, nay, three parts of his yearly charge in holding war, and against what enemy soever. And how would I do it, think you?

Young K. Nay, I know not; nor can I conceive.

Capt. B. Why, thus, sir: I would select nineteen more to myself, throughout the land; gentlemen they should be; of a good spirit, and able constitution; I would choose them by an instinct, a charac-

ter that I have; and I would teach these nineteen the special rules, as your punto, your reverso, your stoccata, imbroccata, your passada, your montanto; till they could all play very near, or altogether as well as myself. This done, say the enemy were forty thousand strong; we twenty would come into the field the tenth of March, or thereabouts, and we would challenge twenty of the enemy; they could not in their honour refuse us. Well, we would kill them; challenge twenty more, kill them; twenty more, kill them, too; and thus would we kill every man his twenty a-day, that's twenty score; twenty score, that's two hundred; two hundred a day, five days a thousand; forty thousand; forty times five, five times forty; two hundred days kills them all by computation. And this I will venture to my poor gentleman-like carcass to perform, provided there be no treason practised upon us, by fair and discreet manhood; that is, civilly by the sword.

Young K. Why, are you so sure of your hand, Captain, at all times.

Capt. B. Tut! never miss thrust, upon my reputation with you.

Young K. I would not stand in Downright's state then, an' you meet him, for the wealth of any one street in London.

Capt. B. Why, sir, you mistake. If he were here now, by this welkin, I would not draw my weapon on him! Let this gentleman do his mind; but I will bastinado him, by the bright sun, wherever I meet him.

Mat. Faith, and I'll have a fling at him, at my distance.

Enter DOWNRIGHT, walking over the stage.

Young K. God's so! Lookye where he is; yonder he goes.

Down. What peevish luck have I; I cannot meet with these bragging rascals.

Capt. B. It's not he, is it?

Young K. Yes, faith, it is he.

Mat. I'll be hanged, then, if that were he.

Young K. I assure you that was he.

Step. Upon my reputation, it was he.

Capt. B. Had I thought it had been he, he must not have gone so; but I can hardly be induced to believe it was he yet.

Young K. That I think, sir. But see, he is come again.

Re-enter DOWNRIGHT.

Down. Oh! Pharaoh's foot, have I found you? Come, draw; to your tools. Draw, gipsy, or I'll thrash you.

Capt. B. Gentleman of valour, I do believe in thee, hear me—

Down. Draw your weapon, then.

Capt. B. Tall man, I never thought on't till now, body of me! I had a warrant of the peace served on me even now, as I came along, by a water-bearer; this gentleman saw it, Mr. Matthew.

[DOWNRIGHT beats CAPT. BOBADIL; MATTHEW runs away.]

Down. 'Sdeath! you will not draw, then?

Capt. B. Hold, hold! under thy favour, forbear.

Down. Prate again, as you like this, you whoreson foist you. You'll control the point, you? Your consort is gone; had he staid, he had shared with you, sir. [Exit.]

Young K. Twenty, and kill them; twenty more, kill them, too—ha, ha!

Capt. B. Well, gentlemen, bear witness; I was bound to the peace, by this good day.

Young K. No, faith, it's an ill day, Captain, never reckon it other; but say you were bound to the peace, the law allows you to defend yourself; that will prove but a poor excuse.

Capt. B. I cannot tell, sir. I desire good construction, in fair sort. I never sustained the like disgrace, by heaven. Sure, I was struck with a planet.

Step. No, Captain, you was struck with a stick.

Young K. Ay, like enough; I have heard of many that have been beaten under a planet. Go, get you to a surgeon. 'Slid! and these be your tricks, your passados and your montantos, I'll none of them.

Capt. B. I was planet-struck certainly. [Exit.]

Young K. Oh, manners! that this age should bring forth such creatures! that nature should be at leisure to make 'em! Come, coz.

Step. Mass! I'll have this cloak.

Young K. God's will, 'tis Downright's.

Step. Nay, it's mine now; another might have ta'en it up as well as I. I'll wear it, so I will.

Young K. How, an' he see it? He'll challenge it, assure yourself.

Step. Ay, but he shall not ha't; I'll say I bought it.

Young K. Take heed you buy it not too dear, coz. [Exit.]

SCENE III.—A Chamber in Kiteley's House.

Enter KITELEY and CASH.

Kite. Art thou sure, Thomas, we have pried into all and every part throughout the house? Is there no hy-place, or dark corner, has escaped our searches?

Cash. Indeed, sir, none; there's not a hole or nook unsearched by us, from the upper loft unto the cellar.

Kite. They have conveyed him then away, or hid him in some privacy of their own. Whilst we were searching of the dark closet by my sister's chamber, didst thou not think thou heard'st a rustling on the other side, and a soft tread of feet?

Cash. Upon my truth, I did not, sir; or if you did, it might be only the vermin in the wainscot; the house is old, and over-run with 'em.

Kite. It is indeed, Thomas. We should bane these rats. Dost thou understand me? We will—they shall not harbour here; I'll cleanse my house from 'em, if fire or poison can effect it: I will not be tormented thus. They gnaw my brain, and burrow in my heart: I cannot bear it.

Cash. I do not understand you, sir. Good now, what is't disturbs you thus? Pray, be composed. These starts of passion have some cause, I fear, that touches you more nearly.

Kite. Sorely, sorely, Thomas. It cleaves too close to me—oh, me! [Sighs.] Lend me thy arm—so, good Cash.

Cash. You tremble and look pale! Let me call assistance.

Kite. Not for ten thousand worlds! Alas, alas! 'tis not in medicine to give me ease—here, here it lies.

Cash. What, sir?

Kite. Why—nothing, nothing. I am not sick, yet more than dead; I have a burning fever in my mind, and long for that, which, having, would destroy me.

Cash. Believe me, 'tis your fancy's imposition. Shut up your generous mind from such intruders. I'll hazard all my growing favour with you; I'll

stake my present, my future welfare, that some base whispering knave—nay, pardon me, sir—hath, in the best and richest soil, sown seeds of rank and evil nature! Oh! my master, should they take root—

[*Laughing within.*]

Kite. Hark, hark! Dost thou not hear? What think'st thou now? Are they not laughing at me? They are, they are! They have deceived the wittol, and thus they triumph in their infamy. This aggravation is not to be borne. [*Laughing again.*] Hark, again! Cash, do thou unseen steal in upon 'em, and listen to their wanton conference.

Cash. I shall obey you, though against my will. [*Exit.*]

Kite. Against his will! Ha! it may be so. He's young, and may be bribed for them; they've various means to draw the unwary in. If it be so, I'm lost, deceived, betrayed, and my bosom, my full-fraught bosom, is unlocked and opened to mockery and laughter! Heaven forbid! He cannot be that viper; sting the hand that raised and cherished him! Were this stroke added, I should be cursed. But it cannot be; no, it cannot be.

Re-enter CASH.

Cash. You are musing, sir. [*why—*]

Kite. I ask your pardon, Cash. Ask me not I have wronged you, and am sorry. 'Tis gone.

Cash. If you suspect my faith—

Kite. I do not—say no more; and for my sake let it die and be forgotten. Have you seen your mistress, and heard whence was that noise?

Cash. Your brother, Master Wellbred, is with 'em, and I found them throwing out their mirth on a very truly ridiculous subject: it is one Formal, as he styles himself, and he appertains, so he phrases it, to Justice Clement, and would speak with you.

Kite. With me? Art thou sure it is the Justice's clerk? Where is he?

Enter BRAINWORM, as FORMAL.

Who are you, friend?

Brain. An appendix to Justice Clement, vulgarly called his clerk.

Kite. What are your wants with me?

Brain. None.

Kite. Do you not want to speak with me?

Brain. No, but my master does.

Kite. What are the Justice's commands?

Brain. He doth not command, but entreats Master Kite to be with him directly, having matters of some moment to communicate unto him.

Kite. What can it be? Say I'll be with him instantly; and if your legs, friend, go not faster than your tongue, I shall be there before you.

Brain. I will. *Vale.* [*Exit.*]

Kite. 'Tis a precious fool, indeed! I must go forth. But first come hither, Thomas: I have admitted thee into the close recesses of my heart, and shewed thee all my frailties, passions, everything.

Be careful of thy promise, keep good watch. Will thou be true, my Thomas?

Cash. As truth's self, sir.

But be assur'd you're heaping care and trouble Upon a sandy base; ill-plac'd suspicion Recoils upon yourself. She's chaste as comely; Believe't she is. Let her not note your humour; Disperse the gloom upon your brow, and be As clear as her unsullied honour.

Kite. I will then, Cash—thou comfort'st me: I'll drive these

Fiend-like fancies from me, and be myself again. Think'st thou she has perceiv'd my folly? 'Twere

Happy, if she had not—she has not:

They who know no evil, will suspect none.

Cash. True, sir; nor has your mind a blemish now.

This change has gladden'd me. Here's my mistress, And the rest; settle your reason to accost 'em.

Kite. I will, Cash, I will.

Enter WELLBRED, Dame KITELY, and BRIDGET.

Well. What are you a plotting, brother Kiteley, That thus of late you muse alone, and bear Such weighty care upon your pensive brow?

[*Laughs.*]

Kite. My care is all for you, good sneering brother,

And well I wish you'd take some wholesome counsel, And curb your headstrong humours; trust me, brother,

You were to blame to raise commotions here, And hurt the peace and order of my house.

Well. No harm done, brother, I warrant you, Since there is no harm done, anger costs A man nothing, and a brave man is never His own man till he be angry. To keep His valour in obscurity, is to keep himself, As it were, in a cloak-bag. What's a brave Musician, unless he play?

What's a brave man, unless he fight?

Dame K. Ay, but what harm might have come of it, brother?

Well. What, school'd on both sides! Prythee, Bridget, save me from the rod and lecture.

[*BRIDGET and WELLBRED retire.*]

Kite. With what a decent modesty she rates him! My heart's at ease, and she shall see it is. [*Aside.*]
How art thou, wife? Thou look'st both gay and comely;

In troth, thou dost. I'm sent for out, my dear, And I shall soon return. Indeed, my life, Business that forces me abroad grows irksome. I could content me with less gain and vantage, To have thee more at home, indeed I could.

Dame K. Your doubts, as well as love, may breed these thoughts.

Kite. That jar untunes me. [*Aside.*]

What dost thou say? Doubt thee?

I should as soon suspect myself. No, no;

My confidence is rooted in thy merit,

So fix'd and settled, that wert thou inclin'd

To masks, to sports, and balls, where lusty youth

Lead up the wanton dance, and the rais'd pulse

Beats quicker measures, yet I could with joy,

With heart's ease and security—not but

I had rather thou shouldst prefer thy home

And me, to boys and such like vanities.

Dame K. But sure, my dear,

A wife may moderately use these pleasures, Which numbers and the time give sanction to, Without the smallest blemish on her name.

Kite. And so she may; and I'll go with thee, child;

I will, indeed; I'll lead thee there myself,

And be the foremost reveller. I'll silence

The sneers of envy, stop the tongue of slander;

Nor will I more be pointed at, as one

Disturb'd with jealousy—

Dame K. Why, were you ever so?

Kite. What?—Ha! never—ha, ha, ha!

She stabs me home. [*Aside.*] Jealous of thee!

No, do not believe it. Speak low, my love,

Thy brother will overhear us. No, no, my dear,

It could not be, it could not be—for—for—

What is the time now? I shall be too late—

No, no; thou may'st be satisfied
 There's not the smallest spark remaining—
 Remaining! What do I say? There never was,
 Nor can, nor ever shall be—so be satisfied.
 Is Cob within there? Give me a kiss,
 My dear; there, there, now we are reconcil'd—
 I'll be back immediately. Good b'ye, good b'ye!
 Ha, ha! jealous. I shall burst my sides with laugh-
 ing.

Ha, ha! Cob, where are you, Cob? Ha, ha!

[Exit—WELLBRED and BRIDGET come forward.]

Well. What have you done to make your husband part so merry from you? He has of late been little given to laughter.

Dame K. He laughed, indeed, but seemingly without mirth. His behaviour is new and strange. He is much agitated, and has some whimsy in his head, that puzzles mine to read it.

Well. 'Tis jealousy, good sister; and writ so largely, that the blind may read it; have you not perceived it yet?

Dame K. If I have, 'tis not always prudent that my tongue should betray my eyes; so far my wisdom tends, good brother, and little more I boast. But what makes him ever calling for Cob so? I wonder how can employ him.

Well. Indeed, sister, to ask how he employs Cob, is a necessary question for you that are his wife, and a thing not very easy for you to be satisfied in. But this I'll assure you, Cob's wife is an excellent procurer, sister, and oftentimes your husband haunts her house: marry to what end, I cannot altogether accuse him—imagine you what you think convenient—but I have known fair hides have foul hearts, ere now, sister.

Dame K. Never said you truer than that, brother; so much I can tell you for your learning. Oh, oh! is this the fruits of his jealousy? I thought some game was in the wind, he acted so much tenderness but now; but I'll be quit with him. Thomas!

Re-enter CASH.

Fetch your hat, Thomas, and go with me. [Exit CASH.] I would to fortune I could take him there, I'd return him his own, I warrant him! I'd fit him for his jealousy!

Well. Ha, ha! so e'en let 'em go; this may make sport anon.—What, Brainworm!

Enter BRAINWORM.

Brain. I saw the merchant turn the corner, and come back to tell you all goes well; wind and tide, my master.

Well. But how got'st thou this apparel of the Justice's man?

Brain. Marry, sir, my proper fine penman would needs bestow the grist o'me at the Windmill, to hear some marshal discourse, where I so marshalled him, that I made him drunk with admiration; and because too much heat was the cause of his distemper, I stripped him stark naked as he lay along asleep, and borrowed his suit to deliver this counterfeited message in, leaving a rusty armour, and an old brown bill, to watch him till they return; which shall be, when I have pawned his apparel, and spent the better part of the money, perhaps.

Well. Well, thou art a successful, merry knave, Brainworm; his absence will be subject for more mirth. I pray thee, return to thy young master, and will him to meet me and my sister Bridget at the Tower instantly; for here, tell him, the house is so stored with jealousy, there is no room for love to stand upright in. We must get our fortunes com-

mitted to some large prison, say: and then the Tower, I know no better air, nor where the liberty of the house may do us more present service. Away.

[Exit BRAINWORM.]

Brid. What, is this the engine that you told me of? What further meaning have you in the plot?

Well. That you may know, fair sister-in-law, how happy a thing it is to be fair and beautiful.

Brid. That touches not me, brother.

Well. Well, there's a dear and well respected friend of mine, sister, stands very strongly and worthily affected towards you, and hath vowed to inflame whole bonfires of zeal at his heart, in honour of your perfections. I have already engaged my promise to bring you where you shall hear him confirm much more. Ned Kuo'well is the man, sister. There's no exception against the party. What say you, sister? On my soul, he loves you; will you give him this meeting?

Brid. 'Faith, I had very little confidence in my own constancy, brother, if I durst not meet a man; but this motion of your's savours of an old knight adventurer's servant a little too much, methinks.

Well. What's that, sister?

Brid. Marry, of the go-between.

Well. No matter if it did; I would be such an one for my friend. But see, who is returned to hinder us.

Re-enter KITELY.

Kite. What villany is this? Called out on a false message! This was some plot. I was not sent for. Bridget, where's your sister?

Brid. I think she be gone forth, sir.

Kite. How! Is my wife gone forth? Whither, for heaven's sake?

Brid. She's gone abroad with Thomas.

Kite. Abroad with Thomas! Oh! that villain cheats me!

He hath discover'd all unto my wife: [I pray Beast that I was to trust him. [Aside.] Whither, You, went she?

Brid. I know not, sir. [she's gone.]

Well. I'll tell you, brother, whither I suspect

Kite. Whither, good brother? [counsel]

Well. To Cob's house, I believe; but keep my

Kite. I will, I will.—To Cob's house! Does she haunt there?

She's gone on purpose now to cuckold me, With that lewd rascal, who, to win her favour, Hath told her all. Why would you let her go? Well. Because she's not my wife; if she were, I'd keep her to her tether.

Kite. So, so! now 'tis plain. I shall go mad With my misfortunes, now they pour in torrents. I'm bruted by my wife, betray'd by my servant, Mock'd at by my relations, pointed at by my neighbours,

Despis'd by myself—There is nothing left now But to revenge myself first, next hang myself; And then—all my cares will be over. [Exeunt.]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—Stocks-market.

Enter Master MATTHEW and Captain BOBADIL.

Mat. I wonder, Captain, what they will say of my going away, eh?

Capt. B. Why, what should they say? but as of

a discreet gentleman; quick, wary, respectful of nature's fair lineaments, and that's all.

Mat. Why so? but what can they say of their beating?

Capt. B. A rude part, a touch with soft wood, a kind of gross battery used, lain on strongly, borne most patiently, and that's all. But wherefore do I wake their remembrance? I was fascinated, by Jupiter! fascinated! but I will be unwitched, and re-venged by law.

Mat. Do you hear? Is't not best to get a warrant, and have him arrested, and brought before Justice Clement?

Capt. B. It were not amiss; would we had it!

Mat. Why, here comes his man, let's speak to him.

Capt. B. Agreed. Do you speak.

Enter BRAINWORM, as FORMAL.

Mat. Save you, sir.

Brain. With all my heart, sir.

Mat. Sir, there is one Downright hath abused this gentleman and myself, and we determine to make ourselves amends by law; now if you would do us the favour to procure a warrant to bring him before your master, you shall be well considered of, I assure you, sir.

Brain. Sir, you know my service is my living; such favours as these, gotten of my master, is his only preferment, and therefore you must consider me, as I may make benefit of my place.

Mat. How is that, sir?

Brain. 'Faith, sir, the thing is extraordinary, and the gentleman may be of great account. Yet, be what he will, if you will lay me down a brace of angels in my hand, you shall have it, otherwise not.

Mat. How shall we do, Captain? He asks a brace of angels. You have no money. [*Apart to Capt. B.*]

Capt. B. Not a cross, by fortune. [*Apart.*]

Mat. Nor I, as I am a gentleman, but two-pence left of my two shillings in the morning for wine and radish. Let's find him some pawn. [*Apart.*]

Capt. B. Pawn! We have none to the value of his demand. [*Apart.*]

Mat. Oh! yes, I can pawn my ring here. [*Apart.*]

Capt. B. And, harkye, he shall have my trusty Toledo, too; I believe I shall have no service for it to-day. [*Apart.*]

Mat. Do you hear, sir? We have no store of money at this time, but you shall have good pawns. Look you, sir; I will pledge this ring, and that gentleman his Toledo, because we would have it despatched.

Brain. I am content, sir; I will get you the warrant presently. What's his name, say you? Downright?

Mat. Ay, ay, George Downright.

Brain. Well, gentlemen, I'll procure you the warrant presently. But who will you have to serve it?

Mat. That's true, Captain; that must be considered.

Capt. B. Body o'me, I know not! 'Tis service of danger!

Brain. Why, you were best get one of the varlets o'the city; a sergeant; I'll appoint you one, if you please.

Mat. Will you, sir? Why, we can wish no better.

Capt. B. We'll leave it to you, sir.

[*Exit with MATTHEW.*]

Brain. This is rare! Now will I go pawn this cloak of the Justice's man's, at the broker's for a varlet's suit, and be the varlet myself, and so get money on all sides. [*Exit.*]

- SCENE II.—*The Street before Cob's house.*

Enter KNO'WELL.

Kno. Oh! here it is; I have found it now. Ho! who is within here? [*Tib appears at the window.*]

Tib. I am within, sir. What's your pleasure?

Kno. To know who is within besides yourself.

Tib. Why, sir, you are no constable, I hope?

Kno. Oh! fear you the constable? Then I doubt not you have some guests within deserve that fear. I'll fetch him straight.

Tib. For heaven's sake, sir—

Kno. Go to! Come, tell me, is not young Kno'well here?

Tib. Young Kno'well! I know none such, sir, o'my honesty.

Kno. Your honesty, dame! It flies too lightly from you. There is no way but fetch the constable

Tib. The constable! the man is mad, I think.

Enter CASH and Dame KITELY.

Kno. Oh! this is the female copesmate of my son. Now shall I meet him straight. [*Aside.*]

Dame K. Knock hard, Thomas.

Cash. Ho, good wife!

Tib. Why, what's the matter with you? [*door?*]

Dame K. Why, woman, grieves it you to ope the Belike you get something to keep it shut.

Tib. What mean these questions, pray you?

Dame K. So strange you make it! Is not my husband here?

Kno. Her husband [*Aside.*]

Dame K. My tried and faithful husband, Master Kitley.

Tib. I hope he needs not be tried here.

Dame K. Come hither, Cash. I see my turtle coming to his haunts. Let us retire. [*They retire.*]

Kno. This must be some device to mock me withal.

Soft—who is this? Oh! 'tis my son disguised.

I'll watch him and surprise him

Enter KITELY, muffled in a cloak.

Kite. 'Tis truth, I see: there she skulks. But I will fetch her from her hold—I will—I tremble so, I scarce have power to do the justice Her infamy demands.

[*As KITELY goes forward, Dame KITELY and KNO'WELL lay hold of him.*]

Kno. Have I trapped you, youth? You cannot escape me now. [*market?*]

Dame K. Oh, sir! have I forestall'd your honest Found your close walks? You stand amaz'd Now, do you? Ah! hide, hide your face for shame! I'faith, I am glad I've found you out at last.

Kno. What mean you, woman? Let go your hold. I see the counterfeit. I am his father, And claim him as my own.

Kite. [*Discovers himself.*] I am your cuckold, and claim my vengeance.

Dame K. What, do you wrong me, and insult me too?

Thou faithless man!

Kite. Out on thy more than strumpet's impudence! Steal'st thou thus to thy haunts? And have I taken Thy bawd and thee, and thy companion, This hoary-headed lecher, this old goat,

Close at your villany, and wouldst thou excuse it
With this stale harlot's jest, accusing me?
Oh! old incontinent, dost thou not shame
To have a mind so hot, and to entice
And feed the enticement of a lustful woman?

Dame K. Out! I defy thee, thou dissembling wretch!

Kite. Defy me, strumpet! Ask thy pander, here;
Can he deny it, or that wicked elder?

Kno. Why, hear you, sir—

Cash. Master, 'tis in vain to reason while these passions blind you. I'm grieved to see you thus.

Kite. Tut, tut! never speak; I see through every Veil you cast upon your treachery; but I have Done with you, and root you from my heart for ever. For you, sir, thus I demand my honour's due; Resolv'd to cool your lust, or end my shame.

[*Draws.*
Kno. What lunacy is this? Put up your sword, and undeceive yourself. No arm that e'er poised weapon can affright me; but I pity folly, nor cope with madness.

Kite. I will have proofs—I will—so you, good wife-bawd, Cob's wife; and you, that make your husband such a monster; and you, young pander, an old cuckold-maker; I'll ha' you every one before the justice. Nay, you shall answer it; I charge you go. Come forth, thou bawd. [*Goes into the house, and brings out Tib.*]

Kno. Marry, with all my heart, sir; I go willingly. Though I do taste this as a trick put on me, To punish my impertinent search, and justly; And half forgive my son for the device.

Kite. Come, will you go?

Dame K. Go, to thy shame believe it. [*betide,*

Kite. Though shame and sorrow hath my heart Come on—I must and will be satisfied. [*Ereunt.*

SCENE III.—Stocks-market.

Enter BRAINWORM.

Brain. Well, of all my disguises yet, now am I most like myself, being in this sergeant's gown. A man of my present profession never counterfeits till he lays hold upon a debtor, and says he 'rests him; for then he brings him to all manner of unrest. A kind of little kings we are, bearing the diminutive of a mace, made like a young artichoke, that always carries pepper and salt in itself. Well, I know not what danger I undergo by this exploit; pray heaven, I come well off!

Enter Captain BOBADIL and Master MATTHEW.

Mat. See, I think yonder is the varlet, by his gown. 'Save you, friend; are not you here by appointment of Justice Clement's man?

Brain. Yes, an' please you, sir, he told me two gentlemen had willed him to procure a warrant from his master, which I have about me, to be served on one Downright.

Mat. It is honestly done of you both; and see where the party comes you must arrest. Serve it upon him quickly, before he be aware.

Enter Master STEPHEN, in Downright's cloak.

Capt. B. Bear back, Master Matthew.

Brain. Master Downright, I arrest you i'the queen's name, and must carry you before a justice, by virtue of this warrant.

Step. Me, friend; I am no Downright, I. I am Master Stephen; you do not well to arrest me, I tell you truly. I am in nobody's bonds or books, I

would you should know it. A plague on you heartily, for making me thus afraid before my time.

Brain. Why, now you are deceived, gentlemen!

Capt. B. He wears such a cloak, and that deceived us. But see, here he comes, indeed! This is he, officer.

Enter DOWNRIGHT.

Down. Why, how now, seignior Gull? Are you turned filcher of late? Come, deliver my cloak.

Step. Your cloak, sir! I bought it even now in open market.

Brain. Master Downright, I have a warrant I must serve upon you, procured by these two gentlemen.

Down. These gentlemen! These rascals!

Brain. Keep the peace, I charge you in her majesty's name.

Down. I obey thee. What must I do, officer?

Brain. Go before Master Justice Clement, to answer what they can object against you, sir. I will use you kindly, sir.

Mat. Come, let's before, and make the Justice, Captain— [*Exit.*

Capt. B. The varlet's a tall man, before heaven! [*Exit.*

Down. Gull, you'll gi' me my cloak?

Step. Sir, I bought it, and I'll keep it.

Down. You will?

Step. Ay, that I will.

Down. Officer, there's thy fee; arrest him.

Brain. Master Stephen, I must arrest you.

Step. Arrest me! I scorn it; there, take your cloak, I'll none on't.

Down. Nay, that shall not serve your turn now, sir. Officer, I'll go with thee to the Justice's. Bring him along.

Step. Why, is not here your cloak; what would you have?

Down. I'll ha' you answer it, sir.

Brain. Sir, I'll take your word, and this gentleman's too, for his appearance.

Down. I'll ha' no words taken. Bring him along.

Brain. [*Aside.*] So, so, I have made a fair mash on't.

Step. Must I go?

Brain. I know no remedy, Master Stephen.

Down. Come along before me here. I do not love your hanging-look behind.

Step. Why, sir, I hope you cannot hang me for it. Can he, fellow?

Brain. I think not, sir. It is but whipping matter, sure!

Step. Why, then, let him do his worst, I am resolute. [*Ereunt.*

SCENE IV.—A Hall in Justice Clement's House.

Enter Justice CLEMENT, KNO'WELL, KITELY, DAME KITELY, TIB, CASH, COB, and Servants.

Just. C. Nay, but stay, stay, give me leave. My chair, sirrah. You, Master Kno'well, say you went thither to meet your son?

Kno. Ay, sir.

Just. C. But who directed you thither?

Kno. That did mine own man, sir.

Just. C. Where is he?

Kno. Nay, I know not now; I left him with your clerk, and appointed him to stay for me.

Just. C. My clerk! About what time was this?

Kno. Marry, between one and two, as I take it.

Just. C. And what time came my man with the false message to you, Master Kately?

Kite. After two, sir.

Just. C. Very good; but, Mrs. Kately, how chance it that you were at Cob's, eh?

Dame K. An' please you, sir, I'll tell you. My brother Wellbred told me, that Cob's house was a suspected place—

Just. C. So it appears, methinks: but on.

Dame K. And that my husband used thither daily.

Just. C. No matter, so he used himself well, mistress.

Dame K. True, sir; but you know what grows by such haunts, oftentimes.

Just. C. I see rank fruits of a jealous brain, Mistress Kately. But did you find your husband there, in that case, as you suspected?

Kite. I found her there, sir.

Just. C. Did you so? That alters the case. Who gave you knowledge of your wife's being there?

Kite. Marry, that did my brother Wellbred.

Just. C. How! Wellbred first tell her, then tell you after! Where is Wellbred?

Kite. Gone with my sister, sir, I know not whither.

Just. C. Why, this is a mere trick, a device; you are gulled in this most grossly, all! Alas, poor wench! wert thou suspected for this?

Tib. Yes, an't please you.

Just. C. I smell mischief here; plot and contrivance, Master Kately. However, if you will step into the next room with your wife, and think coolly of matters, you'll find some trick has been played you. I fear there have been jealousies on both parts, and the wags have been merry with you.

Kite. I begin to feel it: I'll take your counsel. Will you go in, dame?

Dame K. I will have justice, Mr. Kately.

[Exit with KITELY.]

Just. C. You will be a woman, Mrs. Kately, that I see. How now, what's the matter?

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, there's a gentleman i'the court without desires to speak with your worship.

Just. C. A gentleman! What is he?

Serv. A soldier, sir, he says.

Just. C. A soldier! My sword, quickly. A soldier speak with me! Stand by; I will end your matters anon. Let the soldier enter. Now, sir, what ha' you to say to me?

Enter Capt. BOBADIL and Master MATTHEW.

Capt. B. By your worship's favour—

Just. C. Nay, keep out, sir, I know not your pretence; you send me word, sir, you are a soldier? Why, sir, you shall be answered here; here be them that have been among soldiers. Sir, your pleasure?

Capt. B. Faith! sir, so it is: this gentleman and myself have been most uncivilly wronged and beaten by one Downright, a coarse fellow about the town here; and, for my own part, I protest, being a man in no sort given to this filthy humour of quarrelling, he hath assaulted me in the way of my peace; despoiled me of mine honour; disarmed me of my weapons; and rudely laid me along in the open streets, when I not so much as once offered to resist him.

Just. C. Oh, God's precious! is this the soldier? Lie there, my sword, 'twill make him swoon, I fear; he is not fit to look on't, that will put up a blow.

Mat. An't please your worship, he was bound to the peace.

Just. C. Why, an' he were, sir, his hands were not bound, were they?

Serv. There's one of the varlets of the city, sir, has brought two gentlemen here; one upon your worship's warrant.

Just. C. My warrant?

Serv. Yes, sir; the officer says, procured by these two.

Just. C. Bid him come in. Set by this picture. What, Mr. Downright, are you brought at Mr. Freshwater's suit here?

Enter DOWNRIGHT, Master STEPHEN, and BRAINWORM.

Down. I'faith, sir! And here's another brought at my suit.

Just. C. What are you, sir?

Step. A gentleman, sir. Oh! uncle.

Just. C. Uncle! Who, Master Kno'well?

Kno. Ay, sir, this is a wise kinsman of mine.

Step. Uncle, I am wronged here monstrously; he charges me with stealing of his cloak; and would I might never stir, if I did not find it in the street by chance.

Down. Oh! did you find it, now? You said you bought it ere-while.

Step. And you said I stole it. Nay, now my uncle is here, I'll do well enough with you.

Just. C. Well, let this breathe awhile. You that have cause to complain there, stand forth. Had you my warrant for this gentleman's apprehension?

Capt. B. Ay, an't please your worship.

Just. C. Nay, do not speak in passion so. Where had you it?

Capt. B. Of your clerk, sir.

Just. C. That's well, an' your clerk can make warrants, and my hand not at'em! Where is the warrant? Officer, have you it?

[Capt. B. and MATTHEW steal off.]

Brain. No, sir; your worship's man, Master Formal, bid me do it for these gentlemen, and he would be my discharge.

Just. C. Why, Master Downright, are you such a novice to be served, and never see the warrant?

Down. Sir, he did not serve it on me.

Just. C. No; how then?

Down. Marry, sir, he came to me, and said he must serve it, and he would use me kindly, and so—

Just. C. Oh, God's pity! was it so, sir? He must serve it! Give me a warrant; I must serve one, too. You knave, you slave, you rogue! do you say you must, sirrah? Away with him to gaol. I'll teach you a trick for your must, sir.

Brain. Good sir, I beseech you, be good to me.

Just. C. Tell him he shall to the gaol; away with him, I say.

Brain. Ay, sir, if you will commit me, it shall be for committing more than this. I will not lose by my travel any grain of my fame certain.

[Throws off his disguise.]

Just. C. How is this?

Kno. My man, Brainworm!

Step. Oh! yes, uncle, Brainworm has been with my cousin Edward and I all this day.

Just. C. I told you all there was some device.

Brain. Nay, excellent Justice, since I have laid myself thus open to you, now stand strong for me, both with your sword and your balance.

Just. C. Body o'me! a merry knave! Give me a bowl of sack. [A Servant brings it him.] If he belongs to you, Master Kno'well, I bespeak your patience.

Brain. That is it I have most need of. Sir, if you'll pardon me only, I'll glory in all the rest of my exploits.

Kno. Sir, you know I love not to have my favours come hard from me. You have your pardon; though I suspect you shrewdly for being of counsel with my son against me.

Brain. Yes, 'faith! I have, sir; though you retained me doubly this morning for yourself; first, as Brainworm; after, as Fitz-sword. I was your reformed soldier. 'Twas I sent you to Cob's upon the errand without end.

Kno. Is it possible? Or that thou shouldst disguise thyself so as I should not know thee?

Brain. Oh! sir, this has been the day of my metamorphoses; it is not that shape alone that I have run through to-day. I brought Master Kiteley a message, too, in the form of Master Justice's man here, to draw him out o'the way, as well as your worship; while Master Wellbred might make a conveyance of Mistress Bridget to my young master.

Just. C. But, I pray thee, what hast thou done with my man, Formal?

Brain. 'Faith! sir, after some ceremony past, as making him drunk, first with story, and then with wine, but all in kindness, and stripping him to his shirt, I left him in that cool vein, departed, sold your worship's warrant to these two, pawned his livery for that varlet's gown to serve it in; and thus have brought myself, by my activity, to your worship's consideration.

Just. C. And I will consider thee in a cup of sack. Here's to thee; [*drinks*] which having drank off, this is my sentence, pledge me. Thou hast done,

or assisted to nothing, in my judgment, but deserves to be pardoned for the wit o'the offence. Go into the next room; let Master Kiteley into this whimsical business; and if he does not forgive thee, he has less mirth in him than an honest man ought to have. [*Exit BRAINWORM.*] Call Master Kiteley and his wife there.

Re-enter KITELEY and Dame KITELEY.

Did not I tell you there was a plot against you? Did not I smell it out, as a wise magistrate ought? Have not you traced, have you found it, eh! Master Kiteley?

Kite. I have; I confess my folly, and own I have deserved what I have suffered for it. The trial has been severe, but it is past. All I have to ask now is, that as my folly is cured, and my persecutors forgiven, my shame may be forgotten.

Just. C. That will depend upon yourself, Master Kiteley; do not you yourself create the food for mischief, and the mischievous will not prey upon you. But come, let a general reconciliation go round, and let all discontents be laid aside. You, Mr. Down-right, put off your anger; you, Master Kno'well, your cares; and do you, Master Kiteley and your wife, put off your jealousies. [*wife;*]

Kite. Sir, thus they go from me: kiss me, my See what a drove of horns fly in the air, Wing'd with my cleansed and my credulous breath; Watch 'em, suspicious eyes, watch where they fall; See, see, on heads that think they've none at all. Oh! what a plenteous world of this will come, When air rains horns, all may be sure of some.

[*Exeunt.*]

THE END

THE MERCHANT OF BRUGES;

OR, BEGGAR'S BUSH:

A PLAY, IN FIVE ACTS;

ALTERED FROM BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER,

Y DOUGLAS KINNAIRD.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

GOSWIN, OR FLOREZ
GERRARD, OR CLAUSE
WOLFORT
HUBERT
HEMSKIRKE
VANDUNKE
Merchants
HIGGEN
CLOWN
PRIG
SNAP
FERRET
SAILOR

JACULIN
BERTHA
MARGARET

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The outside of the gate of Bruges.*
Public-house on one side, with the sign of the
"Right heir."

HIGGIN, PRIG, FERRET, and other Beggars discovered as having been drinking at a table.

GLEE AND CHORUS.

Well, brothers, our merry old king is dead;
What matters? we'll soon have another instead:

He would not have cried
Had you or I died.

Then mourn him no longer, but merrily sing,
Rest, rest to the bones of our merry old king.

Drain the can, brother;
Fill up another;
Drink till our eyes with tears shall swell;
Tears of brandy alone:
And the monarch that's gone
Shall be wept in the liquor he lov'd so well.

Hig. Well said, my masters, peace be to his rags!
His was a gold and silver reign; he, tyrant-like,
Did never force away your hens and bacon
When ye had ventur'd for't.

Prig. And in return
We've lent him Christian burial; in good sooth,
That's more than follows on your soldier's end.

Fer. The chance was his.

Hig. Ay, marry, was't. But mark,
The chance that laid him low did make him king,
And yet may crown us, too.

Prig. So't be in right
Of our old custom and election—law.

Hig. True, Prig; 'tis fit we do observe the laws.
Here is the table doth exact from all
A strict obedience, or expulsion. First,
Be perfect in your crutches and your feign'd hurts,
Then your torn passports; with the learned ways
To stammer and be dumb, and blind and lame.

Prig. Ay, and shed tears to move compassion.

Fer. Are not the halting paces all set down?

Hig. All in the learned language. Brother—

Prig. Peace! [Boors call from behind.
To your postures.

Enter three or four Boors, with pipes.

1 Boor. What, ho! mine host with the big belly!
beer!

Stark English beer! Well met, my merry souls.
What! your trade thrives, methinks, since Wolfort
reigns

O'er prostrate Flanders, in despite of Bruges!
Your state doth grow in numbers; marry, why?
He now thrives best who hath the least to lose.

Hig. Bless you, masters, we suffer with the times.

2 Boor. Come, landlord, beer.

Enter Landlord from the house, with beer.

Land. Here's o'the right sort. [Florez.

1 Boor. Then here's to the right heir—the lost earl
Who is old Clause?
He gives respect and countenance to beggary;

An' ye make him your king, I'd call myself his subject. [*eh!*]

Hig. What, old solemnity, our grey-beard bishop?
Trig. See, here he comes!

Enter CLAUDE.

I Boor. Good morrow, worthy Claude:

How fares it with ye, man?

Claude. Not better than the times
Give token of: but for old Bruges here,
Whose charitable sons still feed our wants,
We had long fled this bleeding land,
Where tyrants do make beggars of ye all. [*more—*
I Boor. There thou say'st well! Our nobles are no
Our cities ruin'd, and the great wealth of Flanders
Center'd in Bruges. She alone defends
Her rights and liberty 'gainst Wolfort's power.
Here's to her burgomaster, old Vandunke.

[*Beggars and Boors drink o' VANDUNKER.*]

Claude. I will be with you straight; but first must hence

Awhile into the town. We'll meet anon. [*Exit.*

Hig. Let's forward then. Our doxies do repose
Under yon trees. Go some, and call them hither,
And then trudge gaily home to Beggar's Bush.

GLEE.

Men. Come, dories, come. The cheerful day
Is bright, and winds are hush.

Enter Women.

Women. Then take thy staff, and troll the lay,
And trudge to Beggar's Bush.
Our welcome home, a blithe one, too,
The thrush's song shall be;
And never duelt a merrier crew
Beneath the greenwood tree. [*Ereunt.*

SCENE II.—*Presence-chamber of the Earl of Flanders.*

Enter HUBERT disarmed and guarded, met by WOLFORT and train.

Wolf. What, Hubert stealing from me? Who disarm'd him?

'Twas more than I commanded; take your sword,
I am best guarded with it in your hand;
I've seen you use it nobly.

Hub. And will turn it
On my own bosom, ere it shall be drawn
Unworthily or rudely.

Wolf. Would you leave me
Without a farewell, Hubert? Fly a friend,
Unwearing in his study to advance you?
Who ever yet arriv'd to any grace,
Reward, or trust from me, but his approaches
Were by your fair reports of him prefer'd?
Nay, what is more, I've made myself your servant
In making you the master of those secrets, [me:]
Which not the rack of conscience could draw from
Nor I, when I ask'd mercy, trust my pray'rs with.
Yet, after these assurances of love,
These ties and bonds of friendship, to forsake me!
Forsake me as an enemy! Come, you must
Give me a reason.

Hub. Sir, and so I will,
If I may do't in private; and you hear it.

Wolf. All leave the room. [*Ereunt Guards, &c.*
You have your will; now speak,
And use the liberty of our first friendship.

Hub. Friendship! When you prov'd traitor first,
that vanish'd;
Nor do I owe you any thought but hate.

I know my flight hath forfeited my head,
And so I make you first to understand
What a strange monster you have made yourself:
I welcome it.

Wolf. To me this is strange language.

Hub. To you! Why, what are you?

Wolf. Your prince and master

The earl of Flanders.

Hub. By a proper title!

Rais'd to it by cunning, circumvention, force,
Blood, and proscriptions.

Wolf. And in all this wisdom

Had I not reason,—when the protector, Gerrard,
Who underhand had by his ministers
Detracted my great actions, made my faith
And loyalty suspected? in which failing,
He sought my life by practice.

Hub. With what forehead

Do you speak this to me? Who, as I know't,
Must and will say, 'tis false.

Wolf. Ha! my guard there. [*hear,*

Hub. You bade me speak, and promis'd you would
Which I now say you shall: not a sound more;
For I, that am contemner of mine own,
Am master of your life; then here's a sword
Between you and all aids: although you blind
The credulous beast, the multitude, you
Pass not these untruths on me.

Wolf. How! untruths?

Hub. Ay, and it is favourable language;
They'd been in a mean man lies and foul ones.
Were not those rumours,
Of being call'd unto your trial, spread
By your own followers? who, being suborn'd,
Came forth and took their oaths they had been hir'd
By Gerrard to your murder: this once heard
And easily believ'd, your well-taught slaves
Snatch'd hastily their arms, and barbarously kill'd
Such as were servants, or thought friends, to Gerrard,
Vowing the like to him.

Wolf. Will you yet end?

Hub. But he with his son Florez, (the true heir
By right unto this country from his mother,)
Forsook the city, and by secret ways,
As you give out, and we would gladly have't,
Escap'd their fury; though 'tis more than fear'd
They fell among the rest. Your cruelties since
So far transcend your former bloody ills,
As if, compar'd, they only would appear
Essays of mischief,—do not stop your ears,
More are behind yet.

Wolf. Repeat them not.

Hub. A prince in nothing but your princely lusts
And boundless rapines.

Wolf. Hold, I beseech you;

Thou art to me in this a greater tyrant
Than e'er I was to any.

Hub. I end thus

The general grief. Now to my private wrong:
The loss of Gerrard's daughter, Jaculin,
The hop'd for partner of my lawful bed,
Your cruelty hath frighted from mine arms.
Think you that I had reason now to leave you?
My life is irksome; here securely take it,
And do me but this fruit of all your friendship,
That I may die by you, and not your hangman.

Wolf. Oh! Hubert, these your words and reasons
have

As well drawn drops of blood from my griev'd heart,
As from mine eyes these tears! Can you but think
Where Gerrard is, or your lost love, or Florez,
Whom in his infancy—

Hub. You stole; and since
Have kept conceal'd, the better to maintain
The usurpation of his seat.

Wolf. By heav'n!
I stole him not, nor know I where he is,
Nor if he lives; soon after my return
From Brabant, whither I was sent to treat
About a future match with our young earl,
He was at that time missing, and remains
Unheard of to this hour; if you can find him,
I will resign the earldom.

Hub. Sir, do not abuse

My aptness to believe.

Wolf. Suspect not you
A faith that's built upon so true a sorrow.
Make your own terms, ask for them all conditions
My power can grant, or your suspicion prompt.
Hemskirke, the partner of my secret'st councils,
Shall journey with you to this wish'd discovery.
I have of late receiv'd intelligence,
That some of Gerrard's friends are 'bout Bruges
To be found; which I did then interpret
The cause of that town's standing out against me.
But now am glad, it may direct your purpose
Of giving them their safety, and me peace.

Hub. Be constant to your promise, and you have it.

Wolf. Distrust me not; and prosp'rous be your
search.

[*Exit* HUBERT.]

Let me but have them once within my grasp,
Their blood shall write the warrant of my peace.

[*Exit*.]

SCENE III.—*A Street or Square in Bruges.*

Enter three Merchants.

1 *Mer.* 'Tis much that you deliver of this Goswin.

2 *Mer.* He bears himself with such a confidence
As if he were the master of the sea,
And not a wind upon the sailor's compass
But from one point or other were his factor,
To bring him in the best commodities
Merchants e'er ventur'd for.

3 *Mer.* 'Tis strange!

2 *Mer.* Yet does he still continue a good man;
To doubt him would be held an injury,
Or rather, malice, with the best that traffic;
Yet this in him deserves the least of wonder,
Compar'd with other his peculiar fashions:
Is there a virgin of good fame wants dower,
He is a father to her: or soldier
That in his country's service, from the war
Hath brought home only scars and want, his house
Receives him, and relieves him with that care
As if what he possess'd had been laid up
For such good uses, and he steward on't.

1 *Mer.* I would not wish a better man to deal with.

2 *Mer.* Ne'er doubt it; he's your man. See, here
he comes!

Enter GOSWIN, *speaking to a Servant.*

Gos. From England, said ye? bid him be welcome
to my house.

[*Exit* Servant.]

2 *Mer.* Save you, Master Goswin!

Gos. Good day to all!

[*dities*.]

1 *Mer.* We bring you the refusal of more commo-
Gos. Are you the owner of the ship that last night
put into the harbour?

1 *Mer.* Both of the ship and lading.

Gos. What's the freight?

3 *Mer.* Rich cloth of gold, brought from Cambal.

Gos. Some two hours hence I'll come aboard.

1 *Mer.* The gunner shall speak you welcome.

Gos. I'll not fail.

3 *Mer.* Good morrow!

[*Exit* with 1 *Mer*

2 *Mer.* Have you bethought ye further, sir,
On what I am to part with?

[*prus*,

Gos. I take it at your own rate, your wine of Cy-
But for the rest, I cannot save in them.

2 *Mer.* Make me offer of something near the price
That may assure me, you can deal for them.

Gos. And if I could,

I would not do't with too much loss.

[*cheap*.

2 *Mer.* 'Tis a rich lading; you know they are so

Gos. For which I were your chapman, but I am
Already out of cash.

[*Going*.

2 *Mer.* I'll give you day.

[*Following* him.]

Gos. Why, look you, there is now in prison

And at your suit, a pirate; and past hope

To live a week, if you should prosecute

What you can prove against him: set him free,

And you shall have your money to a stiver,

And early payment.

2 *Mer.* This is above wonder!

A merchant of your rank, that have at sea

So many bottoms in the danger of

These water thieves, should be a means to save 'em,

And stay the hand of justice that is ready

To fall on them.

Gos. You mistake me,

If you think I would cherish in this captain

The wrong he did to you, or any man.

But I was lately with him, being assur'd

A braver fellow never put from shore.

I read his letters granted from this state.

Since want of what he could not live without

Compell'd him to the pirate act he did,

I pity his misfortunes; and to work you

To some compassion of them, I come up

To your own price. Save him, the goods are mine;

If not, seek elsewhere; I'll not deal for them.

2 *Mer.* Well, sir, for your love, I will once be led
To change my purpose.

Gos. For your own profit rather.

2 *Mer.* I'll presently make means for his dis-
charge.

[*Exit*.]

Gos. Heaven grant my ships a safe return before
The day of this great payment, as they are
Expected hourly in port; my credit yet
Stands good with all the world.

Enter GERRARD.

Ger. Bless my good master!

The prayers of your poor beadsman ever shall

Be sent up for you.

Gos. God o' mercy, Clause!

There's something to put thee in mind hereafter
To think of me.

Ger. May He that gave it you,

Reward you for it with increase, good master!

Gos. I thrive the better for thy prayers.

Ger. I hope so;

For that I have fed upon your bounties,

And by the fire of your bless'd charity warm'd me:

And yet, good master, pardon that I'm bold

To make one suit more to you.

Gos. What is't? say on.

Ger. 'Tis not for money,

[*me*.

Nor clothes, good master; but your good word for

Gos. That thou shalt have, Clause; for I think
thee honest.

[*trouble*

Ger. To-morrow, then, dear master, take the

Of walking early unto Beggar's Bush;

And, as you see me, among others, brethren

In my affliction, when you are demanded

Which you like best amongst us, point out me,
And then pass by, as if you knew me not.

Gos. But what will that advantage thee?

Ger. Oh! much, sir;

'Twill give me the pre-eminence of the rest,
Make me a king among 'em.

At your better leisure,
I will inform you further of the good
It may do to me.

Gos. 'Troth! thou mak'st a wonder:

Have you a king and commonwealth among you?

Ger. We have. And there are states are govern'd
worse.

Gos. Ambition among beggars!

Ger. Many great ones

Do part with half their estates to have the place,
To cringe and beg in the first file, master.
Shall I be so bound unto your furtherance
In my petition?

Gos. That thou shalt not miss of,
Nor any worldly care make me forget it.
I will be early there. [*Exit.*]

Ger. Heaven guard my master! as it surely will,
To wrest the bloody sword from Wolfort's grasp,
And save himself the land he's born to rule.

My friends, ere long, shall see their long-lost prince;
And Flanders, to the latest ages shew,
A merchant's still the tyrant's deadliest foe. [*Exit.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.

HIGGIN, FERRET, PRIG, JACULIN, CLAUSE, SNAP,
GINKES, and other Beggars discovered.

Hig. Come, princes of the ragged regiment;
You o' the blood; what title e'er you bear,
I speak to all that stand in fair election
For the proud diadem of king of beggars.
Higgin, your orator, doth beseech you
All to stand forth, and put yourselves in rank,
That the first single comer may at view
Make a free choice.

Prig. First put a sentinel.

Hig. Thanks to my lord. The word's Fumbumbis.
[*Exit SNAP.*]

Per. Well; pray, my masters all, that Ferret be
chosen:

You're like to have a mercifui mild priuce of me.

Prig. A very tyrant, I; an arrant tyrant,
If e'er I come to reign; therefore, look to't,
Except you do provide me mum enough,
And beer to booze with. I must have my capons,
And ducklings in the season, and fat chickens,
Or straight I seize on all your privilege,
Call in your crutches, wooden legs, false arms,
All shall be escheated; and then, someone cold night
I'll watch you, what old barn you go to roost in,
And there I'll smother you all i'th' musty hay.

Hig. Whew! This is tyrant-like, indeed.

Enter SNAP, preceding HUBERT and HEMSKIRKE,
in cloaks.

Snap. Fumbumbis!

Prig. To your postures. Arm.

Hub. Yonder's the town, I see it.

Hig. Bless your good worships!

Per. One small piece of money.

Ginkes. Amongst us all, poor wretches!

Prig. Blind and lame!

Hig. Pitiful worships!

Snap. One little stiver.

Prig. Here be seven of us.

Hig. Seven, good masters! Oh! remember seven!
Seven blessings 'gainst seven deadly sins!

Prig. And seven sleepers.

Hems. There's, amongst you all.

Per. Heaven reward you!

Hig. The prince of pity bless thee!

Hub. Do I see right? or is't my fancy?

Sure, 'tis her face. Come hither, pretty maid.

Jac. What would you? Can you keep a secret?
You look as though you could. I'll tell you. Hush!

SONG.—JACULIN.

In ev'ry woodland, dale, and bower,

The fragrant roses blossom fair;

But where's the youth shall cull each flower,

To braid a garland for my hair?

Oh! he is far, far away,

And he knows not where I stray;

And should he e'er return

To his love, I'll answer nay.

My love in fight shall meet his doom

Or for some fairer maiden sigh;

And with the rose's with'ring bloom,

My hopeless, hopeless heart shall die.

Hub. Her voice, too, says the same! but, for my
head,

I would not that her manners were so chang'd.

Hear me, thou honest fellow; what's this maiden,

That lives amongst you here?

Snap. Ao, ao, ao!

Hub. How! Nothing but signs? This is strange!

I would fain have it her—but not her thus.

Hig. He is deaf and dumb. [*Stutters.*]

Hub. 'Slid! they did all speak plain enough e'en
now.

Dost thou know this same maid?

Prig. She was born at the barn, yonder, [*Stutters.*]
By Beggar's Bush. Her name is—

Hig. So was her mother's, too. [*Beggars retire.*]

Hub. I must be better informed than by this way.

Here was another face, too, that I mark'd,

Of the old man's; I will come here again.

Protect us, our disguise now: pr'ythee, Hemskirke,

If we be taken, how dost thou imagine

This town will use us, that hath so long stood

Out against Wolfort?

Hems. Even to hang us forth

Upon their walls a sunning, to make crows' meat.

If I were not assur'd o' the burgomaster,

And had a pretty excuse to see a niece there,

I should scarce venture.

Hub. Come, 'tis now too late

To look back at the ports: good luck, and enter.

[*Exit with HEMS.*]

Hig. A peery dog, I warrant him. [*mean?*]

Ginkes. [*To CLAUSE.*] What could his question
Clause. I know not; yet 'twas time to fly, he grew
Too close in his inquiries 'bout my daughter.

Hig. Hang them, for disturbing our

Noble ceremonies. Shall we renew them?

Prig. Incontinently, noble brother.

Enter GOSWIN.

Hig. Oh! here a judge comes!

[*Cry of "A judge!"*]

Gos. What ails you, sirs? What means this outcry?

Hig. Master,

A sort of poor souls met, heav'n's tools, good master,
Have had some little variance amongst ourselves

Who should be honestest of us, and which lives Uprightest in his calling: now, 'cause we thought We ne'er should 'gree upon't ourselves, because Indeed, 'tis hard to say, we all resolv'd to put it To him that should come next, and that's your mastership:

Which does your worship think is he? Sweet master, Look on us all, and tell us: we are seven of us, Like to the seven wise masters, or the planets.

Gos. I should judge this, the man with the grey beard; [Pointing to CLAUSE.]

And if he be not, I would he were!
There's something, too, amongst you,
To keep you all honest.

Exit.

Clause. Heav'n go with you!

Snap. What is't?

Prig. A crown of gold.

Fer. For our new king—good luck! [Clause!]

Prig. King Clause! I bid, God save the first king
After this golden token of a crown,
Where's Higgen, with his gratulating speech
In all our names?

Fer. Here he is, pumping for't. [once more,

Ginkes. H' has cough'd the second time; 'tis but
And then it comes.

Hig. Thou art chosen, venerable Clause,
Our king and sov'reign; monarch o' th' maunders;
And who is he that did not wish thee chosen,
Now thou art chosen? Ask 'em; all will say so;
Nay, swear't. 'Tis sworn so every day;
The times do give it sanction. When t'other day
We sat lamenting o'er our buried prince,
Of famous memory, (rest go with his rags!)
I then presag'd thou shortly would'st be king,
And now thou art so. By that beard, king Clause,
Thou wert found out, and mark'd for sovereignty.
Oh! happy prince, and beard! long may it grow,
And thick, and fair, that who lives under it
May live as safe as under Beggar's Bush.
Of which this is the thing—that but the type.

[Coughs.]

Prig. On, good Higgen!

Hig. No impositions, taxes, grievances,
Lie lurking in this beard: but under him
Each man shall eat his own stol'n eggs and bacon
In his own shade: he will have no purveyors
For pigs, or poultry—

Clause. That we must have, my learned orator;
It is our will; and every man to keep
In his own path and circuit.

Hig. Do you hear?

You must hereafter maund in your own pads,
He says.

Clause. Besides, to give good words.

Hig. Do you mark?

To cut bien whids, that is the second law. [mon

Clause. And keep afoot the humble and the com-
Phrase of begging, lest men discover us.

We love not heaps of laws, where few will serve.

All. Oh! gracious prince! Save, save the good
king Clause!

Hig. A song to crown him.

GLEE AND CHORUS.

Cast our caps and cares away,
This is beggars' holyday;
At the crowning of our king,
Thus we ever dance and sing.
In the world look out and see,
Where so happy prince as he,
Where the nations live so free
And so merry as do we?

Be it peace, or be it war,
Here at liberty we are.
And enjoy our ease and rest;
To the field we are not press'd;
Nor will any go to law
With the beggar for a straw:
All which happiness he brags,
He doth owe unto his rags.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—A Room in Vandunke's House.

Enter VANDUNKE, HUBERT, HEMSKIRKE, and
MARGARET.

Vand. Captain, you're welcome; so is this your
friend,

Most safely welcome; though our town stand out
Against your master, you shall find good quarters.
The truth is we love not him—Margaret, some wine.
Let's talk a little treason, if we can
Talk treason 'gainst the traitors; by your leave,
We, here in Bruges, think he does usurp;
And, therefore, I am bold—

[Exit MARGARET, and returns with wine.]

Hub. Sir, your boldness
Haply becomes your tongue, but not our ears,
While we are his servants.

Vand. Good! let's drink, then;

That will become us all.
Here's to you with a heart, my captain's friend,
With a good heart; and if this make us speak
Bold words anon, 'tis all under the rose,
Forgotten; drown all memory when we drink.

Hub. 'Tis freely spoken; noble burgomaster,
I'll do you right.

Hems. Nay, sir, mynheer Vandunke
Is a true statesman.

[throat

Vand. Fill my captain's cup; oh! that your cut-
Master, Wolfort, had been an honest man!

Hub. Sir?

Vand. Under the rose—

Hems. Here's to you;

And how does my niece?

Almost a woman, I think; she was my errand.

Vand. Ay, a kind uncle you are—fill him his glass—
That in seven years could not find leisure—

Hems. No, 'tis not so much.

Vand. I'll bate you ne'er an hour on't.

It was before the Brabander 'gan his war,
For moonshine, i'the water there, his daughter
That ne'er was lost, yet you could not find time
To see a kinswoman; but she is worth the seeing, sir,
Now you are come: you ask if she were a woman?
She is a woman, sir—bring her forth, Margaret—
And a fine woman, and has suitors.

Hems. How! What suitors are they?

Vand. Bachelors; young burghers;
And one a gallant, the prince of merchants
We call him here in Bruges.

Hems. How! a merchant?

I thought, Vandunke, you had understood me better,
And my niece, too, so trusted to you by me,
Than to admit of such in name of suitors.

Vand. Such! he is such a such, as were she mine,
I'd give him thirty thousand crowns with her.

Hems. Sir, you may deal for your own wares, but
know,

That the same things, sir, fit not you and me. [Exit.
Vand. Why, give's some wine, then, that will fit us
all;

Here's to you still, my captain's friend; but still
I say, would Wolfort were an honest man!
Under the rose I speak it. But this merchant

Is a brave boy; he lives so, in the town here,
We know not what to think of him.
Your master is a traitor for all this,
Under the rose—here's to you—and usurps
The earldom from a better man.

Hub. Ay, marry, sir, where is this man?

Vand. Nay, soft! an' I could tell you,
'Tis ten to one I would not. Here's my hand—
I love not Wolfort—sit you still with that.
See, here my captain comes, and his fine niece,
And there's my merchant—view him well.

Enter HEMSKIRKE, GERTRUDE, and GOSWIN.

Hems. You must

Not only know me for your uncle now,
But obey me: you, to go cast yourself
Away upon a merchant? fie upon't! one
That makes his trade with oaths and perjuries.

Gos. If it be me you speak of, as your eye
Seems to direct, I wish you would speak to me, sir.

Hems. Sir, I do say she is no merchandise.
Will that suffice you?

Gos. Merchandise! good sir,
Though you be kinsman to her, take no leave thence
To use me with contempt. I ever thought
Your niece above all price.

Hems. And do so still;
Dost hear? her rate's at more than you are worth.

Gos. You do not know what a gentleman's worth;
Nor can you value him.

Hub. Well said, merchant.

Vand. Nay, let him alone.

Hems. A gentleman!

What, o'the woolpack, or the sugar-chest,
Or list of velvet? Which is't, pound or yard,
You vend your gentry by?

Hub. Oh! Hemskirke, fie! [*Wolfort,*

Vand. Come, do not mind 'em: drink; he is no
Captain, I advise you.

Hems. If 'twere the blood
Of Charlemagne, as't may for aught I know,
Be some good butcher's issue here in Bruges.

Gos. How!

Hems. Nay, I'm not certain on't; of this I am:
If you once buy and sell, your gentry's gone.

Gos. Ha, ha, ha!

Hems. You're angry, though you laugh.

Gos. Now do I smile in pity and contempt
Of your poor argument: do not you, the lords
Of land, if you be any, sell the grass,
The corn, the straw, the milk, the cheese?

Vand. And butter?

Remember butter, do not leave out butter.

Gos. The beefs and muttons that your grounds are
stor'd with,

Beside the woods? Your empty honour, fetch'd
From the heralds A, B, C, and said o'er
With your court faces once an hour, shall ne'er
Make me mistake myself. Do not your lawyers
Sell all their practice, as your priests their prayers?
What is not bought and sold?

Hems. You now grow bold, sir.

Gos. I have been bred

Still with my honest freedom, and must use it.

Hems. Upon your equals, then.

Gos. Sir, he that will

Provoke me first, doth make himself my equal.

Hems. No more.

Gos. Yes, sir; this little—

'Tshall be aside: then after as you please.

You appear the uncle, sir, to her I love
More than mine eyes; and I have heard your scorn

ACT. DRAMA.—NOS. 81 & 82.

With so much scoffing, and with so much shame,
As each striv'd which is greater: but believe me,
I suck'd not in this patience with my milk;
Cast no despites on my profession
For the civility and tameness of it.

A good man bears a contumely worse
Than he would do an injury.

I would approach your kinswoman

With all respect due to yourself and her!

Hems. Away companion! handling her!

[*Pulls him from her.*]

Gos. Nay, I do love no blows, sir.

[*They fight; he gets HEMSKIRKE's sword,
and throws it away.*]

Hub. Hold, sir!

Gert. Help, my Goswin!

Vand. Let 'em alone; my life for one.

Gos. Nay, come,

If you have will.

Hub. None to offend you, sir.

Gos. He that had, thank himself! Not hand her?
And clasp her, and embrace her, and bear her

Through a whole race of uncles, arm'd;
And all their nephews, though they stood a wood
Of pikes, and wall of cannon. Kiss me, Gertrude;
Quake not, but kiss me.

Vand. Well said,

My merchant royal; fear no uncles; hang 'em,
Hang up all uncles!

Gos. In this circle, love,
Thou art as safe as in a tower of brass;
Let such as do wrong fear.

Vand. Ay, that's good.

Let Wolfort look to that.

Gos. Sir, here she stands,
Your niece and my belov'd; one of these titles
She must apply to; if unto the last,

Not all the anger can be sent unto her,
In frown or voice, or other art, shall force her,
Had Hercules a hand in't. Come, my joy,
Say, thou art mine, aloud, love—and profess it.

Vand. Do, and I drink to it.

Gos. Pr'ythee, say so, love.

[*blushes.*
Gert. 'Twould take away the honour from my
Do not you play the tyrant, sweet; they speak it.

Hems. I thank you, niece.

Gos. Sir, thank her for your life,
And fetch your sword within. [*Exit with GERT.*

Hub. A brave, clear spirit;
Hemskirke, you were to blame. A civil habit
Oft covers a good man; and you may meet
In person of a merchant, with a soul

As resolute and free, and always worthy
As else in any file of mankind. Pray you,
What meant you so to slight him?

Hems. 'Tis done now;

Ask me no more on't:

I was to blame, and I must suffer—[*aside.*—but yet
I'll be reveng'd. [*Exit.*

Hub. I'll to the woods

To find our much-wrong'd banish'd nobles,
And trace the lonely haunt where my lost love,
My Jaculin, laments her alter'd fortunes.
There I may chance to learn

Somewhat to help my inquiries further.

How now, brave burgomaster?

[*dunke.*
Vand. I love not Wolfort, and my name's Van-

Hub. Come, go sleep within. [*Wolfort—*

Vand. Earl Florez is right heir; and this same
Under the rose I speak it—

Hub. Very hardly.

[*breath'd,*
Vand. Usurps; and is a rank traitor as ever

And all that do uphold him. Let me go.

Do you uphold him?

Hub. No.

Vand. Then hold up me.

[*Ereunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Wood.

Enter *GOSWIN.*

Gos. No wind blows fair yet! no return of monies, Letters, nor anything to hold my hopes up! Why, then, 'tis destin'd that I fall! Fall miserably! My credit I was built on sinking with me. The raging north wind blows still stubbornly, And on his boist'rous rack rides my sad ruin. To-morrow with the sun-set, sets my credit: To prison now! Well, yet there's this hope left me, I may sink fairly under this day's venture; And so to-morrow's cross'd, and all its curses. This is the place his challenge call'd me to; Now let me fall before my foe i'the field, And not at bar before my creditors. He has kept his word. [*Enter* *HEMSKIRKE.*]

Now, sir, your sword's tongue only,

Loud as you dare—all other language—

Hem. Well, sir,

You shall not be long troubled: draw!

Gos. 'Tis done, sir; and now have at ye.

Hems. Now! [*Enter* *Boors who attack* *GOSWIN.*]

Gos. Betray'd to villains! Slaves, you shall buy me dearly.

Enter *GERRARD and Beggars.*

Ger. Now upon 'em bravely, boys!

Down with the gentlemen.

Boors. Hold, hold!

[*'em!*]

Ger. Down with 'em into the wood, and swinge

Conjure 'em soundly, boys! swinge 'em to jelly!

[*Beggars beat off* *HEMSKIRKE* and *Boors.*]

Blessings upon my master! thou art not hurt?

Gos. That heav'n, which sent thee to my aid, Still nerv'd my arm.

Ger. And let my wandering steps,

To where conceal'd I heard yon coward knave

Tutor his ruffian band to thy undoing.

Gos. I thank ye, Clause. Pr'ythee, now leave me, For, by my troth, I have nothing left to give thee.

Ger. Indeed, I do not ask, sir; only it grieves me To see you look so sad. Now goodness keep you

From troubles in your mind!

Gos. If I were troubled, [*me.*]

What could thy comfort do? Pr'ythee Clause, leave

Ger. Why, are ye sad?

Gos. Most true, I am so;

And such a sadness I have got will sink me! [*ble*]

What would the knowledge do thee good, so misera-

Thou canst not help thyself! canst thou work mira-

cles?

Ger. You do not know, sir, what I can do.

Tell me your cause of grief; I must not leave ye.

Gos. How! [*goodness,*]

Ger. By what ye hold most precious, by heav'n's

As your fair birth may prosper, good sir, tell me;

My mind believes yet something's in my power

May ease you of this trouble.

Gos. I will tell thee:

For a hundred thousand crowns, upon my credit

Taken up of merchants to supply my traffic,

To-morrow, Clause—to-morrow, which must come, In prison thou shalt find me, poor and broken.

Ger. I cannot blame your grief, sir,

Gos. Now, what say'st thou?

[*ye,*]

Ger. I say, you should not shrink; for he that gave Can give you more. Are ye, good master, ty'd Within the compass of a day?

Gos. Even to-morrow.

But why do I stand mocking of my misery?

Is't not enough that floods and friends forsake me?

Ger. Have ye no friends left?

None that have felt your bounty worth the duty?

Gos. Friendship! thou know'st it not.

Ger. It is a duty; and as a duty, from those men have felt ye,

Should be return'd again; therefore, I'll do't.

Distrust not, but pull up your noble spirit;

For if the fortunes of ten thousand people

Can save ye, rest assur'd. You have forgot, sir,

The good you did; that was the pow'r you gave me.

You shall now know the king of beggars' treasure;

And let the winds blow as they list, the sea roar,

Yet here in safety you shall find your harbour.

Distrust me not, for if I live, I'll fit ye.

Gos. How fain I would believe thee!

Ger. If I fail, master, believe no man hereafter.

Gos. I will try thee; but He knows, that knows all.

Ger. Know me to-morrow:

And if I know not how to cure ye, kill me!

So pass in peace, my best, my worthiest master.

[*Exit.*]

Gos. Still blow'st thou there? and from all other parts

Do all my agents sleep, that nothing comes?

There's a conspiracy of friends and servants,

If not of elements, to ha' me break.

What should I think, unless the seas and sands

Had swallow'd up, or fire devour'd my ships,

I must ha' had some returns.

Enter first Merchant.

1 *Mer.* Save you, sir!

Gos. Save you!

1 *Mer.* No news yet o' your ships?

Gos. Not any yet, sir.

1 *Mer.* 'Tis strange!

[*Exit.*]

Gos. 'Tis true, sir. What a voice was here now!

This was one passing bell; a thousand ravens

Sung in that man now, to presage my ruin!

Enter second Merchant.

2 *Mer.* Goswin, good day! these winds are very constant.

Gos. They are so, sir—to hurt.

2 *Mer.* Ha' you had no letters

Lately from England, nor from Denmark?

Gos. Neither.

2 *Mer.* This wind brings them. Nor no news over lands

Through Spain, from the Straits?

Gos. Not any.

2 *Mer.* I am sorry, sir.

[*Exit.*]

Gos. They talk me down; and, as 'tis said of vultures,

That scent a field fought, and do smell the carcasses

By many hundred miles: so do these, my wrecks,

At greater distances. Then, heaven, thy will

Come on, and be! For base, deceitful fortune

Shall never say, she's cut my throat in fear:

I am not broken yet; nor should I fall,

Methinks, with less than that; that ruins all.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*Another part of the Wood.**Enter HUBERT, as a Huntsman.*

Hub. Thus have I stol'n away disguis'd from
Hemskirke,

To try these people; for my heart yet tells me
Some of these beggars are the men I look for.
Appearing like myself, they have no reason
(Though my intent be fair,) but still to avoid me.
This is the wood they make their hidden home,
A fit place for concealment; where, till fortune
Crowns me with that I seek, I'll live amongst 'em.
They come: I'll couch awhile, and mark my time.
[Exit.]

*Enter HIGGEN, PRIG, FERRET, GINKES, and the
rest, with the Boors in custody.*

Hig. Come, bring 'em out, for here we sit in
justice;

Each man take a cudgel, a good cudgel:
And now attend our sentence. That you are rogues,
And mischievous, base rascals—there's the point
now—

I take it, is confess'd.

Prig. Deny it, if ye dare, knaves.

Boors. We are rogues, sir.

Hig. To amplify the matter, then; rogues ye are,
And cudgell'd ye shall be, ere we leave ye.

Boors. Yes, sir.

Hig. Why did ye this?

Were you drunk when ye did it?

Boors. Yes, indeed, we were.

Prig. You shall be beaten sober.

Hig. Was it for want ye undertook it?

Boors. Yes, sir.

Hig. Ye shall be swing'd abundantly.

Has not the gentleman (pray, mark this point,
Brother Prig,) reliev'd you often?

Boors. 'Tis most true, sir.

Hig. And as ye are true rascals,
Tell me but this: have ye not been drunk and often
At his charge?

Boors. Often, often.

Hig. There's the point, then:

They have cast themselves, brother Prig.
Proceed you now; I'm somewhat weary.

Prig. Can you do these things,
You most abominable scurvy rascals,
You turnip-eating rogues?

Boors. We're truly sorry. [presently]

Prig. To the proof, you knaves; to the proof, and
Give us a sign you feel compunction.

Every man up with his cudgel, and on his neighbour
Bestow such alms, till we shall say sufficient.

Hig. You know your doom:

One, two, three, and about it.

[Boors beat each other off.]

Prig. That fellow in the blue has true compunc-
tion.

Enter GERRARD.

Ger. Call in the gentleman:
His cause I'll hear myself.

Enter HEMSKIRKE, handcuffed.

Prig. With all due reverence
We do resign, sir.

Ger. Go fetch that paper was found upon him.
But, soft! who have we here? [Exit FERRET.]

Enter HUBERT.

Hub. Good ev'n, my honest friends!

Ger. Good ev'n, good fellow!

Hub. May a poor huntsman, with a merry heart,
A voice shall make the forest ring about him,
Get leave to live amongst ye? True as steel, boys;
That knows all chases, and can watch all hours,
Force ye the crafty reynard, climb the quick-sets,
And rouse the lofty stag; and with my bell-mourn
Ring him a knell, that all the woods shall mourn him,
Till in his funeral tears he fall before me.

Ger. Well spoke, my brave fellow.

Hub. [Aside.] What mak'st thee here?
Hemskirke, thou art not right, I fear.

Re-enter FERRET, with a paper.

Fer. Here is the paper.

Ger. Give it to me. You are sent here, sirrah,
To discover certain gentlemen; a spy knave!
And if you find 'em, if not by persuasion,
To bring 'em back—by poison to dispatch 'em!

Hub. By poison! ha!

Ger. Here is another.—Hubert. What is that
Hubert, sir?

Hub. You may perceive there—

Ger. Here thou art commanded, when that Hubert
Has done his best and worthiest service this way,
To cut his throat; for here he's set down dangerous.

Hub. This is most impious!

Ger. Is not this true?

Hems. Yes. What are you the better? [dom;]

Ger. You shall perceive, sir, ere you get your free-
Keep him still bound: and, friend, we take thee
to us,

Into our company. Thou dar'st be true unto us?

Hig. Ay, and obedient, too?

Hub. As you had bred me.

[to us.]

Ger. Then take our hand; thou'rt now a servant
Welcome him all.

Hig. Stand off, stand off, I'll do't; [person,
We bid you welcome three ways: first, for your
Which is a promising person: next for your quality,
Which is a decent and a gentle quality;
Last, for the frequent means you have to feed us;
You can steal, 'tis presum'd?

Hub. Yes, venison; an' if you want—

Hig. 'Tis well you understand that, for you
Shall practise it daily; you can drink, too?

Hub. Soundly.

[cock;]

Hig. And ye dare know a woman from a weather-

Hub. If I handle her.

Ger. As earnest of thy faith and resolution

Wilt undertake to keep this rascal prisoner?

One who basely contriv'd to undermine

A noble life, dear to the state and us. [wonder,

Hub. Sirs, I have kept wild dogs, and beasts for
And made 'em tame, too. Give into my custody
This roaring rascal, I shall hamper him.

Oh! he smells rank o'th' rascal.

Ger. Take him to thee; but if he 'scape—

Hub. Let me be even hang'd for him.

Come, sir, I'll tie you to the leash.

Hems. Away, rascal!

[soundly,

Hub. Be not so stubborn: I shall swinge ye

An' ye play tricks with me.

Ger. So, now away;

But ever have an eye, sir, to your prisoner.

Hub. He must blind both mine eyes, if he get
from me. [Exit.]

SCENE III.—*A Room in Gertrude's House.*

Enter GOSWIN and GERTRUDE.

Gert. Indeed, you're welcome; I have heard your
'scape,

And, therefore, give her leave, that only loves you,
To bid you welcome : what is't makes you sad ?
Why do you look so wild ? Is't I offend you ?
Beshrew my heart, not willingly.

Gos. No, Gertrude.

[for,

Gert. Is't the delay of that you long have look'd
A happy marriage ?

Gos. No news yet.

Gert. Do you hear, sir ?

Gos. Have I liv'd

In all the happiness that fortune could seat me ?

In all men's fair opinions ?

Gert. Do you love me ?

Gos. And can the devil,

In one ten days—that devil chance, devour me ?

Gert. You do not love me.

Gos. No star prosperous ! all at a swoop !

Gert. Goswin, you will not look upon me.

Gos. Can men's prayers,

Shot up to heaven with such a zeal as mine are,

Fall back like lazy mists, and never prosper ?

Gyves I must wear, and cold must be my comfort,
Darkness, and want of meat—alas ! she weeps, too,

Which is the top of all my sorrow—Gertrude !

Gert. No, no, you will know me.

Gos. The time grows on still,

And like a tumbling wave, I see my ruin

Come rolling over me. [slighting ?

Gert. Tell me but how I have deserv'd your

Gos. For a hundred thousand crowns !

Gert. Farewell !

[starts me !

Gos. Of which I have scarce ten—oh ! how it

Gert. And may the next you love, hearing my
ruin—

Gos. I had forgot myself—oh ! my best Gertrude !
Crown of my joys and comforts.

Gert. Sweet, what ails ye ?

I thought you had been vex'd with me.

Gos. My mind, wench,

My mind, o'erflow'd with sorrow, sunk my memory.

Gert. Am I not worthy of the knowledge of it ?

And cannot I as well affect your sorrows

As your delights ? you love no other woman ?

Gos. No, I protest.

Gert. You have no ships lost lately ?

Gos. None that I know of. [innocence

Gert. I hope you have spilled no blood whose
May lay this on your conscience.

Gos. Clear, by heaven !

Gert. Why should you be thus, then ?

Gos. Good Gertrude, ask not.

Even by the love you bear me.

Gert. I am obedient.

Gos. Go in, my fair ; I will not be long from ye—

Nor long, I fear me, with thee. At my return

Dispose me as you please.

Gert. The good gods guide ye !

[Exit.

Gos. Now for myself, which is the least I hope for,
And when that fails, for man's worst fortune, pity.

[Exit.

Nor, if you give me patience, is it possible
All my adventures fail. You've ships abroad
Endure the beating both of wind and weather,
I'm sure 'twould vex your hearts to be protested :
Ye're all fair merchants.

1 *Mer.* And must have fair play.

There is no living here else ; for my part,
I would gladly stay ; but my wants tell me,
I must wrong others in't.

Gos. No mercy in ye ?

2 *Mer.* 'Tis foolish to depend on others' mercy.
Keep yourself right, sir ; you have yet liv'd here
In lord-like prodigality, high and open ;
Now ye find what 'tis.

1 *Mer.* Before your poverty,
We were of no mark, of no endeavour.

2 *Mer.* You stood alone ; and scarce a sail at sea
But laden with your goods. Now I hope, sir,
We shall have sea-room.

Gos. Is my misery

Become my scorn, too ? Have you no mercy,
No part of men left ? Are all my bounties
To you, and to the town, turn'd my reproaches ?

2 *Mer.* Well, get your monies ready ; 'tis but two
hours ;

We shall protest ye else, and suddenly.

Gos. But two days—

2 *Mer.* Not an hour. Ye know the hazard.

[Exeunt Merchants.

Gos. How soon my light's put out ! Hard-hearted
Bruges !

Within thy walls may never honest merchant
Venture his fortune more !

Enter GERRARD.

Ger. Good fortune, master !

Gos. Thou mistak'st me, Clause

I am not worth thy blessing.

Ger. Still a sad man !

No belief, gentle master ?

Enter FERRET and GINKES, as porters.

Bring it in, then ;

And now believe your beadsman.

Gos. Is this certain ?

Or dost thou work upon my troubled senses ?

Ger. 'Tis gold ; 'tis there, a hundred thousand
crowns ;

And, good, sweet master, now be merry. Pay 'em !
Pay the poor, pelting knaves, that know no goodness.
And cheer your heart up.

Gos. But, good Clause, tell me. [fully,

How cam'st thou by this mighty sum ? If wrong-
I must not take it of thee ; 'twill undo me !

Ger. Fear not ; you have it by as honest means,
As though your father gave it.

Gos. What great security ?

Ger. Away with that, sir ;

Were ye not more than all the men in Bruges,
And all the money, in my thoughts ?

Gos. But, Clause,
I may die presently.

Ger. Then this dies with you. [ments.

Pay when you can, good master ; I'll no parch-
Only this charity I entreat you,
Leave me this ring.

Gos. Alas ! it is too poor, Clause.

Ger. 'Tis all I ask ; and this withal, that when
I shall deliver't back, you shall grant me,
Freely, one poor petition.

Gos. There, I confirm it. [Gives the ring.

And may my faith forsake me when I shun it !

[Exit.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Street in Bruges.

Enter GOSWIN and two Merchants.

Gos. Why, gentlemen, 'tis but a week more ; I
entreat you

But seven short days ; I am not running from you,

Ger. Away! take up the money,
And follow that young gentleman.

[*Eseunt.*]

SCENE II.—A Wood.

Enter JACULIN.

Jac. I surely cannot err. What borrow'd dress
Can hide my Hubert from me? How I wish,
Yet fear to be resolv'd. He went this way.
Shall I adventure? Oh! this dread suspense,
How it does load my heart!

Enter HUBERT.

Hub. I've lock'd my youth up close enough from
gadding,
In an old tree, and set watch over him.
My schemes are almost ripe—Ha, Jaculin!
If through her means, I can but make discovery.
Come hither, pretty maid.

Jac. No, no; you'll kiss me.

Hub. So I will.

[*Kisses her.*]

What's your father's name?

Jac. He's gone to heaven!

Hub. Is it not Gerrard, sweet?

Jac. I'll stay no longer.

My mother's an old woman, and my brother
Was drown'd at sea.

[*Going.*]

Hub. Stay! do not fly me thus.

Jac. [*Aside.*] Oh! how my heart melts within me.

Hub. [*Aside.*] 'Tis certain she! Pray, let me see
your hand, sweet.

Jac. No, no.

Hub. [*Aside.*] Sure, I should know that ring!

Jac. [*Aside.*] 'Tis certain he. I had forgot my
ring, too.

Hub. Do you know me, chuck?

Jac. No, indeed; I never saw ye:

I must be married to-morrow, to a capper.

Hub. [*Aside.*] How fain she would conceal her-
self, yet cannot.

My pretty wanderer, will you love me,
And leave that man? I'll wait you through the vale,
And make you dainty nosegays.

Jac. And where put them?

Hub. Here, in thy bosom, sweet.

Jac. Can you love, then?

SONG.—JACULIN.

*Tho' he is far away,
And over land and sea;
He'll come some happy day,
And prove his truth to me.
And when my love's returning,
My secret known too well,
Tho' all my blushes burning,
Shall want no tongue to tell.*

Hub. One word more.

Did you ever know a maid call'd Jaculin?

Jac. Oh! I'm discover'd!

Hub. 'Tis she! Now I'm certain

They're all here. Turn, turn thee, lovely maid,
'Thy Hubert speaks to thee.

Jac. Alas! I am forbid! Why thus disguis'd?

Hub. For justice and for thee, love!

Meet me anon, I'll tell thee all my purpose.

Jac. And may I trust thee, Hubert?

Hub. As thine own soul.

Jac. But yet you must not know me. This, and
be constant ever.

[*Exit.*]

Hub. Oh! blessed certainty!

Now for my other project.

To turn the cunning toils were laid for me
To Hemsikirke's ruin, and the tyrant's fall.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—A House.

Enter VANDUNKE, followed by a Servant.

Van. With officers of justice, said ye? and
Inquir'd for Goswin? Bid 'em come in. [*Exit Serv.*]
Now will I play upon this envious crew,
That fain would run a royal vessel down.
They're here as bidden to a feast, before their hour:
I'll whet and disappoint their hungry appetites.

Enter the four Merchants.

2 Mer. Good day, most worthy burgomaster.
Our visit was to the rich merchant, Goswin. [*tics*
Vand. I'm sorry for't. I fear his strong necessi-
Will bring him empty-handed.
You must be merciful.

1 Mer. Oh! but he'll come:

He's rich, or from his ventures should be so.

2 Mer. I only wish

His forwardness to embrace all bargains,
Sink him not in the end.

1 Mer. [*To VAND.*] Have better hopes;

For my part, I am confident.

[*friends:*]

Vand. [*Aside.*] Here's a set of smiling mouth

3 Mer. His noble mind and ready hand contend

Which can add most to his free courtesies.

Vand. A fable wolves!

[*Aside.*]

2 Mer. It was at his bidding,

I did free from prison a sea robber,

Who yet may live to pay him with his ruin.

What think you of that deed, burgomaster?

Vand. What think! as of a deed of noble pity:

And if that act did plunge him into ruin,

You may now share its glory, by relieving him;

And holding off your bonds.

2 Mer. I love and honour him,

But must not break my neck to heal his finger.

3 Mer. For my part, though his bounty has no eyes,
Yet my necessities compel me to some foresight.

Vand. Have ye not often profited by this man,

And reve'll'd at his cost?

2 Mer. Sir, we confess—

Vand. Do, that y're all base knaves and hypocrites.

See, here he comes to challenge a return

Of kindness from ye.

1 Mer. When our bonds be paid.

Enter Goswin, with men carrying bags of money.

Gos. Now, sirs, your bonds. Set down those bags
of gold.

Your pardon, that you wait.

2 Mer. [*Aside.*] He deals in witchcraft!

1 Mer. Nay, sir, if it would do you courtesy,—

Gos. None at all, sir. [*The Merchants bow.*]

Vand. There's bending now of backs,

And jutting out of hips. [*Aside.*]

Gos. Take it, 'tis yours.

There's your ten thousand, sir. Give in my bills.

Your sixteen—

3 Mer. Pray, be pleas'd to make further use.

Gos. No.

Vand. That's plump! You're answered, I hope?

4 Mer. What I have, sir,

You may command. Pray, let me be your servant.

Gos. Put on your hats. I care not for your cour-
tesies;

They're most untimely done, and no truth in 'em.
Vand. They're all lies, I'll vouch for 'em every
one.

2 Mer. I have a freight of pepper.

Vand. Rot your pepper!

Gos. Shall I trust you again?—There's your ten thousand.

4 Mer. Or, if you want fine sugar, 'tis but sending.

Gos. No, I can send to Barbary; those people, That never yet knew faith, have nobler freedoms. How now?

Enter a Sailor.

Sail. Why, health to the noble merchant!

The Susan is returned.

Gos. Well?

Sail. Well, and rich, sir;

And now put in.

Vand. Do you mark that?

Gos. Heav'n, thou hast heard my prayers.

What news o'th' fly-boat?

Sail. If this wind hold till midnight,

She will be here, and wealthy.—'Scaped fairly.

Vand. D'ye hear that, too, knaves.

Gos. How, pr'ythee, sailor?

Sail. Thus, sir. She had fought

Seven hours together, with six Turkish galleys,

And she fought bravely; but, at last, was boarded,

And overlaid with strength; when, presently,

Comes bearing up i'the wind, Captain Vannoke,

That valiant gentleman you redeem'd from prison.

He knew the boat, set in, and fought it bravely;

Beat all the galleys off, sunk three; redeem'd her,

And, as a service to ye, sent her home, sir.

Gos. An honest, noble captain, and a thankful!

Vand. And this is he you would have hang'd,

Ye land pirates! [chant's health, sailor.

Gos. There's for thy news. Go, drink the mer-

Sail. Thank your bounty; and I'll do it to a do it.

Vand. Ay, drink till ye drown yourself,

Or you're no Englishman. [Exit Sailor.

Gos. This year, I hope, my friends, I shall 'scape prison,

For all your cares to catch me.

Vand. Come, sir, leave these pitiful knaves;

You must along with me:

Yonder is one who weeps and sobs.

Gos. Alas! how does she?

Vand. She will be better soon, I hope.

Gos. Why soon, sir?

Vand. Why, when you have her in your arms. This

My boy, she is thy wife:

I'll cheer thee up with sack,

And, when thou'rt joyous, fling thee to thy mistress.

Gos. With all my heart, I take her

You are paid, I hope?

2 Mer. You may please, sir,

To think of your poor servants in displeasure, Whose all they have—goods, moneys, are at your service.

Gos. I thank you;

And when I've need of you, I shall forget you.

[Exeunt.

SCENE IV.—A Wood.

Enter HUBERT and HEMSKIRKE.

Hub. You the Earl's servant? [him,

Hems. I swear I am near as his own thoughts to Able to do thee service. Release me, I'll make thee ranger over all the game. [too.

Hub. This may provoke me. Yet to prove a knave

Hems. 'Tis to prove honest; 'tis to do good service

For him thou'rt sworn to, huntsman; for thy prince.

Hub. Then thou shalt see, sir. I will do a service,

That shall deserve, indeed.

'Tis not your setting free, for that's mere nothing; But such a service, if the Earl be noble,

He shall for ever love me.

Hems. What is't, huntsman?

Hub. Do you know any of these people live here?

Hems. No. [cm,

Hub. You are a fool, then. Here be those, to have I know the Earl so well, would make him caper.

Hems. Any of the old lords, that rebell'd?

Hub. Peace!

All. I know 'em all, and can betray 'em.

Hems. But wilt thou do this service?

Hub. More than that, too.

Here's the right heir!

Hems. What, Florez? Oh! honest,

Honest huntsman!

Hub. Now, how to get them,

There's the matter.

Hems. By force.

Hub. Ay, that must do't.

And, with the person of the Earl himself,

Authority and might must come on 'em,

Or else in vain. And thus I would have you do't.

To-morrow night be here, the hour be twelve:

Now for a guide to draw ye on these persons,

The woods being thick, and hard to hit, myself

With some beside, will wait you by th' great oak.

Hems. Keep but thy faith, and such a shower of wealth—

Hub. I warrant ye. Miss nothing that I tell ye.

Away, away! for here come those will hold ye.

[Exit HEMSKIRKE

Enter GERRARD, HIGGEN, PRIG, GINKES, SNAP, FERRET, and others.

Ger. Now, what's the news in town?

Ginkes. No news but joy, sir.

Ev'ry man wooing of the noble merchant,

Who sends his hearty commendations to ye.

Fer. Yes; there's this news. This night he's to be married.

Ger. This night! He must not marry now.

Hub. Good sir,

By your leave, one word in private with ye.

Nay, do not start; I know ye.

Hubert speaks to ye, and you must be Gerrard,

The time invites you to it.

Ger. Challenge'd thus,

I throw aside disguise, and trust your honour.

Sir, I am Gerrard; say, how stand our hopes?

Hub. Fair, if you now pursue 'em. Hemskirke,

I've

Let go, and these my causes I'll tell ye

Privately, and how I have wrought on him,

Gull'd him, and sent him home as a decoy,

To bring Lord Wolfort hither, with his guards,

To seize (so he'll expect) the banish'd lords;

But, so my plan succeed, his very guards

Shall serve to crush the tyranny they rais'd,

And, at my voice, shall hail their lawful prince.

Till I can prove me honest to my friends,

Look on, and strictly follow these directions.

Snap. What! does he marry Vandunke's pretty daughter? [pies!

Prig. Oh! the puddings, the piping hot mince-

Hig. For the leg of a goose, now would I venture a limb:

I love a fat goose, as I love allegiance;

And plague upon the boors, too well they know't;

And, therefore, starve their poultry.

Prig. Brother Higgen,

What think you of a wassail?

Hig. Worthily;

And then I'll make a speech in praise of merchants.

Prig. And I'll so roar out songs and glees!

Ger. 'Tis passing well, I both believe and joy in't,
And will be ready. Hear me all; keep in
Till this, your huntsman, call ye forth; then do
His bidding faithfully. I must awhile
Forsake ye. On mine anger, no man stir hence.

Prig. Not to the wedding, sir?

Ger. Not any whither.

[*meat, too.*]

Hig. The wedding must be seen, sir. We want
We're horribly out of meat.

Prig. Shall it be spoken,

Fat capons shak'd their tails at's in defiance?
Shall pigs, sir, that the parson's self would envy,
And dainty ducks—

Ger. Not a word more. Obey me!

[*Erit.*]

Hig. Why, then, come doleful death, this is flat
tyranny!

And by this hand—

Hub. What?

Hig. I'll go to sleep upon't.

Hub. No sleep to-night for any that have hearts
To hunt with me the savage, bloody boar
That wastes the land. I have a scheme, my hearts,
Shall, by one night of watching, win a feast,
Whereat a royal host shall bid you welcome.

[*Exeunt, crying* "Long live our huntsman,
Hubert!"]

SCENE V.—An entrance Hall in Bruges.

Enter Goswin, with a paper in his hand.

Gos. Such earnest bidding; nay, more like com-
mand,

To meet him here, on th' forfeit of my word,
In this the moment of my nuptial hour!
What this man is I know not, nor for what cause
He twice has thrust himself into my dangers.
But, sure, heav'n's hand is in't. By strange instinct,
Nature has taught me to behold his wants,
Not as a stranger's.—

Enter GERRARD.

My honest, my best friend, I have been careful
To see thy moneys—

Clause. Sir, that brought not me.

Do you know this ring again?

Gos. Thou hadst it of me.

[*you gave me*]

Clause. And do you well remember yet the boon
Upon the return of this?

Gos. Yes; and I grant it,

Be it what it will. Ask what thou canst, I'll do it,
Within my power.

Clause. You are not married yet?

Gos. No.

[*turb ye.*]

Clause. 'Faith, I shall ask you that, that will dis-

Gos. Do;

And if I faint and flinch in't—

Clause. Well said, master;

And yet it grieves me, too, and yet it must be.

Gos. Pr'ythee, distrust me not.

Clause. You must not marry.

That's part of the power you gave me.

Gos. Not marry, Clause?

Clause. Not if you keep your promise,

And give me power to ask.

Gos. Pr'ythee, think better.

I will obey, by heaven!

Clause. I have thought the best, sir.

[*honesty?*]

Gos. Give me thy reason. Dost thou fear her

Clause. Chaste as the ice, for anything I know, sir.

Gos. Must not marry?

Shall I break now, when my poor heart is pawn'd?

When all the preparation—

Clause. Now, or never.

Gos. Come, 'tis not that thou wouldst: thou dost
but fright me.

Clause. You may break, sir;

But never more in my thoughts appear honest.

Gos. Didst ever see her?

Clause. No.

Gos. She is such a wonder

For beauty and fair virtue, Europe has not.

Why hast thou made me happy to undo me?

But look upon her, then if thy heart relent not,

I'll quit her presently. Who waits there?

Bid my fair love come hither.

Pr'ythee, be merciful; take a man's heart,

And look upon her truly: take a friend's heart,

And feel what misery must follow this. [promise.]

Clause. Take you a noble heart, and keep your
I forsook all I had to make you happy.

Enter GERTRUDE.

Can that thing call'd a woman stay your virtue?

Gos. Look, there she is. Now deal with me as
thou wilt.

Didst ever see a fairer?

Gert. What ails my love?

Gos. Didst thou ever,

By the fair light of heav'n, behold a sweeter?

Gert. Sure, h'as some strange design in hand,

He starts so.

Clause. She is most goodly.

Gos. Is she a thing, then, to be lost thus lightly?

Her mind is ten times sweeter, ten times nobler,—

And but to hear her speak—a paradise.

And such a love she bears to me,—a chaste love,—

And ready now to bless me; the priest too, ready

To say the holy words, shall make us happy.

This is a cruelty beyond man's study;

'Twill be her death to do't.

Clause. Let her die, then.

Gos. 'Twill kill me, too; 'twill murder me. By
heav'n, Clause, [me.]

I'll give thee half I have. Come, thou shalt save

Clause. Then you must go with me; I can stay
no longer.

If you be true and noble, in the dark walk

Of aged elms, that opens to the plain,

You'll meet me in this hour.

Gos. Hard heart, I'll follow thee. [Exit CLAUSE.]

Pray ye, go in. I have a weighty business

Concerns my life and state, (make no inquiry,)

This present hour befall'n me. My cloak there!

Gert. Is this your ceremony? Why is this stop,
sir?

Gos. We must part,

Gertrude, we must!

Gert. Must! What voice enjoins?

What power commands?

Gos. We shall meet again.

Gert. Who is yon man, that rules so absolute

O'er Goswin's will? [sweet,]

Gos. Ask me no more. I can but tell thee this,
I'm ever thine. Farewell.

I know not why,

But to obey this man, to me seems now

As payment of some great religious debt

Nature stands bound for.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*Woods.*

Enter GERTRUDE and a Clown.

Gert. Lead, if we're right; thou said'st thou knew'st the way. [homeward!]

Clown. Fear nothing, I do know it. Would 'twere

Gert. Wrought from me by a beggar! at the time That most should tie him! 'tis some other love That hath a more command on his affections, And he that fetch'd him, a disguised agent, Not what he personated. Darkness shroud And cover love's too curious search in me; For yet, suspicion, I would not name thee. [dark.]

Clown. Mistress, it grows somewhat pretty and *Gert.* What then?

Clown. Nay, nothing. Do not think I am afraid, Although, perhaps, you are.

Gert. I am not. Forward! [fear nothing.]

Clown. Sure, but you are. Give me your hand—

What a fright one on's are in, you or I?

Gert. What ails the fellow?

Clown. Hark, hark! I beseech you.

Do you hear nothing?

Gert. No.

Clown. List! This wood is full of wolves, Of hogs, and such carnivorous vermin.

Hark! 'tis the howling of a wolf!

Gert. Of the wind, coward! [now!]

Clown. Help me to say my pray'rs. He's got me I cannot speak! Do I speak, mistress? Tell me.

Gert. A precious guide I've got. [One halloo.]

Clown. It thunders now. You hear that, mistress?

Gert. I hear one halloo! [lightning!]

Clown. 'Tis thunder, thunder! See, a flash of Are you not blasted, mistress?

'T has played the barber with me; I have lost My beard—I am shaven, mistress.

Gert. Pr'ythee, hold thy peace.

Both love and jealousy have made me bold.

Where my fate leads me, I must go. Hold off! [E.r.]

Clown. The Lord go with you, then, for I will not.

Enter WOLFORT, HEMSKIRKE, and Soldiers.

Hems. It was the fellow,—sure, he that should guide—

The huntsman that did halloo. Who goes there?

Clown. Mistress, I am taken.

Hems. Ah, mistress! Now look forth.

Wolf. What are you, sirrah?

Clown. Truly, all is left

Of a poor boor by day, nothing by night.

I'm none that will stand out, great sir.

You might have spar'd your guns and drum;

You may subdue me with a walking-stick,

E'en when you please, and hold me with a pack-thread.

Hems. What woman was't you call'd to?

Clown. I? None, sir.

Wolf. None! Did not you name a mistress?

Clown. Yes; but she's

No woman yet: she should have been this night,

But that a beggar stole away her bridegroom.

Enter Soldiers with GERTRUDE.

Hems. 'Tis she!

Gert. Ha! I am miserably lost!

Hems. This was a noble entrance to your fortune; That being thus upon the point of marriage, Upon her venture here, you should surprise her.

Wolf. I begin, Hemskirke, to believe my fate Works to my end.

Hems. Yes, sir; and this adds trust

Unto our guide, who did assure me Florez

Liv'd in some merchant's shape, as Gerrard did

In the old beggar's. [Shouts heard.] That's he again!

Wolf. Good! Go we forth to meet him.

Hems. Here's the oak, my lord. Come, madam, you must along with us. [Ereunt.]

Enter HUBERT, HIGGEN, PRIG, FERRET, SNAP, and GINKES, like Boors.

Hub. I like your habits well. They're safe! stand close!

Hig. But what's the action we are for now, eh? Robbing a ripper of his fish?

Prig. Or taking a poultener prisoner?

Hig. Without ransom?

Snap. Or cutting off a convoy of butter?

Prig. Oh! I could drive a regiment Of geese afore me, such a night as this, Ten leagues with my hat and staff, and not a hiss Heard, or a wing of my troop disorder'd.

Hig. Is it a fetching off a buck of clothes? We are horribly out of linen.

Hub. No such matter.

Hig. Let me alone for any farmer's dog: If you've a mind to the cheese-loft, 'tis but thus. And he's a silenc'd mastiff during pleasure.

Hub. Would it please you to be silent?

Hig. Mum!

Re-enter WOLFORT, HEMSKIRKE, and Soldiers.

Wolf. Who's there?

Hub. A friend, the huntsman.

Hems. 'Tis he, himself. [these?]

Hub. I have kept touch, sir. Which is the earl of *Hems.* This, my lord, 's the friend Hath undertook the service.

Hub. And I have don't.

I know to pitch my toils, drive in my game; For Florez, and his father Gerrard, and Jaculin, young Florez' sister, I'll have 'em all.

Wolf. We will double

Whatever Hemskirke now hath promis'd thee.

Hub. And I'll deserve it treble. What horse ha' you?

Wolf. A hundred.

Hub. That's well. Ready to take 'em on surprise?

Wolf. Yes.

Hems. Divide, then,

Your force into five squadrons; for there are So many outlets; of all which passages We must possess ourselves to round 'em in. And that they may be more secure, I'll use My wonted whoops and halloos, as I were A hunting for 'em; which will make them rest Careless of any noise, and be a direction To other guides, how we approach 'em still.

Wolf. 'Tis order'd well, and relisheth the soldier. Make the division, huntsman. You are my charge, My fair one, I'll look to you. [Ereunt.]

Clown. No one shall need to look to me, I'll look unto myself. [Erit.]

Hub. Now, comrades, is the promis'd hour at hand! Here, where the roads do meet, lie conceal'd; And, at the bugle's sound, rush forth to aid Lord Hubert, who then rings the knell Of Wolfort's power, and hails found Florez, prince. [Erit with Guards.]

Enter GERRARD and FLOREZ.

Flo. 'Tis passing strange!

Ger. When we fled from Wolfort,
I sent you into England, there plac'd you [win,
With a brave Flanders merchant, called rich Gos-
Who, dying, left his name and wealth unto you,
As his reputed son. But though I
Should, as a subject, study you, my prince,
'Twill not discredit you to call me father.

Flo. Acknowledge you my father! Sir, I do;
And may impiety, conspiring with
My other sins, sink me, and suddenly,
When I forget to pay you a son's duty. [*Kneels.*

Ger. I pray you, rise;
And may those powers that see and love this in you
Reward you for it. Taught by your example,
Having receiv'd the rights due to a father,
I tender you th' allegiance of a subject,
Which, as my prince, accept of.

Flo. Kneel to me!
May mountains first fall down beneath their valleys,
And fire no more mount upwards, when I suffer
An act in nature so preposterous.

I am your son, sir; prouder to be so,
Than I shall ever of those specious titles,
Left to me by my mother.

Ger. I do believe it.—

By this time, sir, I hope you want no reasons
Why I broke off your marriage;
For now, as Florez, and a prince, remember,
The fair maid whom you chose to be your bride,
Being so far beneath you, even your love
Must grant she's not your equal.

Flo. In descent,
Or borrow'd glories from dead ancestors;
But for her beauty, chastity, and virtues,
A monarch might receive from her, not give,
Though she were his crown's purchase.

*Enter HUBERT, HEMSKIRKE, WOLFORT, BERTHA,
and Lords, with torches.*

Hub. Sir, here be two of 'em,
The father and the son.

Ger. Who's this? Wolfort? [*treason.*

Wolf. Impostor! ay, to charge thee with thy
In this disguise, that hath so long conceal'd you,
I must find Gerrard.

And in this merchant's habit, one call'd Florez,
Who would be earl.

Flo. And is, wert thou a subject.

Bertha. Goswin turn'd prince!

Oh! I am poorer by this greatness
Than all my former jealousies or misfortunes!

Flo. Gertrude!

Wolf. Stay, sir; hold, on your life!

Bertha. His life! oh! first take mine;
And since I cannot hope to wed him now,
Let me but fall a part of his glad ransom.

Flo. So proud a fiend as Wolfort!

Wolf. For so lost a thing as Florez!

Flo. And that be so,
Rather than she should stoop again to thee,—
There is no death, but's sweeter than all life,
When Wolfort is to give it. Oh! my Gertrude!

Wolf. This is no Gertrude, nor no Hemskirke's
nice,

Nor Vandunke's daughter; this is Bertha, Bertha,
Heiress of Brabant, she that caus'd the war. [*vice.*

Hems. Whom I did steal to do great Wolfort ser-
Flo. Insolent villain!

Enter JACULIN.

Wolf. Who is this, huntsman? [*Florez.*

Hub. More, more, sir. This is Jaculin, sister to
Ger. How they triumph in their treachery!

Wolf. Why, here's brave game! this was sport
royal!

Huntsman, your horn: first wind me Florez' fall,
Next Gerrard's, then his daughter, Jaculin's.

We'll hang 'em, Hemskirke, on these trees.

Hems. No here, my lord; 'twill spoil your triumph.

Hub. A public scaffold will shew better sport.

Flo. Wretch! art thou not content thou hast be-
tray'd us,

But mock'st us, too?

Ger. False Hubert! this is monstrous!

Wolf. Hubert!

Hems. Who, this? [*bert!*

Ger. Yes, this is Hubert; false and perjurd Hu-
I hope he has help'd himself unto a tree.

Wolf. The first, the first of any; and most glad I
have you, sir.

I'll let you go before, but for a train:

Is't you have done this service?

Hub. As your poor huntsman, sir. But now as
The wolf's a-foot, let slip. [*Sounds his horn.*

*Enter VANDUNKE, Merchants, HIGGEN, PRIG,
FERRET, SNAP, and Soldiers, who seize on
WOLFORT and HEMSKIRKE.*

Wolf. Betray'd!

Hub. No; but well catch'd; and I the huntsman.

Vand. How do you, Wolfort? Rascal! good
knaue, Wolfort!

I speak it now without the rose: and Hemskirke,
Rogue Hemskirke! you that have no niece; this lady
Was stol'n by you, and ta'en by you, and now
Resigned by me, to the right owner here.

Take her, my prince.

Flo. Can this be possible?

Welcome, my love! my sweet, my beauteous love!

Gert. And shall we part no more? [*better,*

Vand. I ha' given you her twice; now keep her

And thank lord Hubert that compos'd the plot,

And in good Gerrard's name sent for Vandunke,

And got me out with my brave boys, to march

Like Caesar when he bred his commentaries;

So I to breed my chronicle, came forth,

Cæsar Vandunke, and *veni, vidi, vici.*

Hig. Captain Prig, sir!

Prig. And colonel Higgen!

Vand. Peace, rogues!

Give me my bottle, and set down my drums,
I'll sit in judgment on 'em: you stole the lady.

Wolf. Well, I can stand, and praise the toils that
took me,

And laughing in them die! they were brave snares!

Flo. 'Twere truer valour, if thou durst repent

The wrongs th' hast done, and live!

Wolf. Who! I repent,

And say I am sorry! Yes; 'tis the fool's language,
But not for Wolfort.

Vand. Wolfort, thou art a devil, [*longing!*

And speak'st his language. Now, might I have my
Under this row of trees here would I hang thee.

Flo. No; let him live

Banish'd from our state. That is thy doom.

Vand. Then hang this worthy captain here, this
Hemskirke,

For profit of th' example.

Flo. No, let him

Enjoy his shame, too, with his conscious life,

To shew how much our innocence contemns
All practice from the guiltiest to molest us.
Away with them! [*Exit WOLFORT guarded.*]

Ger. Sir, you must help to join
A pair of hands, as they have done of hearts
And to their loves wish joys.

Flo. As to mine own—my gracious sister,—
Worthiest brother! [*Embracing.*]

Vand. Away with them! a noble prince!
And yet I'd fain some one were hang'd.

Ger. Sir, here be friends ask to be look'd on too,
And thank'd; who though their trade be none o'th'
best,

Have yet us'd me with court'sy, and been true

Subjects unto me, while I was their king. [*Bruges, Vand.* Your grace command them follow me to
They'll turn the wheel for Crab the rope-maker.

Flo. Do you hear, sirs?

Hig. We do; thanks to your grace. [*a week.*]

Vand. They shall beat hemp, and be whipp'd twice

Prig. Thank your good lordship.

Flo. No, I will take the care on me to find
Some manly and more profitable course,
To fit them as a part of the republic.

Be it our care to prove unto the world

Our better title o'er usurped favour,

In how much we shall use it for the good

Ev'n of the meanest subjects in our state. [*Exeunt.*]

THE COUNTRY GIRL;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS;

ALTERED FROM WYCHERLY,

BY DAVID GARRICK

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MOODY
HARCOURT
SPARKISH
BELVILLE
WILLIAM
Countrymen, &c.

MISS PEGGY
ALITHEA
LUCY.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—Harcourt's Lodgings.

HARCOURT and BELVILLE discovered sitting.

Har. Ha, ha, ha! and so you are in love, nephew;
not reasonably and gallantly, as a young gentle-

man ought, but sighingly, miserably so; not content to be ankle-deep, you have sous'd over head and ears; ha, Dick?

Bel. I am pretty much in that condition, indeed, uncle. [*Sighs.*]

Har. Nay, never blush at it: when I was of your age I was asham'd too; but three years at college, and half a one at Paris, methinks, should have cured you of that unfashionable weakness—modesty.

Bel. Could I have released myself from that, I had perhaps been at this instant happy in the possession of what I must despair now ever to obtain. Heigho!

Har. Ha, ha, ha! very foolish indeed.

Bel. Don't laugh at me, uncle; I am foolish, I know; but, like other fools, I deserve to be pitied.

Har. Pr'ythee don't talk of pity; how can I help you? For this country girl of yours is certainly married.

Bel. No, no; I won't believe it; she is not married, nor she sha'n't be, if I can help it.

Har. Well said, modesty; with such a spirit you can help yourself, Dick, without my assistance.

Bel. But you must encourage and advise me too, or I shall never make anything of it.

Har. Provided the girl is not married; for I never encourage young men to covet their neighbours' wives.

Bel. My heart assures me, that she is not married.

Har. O, to be sure, your heart is much to be relied upon; but to convince you that I have a fellow-feeling of your distress, and that I am as nearly allied to you in misfortunes as in relationship, you must know—

Bel. What, uncle? You alarm me!

Har. That I am in love, too.

Bel. Indeed!

Har. Miserably in love.

Bel. That's charming.

Har. And my mistress is just going to be married to another.

Bel. Better and better.

Har. I knew my fellow-sufferings would please you; but now prepare for the wonderful wonder-of-wonders!

Bel. Well.

Har. My mistress is in the same house with yours.

Bel. What, are you in love with Peggy, too?

[Rising from his chair.

Har. Well said, jealousy. No, no; set your heart at rest; your Peggy is too young, and too simple for me. I must have one a little more knowing, a little better bred, just old enough to see the difference between me and a coxcomb, spirit enough to break from a brother's engagements, and choose for herself.

Bel. You don't mean Alithea, who is to be married to Mr. Sparkish?

Har. Can't I be in love with a lady that is going to be married to another, as well as you, sir?

Bel. But Sparkish is your friend?

Har. Pr'ythee don't call him my friend; he can be nobody's friend, not even his own. He would thrust himself into my acquaintance, would introduce me to his mistress, though I have told him again and again that I was in love with her; which, instead of ridding me of him, has made him only ten times more troublesome, and me really in love. He should suffer for his self-sufficiency.

Bel. 'Tis a conceited puppy. And what success with the lady?

Har. No great hopes; and yet if I could defer the marriage a few days, I should not despair; her honour, I am confident, is her only attachment to my rival: she can't like Sparkish; and if I can work upon his credulity, a credulity which even popery would be ashamed of, I may yet have the chance of throwing sixes upon the dice to save me.

Bel. Nothing can save me.

Har. No, not if you whine and sigh, when you should be exerting everything that is man about you. I have sent Sparkish, who is admitted at all hours into the house, to know how the land lies for you, and if she is not married already—

Bel. How cruel you are; you raise me up with one hand, and then knock me down with the other.

Har. Well, well, she shan't be married. [Knocking at the door.] This is Sparkish, I suppose; don't drop the least hint of your passion to him; if you do, you may as well advertise it in the public papers.

Bel. I'll be careful.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. An odd sort of a person, from the country, I believe, who calls himself Moody, wants to see

you, sir; but as I did not know him, I said you were not at home, but would return directly; "And so will I too," said he, very shortly and surlily! and away he went, mumbling to himself.

Har. Very well, Will; I'll see him when he comes. [Exit Servant.] Moody call to see me! He has something more in his head than making me a visit; 'tis to complain of you, I suppose.

Bel. How can he know me?

Har. We must suppose the worst, and be prepared for him; tell me all you know of this ward of his, this Peggy—Peggy what's her name?

Be. Thrift, Thrift, uncle.

Har. Ay, ay, Sir Thomas Thrift's daughter, of Hampshire; and left very young, under the guardianship of my old companion and acquaintance, Jack Moody.

Bel. Your companion!—he's old enough to be your father.

Har. Thank you, nephew; he has greatly the advantage of me in years, as well as wisdom. When I first launched from the university into this ocean of London, he was the greatest rake in it; I knew him well for near two years, but all of a sudden he took a freak (a very prudent one) of retiring wholly into the country.

Bel. There he gain'd such an ascendancy over the odd disposition of his neighbour, Sir Thomas, that he left him sole guardian to his daughter; who forfeits half her fortune, if she does not marry with his consent. There's the devil, uncle.

Har. And are you so young, so foolish, and so much in love, that you would take her with half her value? Ha, nephew?

Bel. I'll take her with anything, with nothing.

Har. What! such an unaccomplish'd, awkward, silly creature? He has scarce taught her to write; she has seen nobody to converse with, but the country people about 'em; so she can do nothing but dangle her arms, look gawky, turn her toes in, and talk broad Hampshire.

Bel. Don't abuse her sweet simplicity; had you but heard her talk, as I have done, from the garden-wall in the country, by moon-light—

Har. Romeo and Juliet, I protest; ha, ha, ha! "Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious—" ha, ha, ha! How often have you seen this fair Capulet?

Bel. I saw her three times in the country, and spoke to her twice; I have leap'd an orchard-wall, like Romeo, to come at her; played the balcony scene, from an old summer-house in the garden; and if I lose her, I will find out an apothecary, and play the tomb scene too.

Har. Well said, Dick! this spirit must produce something; but has the old dragon ever caught you sighing at her?

Bel. Never in the country; he saw me yesterday kissing my hand to her, from the new tavern window that looks upon the back of his house, and immediately drove her from it, and fastened up the window-shutters.

Spark. [Without.] Very well, Will, I'll go up to 'em.

Har. I hear Sparkish coming up; take care of what I told you; not a word of Peggy; hear his intelligence, and make use of it, without seeming to mind it.

Bel. Mum, mum, uncle.

Enter SPARKISH.

Spark. O, my dear Harcourt, I shall die with laughing; I have such news for thee, ha, ha, ha!

What, your nephew too, and a little dumpish, or so; you have been giving him a lecture upon economy, I suppose—you, who never had any, can best describe the evils that arise from the want of it. I never mind my own affairs, not I; "The gods take care of Cato."—I hear, Mr. Belville, you have got a pretty snug house, with a bow-window that looks into the Park, and a back-door that goes out into it. Very convenient, and well-imagined; no young handsome fellow should be without one; you may be always ready there, like a spider in his web, to seize upon stray'd women of quality.

Har. As you used to do—you vain fellow, you; prythee don't teach my nephew your abandoned tricks; he is a modest young man, and you must not spoil him.

Spark. May be so, but his modesty has done some mischief at our house; my surly, jealous brother-in-law saw that modest young gentleman casting a wishful eye at his forbidden fruit, from the new tavern window.

Bel. You mistake the person, Mr. Sparkish; I don't know what young lady you mean.

Har. Explain yourself, Sparkish, you must mistake; Dick has never seen the girl.

Spark. I don't say he has; I only tell you what Moody says. Besides, he went to the tavern himself, and inquired of the waiter who dined in the back room, No. 4; and they told him it was Mr. Belville, your nephew; that's all I know of the matter, or desire to know of it, faith.

Har. He kiss'd his hand, indeed, to your lady, Alithea, and is more in love with her than you are, and very near as much as I am; so look about you; such a youth may be dangerous.

Spark. The more danger the more honour: I defy you both; win her and wear her, if you can;—*Dolus an virtus* in love as well as in war! though you may be expeditious, faith; for I believe, if I don't change my mind, I shall marry her to-morrow, or the day after. Have you no honest clergyman, Harcourt, no fellow-collegian to recommend me, to do the business?

Har. Nothing ever, sure, was so lucky. [Aside.] Why, faith, I have, Sparkish; my brother, a twin-brother, Ned Harcourt, will be in town to-day, and proud to attend your commands. I am a very generous rival, you see, to lend you my brother to marry the woman I love.

Spark. And so am I too, to let your brother come so near us; but Ned shall be the man; poor Alithea grows impatient; I can't put off the evil day any longer. I fancy the brute, her brother, has a mind to marry his country idiot at the same time.

Bel. How! country idiot, sir?

Har. Hold your tongue. [Apart to Belville.] I thought he had been married already.

Spark. No, no, he's not married, that's the joke of it.

Bel. No, no, he is not married.

Har. Hold your tongue. [Elbowing Belville.]

Spark. Not he; I have the finest story to tell you: by-the-by, he intends calling upon you—for he asked me where you lived—to complain of modesty there. He picked up an old raking acquaintance of his as we came along together, Will Frankly, who saw him with his girl, skulking and muffled up, at the play last night; he plagu'd him much about matrimony, and his being ashamed to show himself; swore he was in love with his wife, and intended to cuckold him. "Do you?" cried Moody, folding his arms, and scowling with his eyes thus—"You must

have more wit than you used to have; besides, if you have as much as you think you have, I shall be out of your reach, and this profligate metropolis, in less than a week." Moody would fain have got rid of him, but the other held him by the sleeve, so I left 'em; rejoiced most luxuriously to see the poor devil tormented.

Bel. I thought you said, just now, that he was not married; is not that a contradiction, sir? [Harcourt still makes signs to Belville.]

Spark. Why, it is a kind of one; but considering your modesty, and ignorance of the young lady, you are pretty tolerably inquisitive, methinks; eh, Harcourt! ha, ha, ha!

Har. Pooh, pooh! don't talk to that boy, tell me all you know.

Spark. You must know, my booby of a brother-in-law hath brought up this ward of his (a good fortune let me tell you), as he coops up and fattens his chickens, for his own eating; he is plagu'y jealous of her, and was very sorry that he could not marry her in the country, without coming up to town; which he could not do on account of some writings or other; so what does my gentleman? He persuades the poor silly girl, by breaking a sixpence, or some nonsense or another, that they are to all intents married in heaven; but that the laws require the signing of articles, and the church service to complete their union: so he has made her call him husband, and bud, which she constantly does; and he calls her wife, and gives out she is married, that she may not look after younger fellows, nor younger fellows after her, egad; ha, ha, ha! and all won't do.

Bel. Thank you, sir. What heavenly news, uncle! [Aside.]

Har. What an idiot you are, nephew. [Apart.] And so then you make but one trouble of it, and are both to be tack'd together the same day?

Spark. No, no, he can't be married this week; he d—ns the lawyers for keeping him in town; besides, I am out of favour; and he is continually snarling at me, and abusing me for not being jealous. [Knocking at the door.] There he is; I must not be seen with you, or he'll suspect something; I'll go with your nephew to his house, and we'll wait for you, and make a visit to my wife that is to be, and perhaps we shall show young modesty here a sight of Peggy too.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, here's the strange odd sort of a gentleman come again, and I have shown him into the fore-parlour.

Spark. That must be Moody. Well said, Will; an odd sort of a strange gentleman indeed; we'll step into the next room till he comes into this, and then you may have him all to yourself; much good may he do you. [Going.] Remember that he is married, or he'll suspect me of betraying him.

[Exeunt SPARKISH and BELVILLE.]

Har. Show him up, Will. [Exit Servant.] Now must I prepare myself to see a very strange, though a very natural metamorphosis; a once high-spirited, handsome, well-dress'd, raking prodigal of the town, sunk into a surly, suspicious, economical, country sloven.

Enter Moody.

Moody. Mr. Harcourt, your humble servant: have you forgot me?

Har. What, my old friend, Jack Moody! By thy long absence from the town, the grumness of thy

countenance, and the slovenliness of thy habit, I should give thee joy; you are certainly married.

Moo. My long stay in the country will excuse my dress, and I have a suit at law that brings me up to town, and puts me out of humour; besides, I must give Sparkish ten thousand pounds to-morrow to take my sister off my hands.

Har. Your sister is very much obliged to you: being so much older than her, you have taken upon you the authority of a father, and have engaged her to a coxcomb.

Moo. I have, and to oblige her: nothing but coxcombs or debauchees are the favourites now a-days; and a coxcomb is rather the more innocent animal of the two.

Har. She has sense and taste, and can't like him; so you must answer for the consequences.

Moo. When she is out of my hands, her husband must look to the consequences. He's a fashionable fool, and will cut his horns kindly.

Har. And what is to secure your worship from consequences? I did not expect marriage from such a rake—one that knew the town so well; fie, fie, Jack.

Moo. I'll tell you my security; I have married no London wife.

Har. That's all one; that grave circumspection in marrying a country wife, is like refusing a deceitful, pamper'd, Smithfield jade, to go and be cheated by a friend in the country.

Moo. I wish the devil had both him and his simile.

[*Aside.*]

Har. Well, never grumble about it; what's done can't be undone. Is your wife handsome and young?

Moo. She has little beauty but her youth, nothing to brag of but her health, and no attraction but her modesty; wholesome, homely, and housewifely; that's all.

Har. You talk as like a grazier as you look, Jack. Why did you not bring her to town before, to be taught something?

Moo. Which something I might repent as long as I live.

Har. But pr'ythee, why wouldst thou marry her, if she be ugly, ill-bred, and silly: she must be rich then?

Moo. As rich as if she had the wealth of the mogul. She'll not ruin her husband, like a London baggage, with a million of vices she never heard of: then, because she's ugly, she's the likelier to be my own; and being ill-bred, she'll hate conversation; and since silly and innocent, will not know the difference between me and you; that is, between a man of thirty and one of forty.

Har. Fifty to my knowledge. [*Moody turns off, and grumbles.*] But see how you and I differ, Jack; wit to me is more necessary than beauty; I think no young woman ugly that has it, and no handsome woman agreeable without it.

Moo. 'Tis my maxim; he's a fool that marries; but he's a greater that does not marry a fool. I know the town, Mr. Harcourt; and my wife shall be virtuous in spite of you or your nephew.

Har. My nephew! poor sheepish lad, he runs away from every woman he sees: he saw your sister Alithea at the opera, and was much smitten with her; he always toasts her, and hates the very name of Sparkish. I'll bring him to your house, and you shall see what a formidable Tarquin he is.

Moo. I have no curiosity, so give yourself no trou-

ble.—You have heard of a wolf in sheep's clothing; and I have seen your innocent nephew kissing his hands at my windows.

Har. At your sister, I suppose; not at her unless he was tipsy. How can you, Jack, be so outrageously suspicious? Sparkish has promised to introduce him to his mistress.

Moo. Sparkish is a fool, and may be what I'll take care not to be.—I confess my visit to you, Mr. Harcourt, was partly for old acquaintance sake, but chiefly to desire your nephew to confine his gallantries to the tavern, and not send 'em in looks, signs, or tokens, on the other side of the way. I keep no brothel; so pray tell your nephew.

[*Going.*]

Har. Nay, pr'ythee, Jack, leave me in better humour. Well, I'll tell him; ha, ha, ha! Poor Dick, how he'll stare. This will give him a reputation, and the girls won't laugh at him any longer. Shall we dine together at the tavern, and send for my nephew to chide him for his gallantry? Ha, ha, ha! we shall have fine sport.

Moo. I am not to be laugh'd out of my senses, Mr. Harcourt. I was once a modest young gentleman myself; and I never have been half so mischievous before or since, as I was in that state of innocence.—And so, old friend, make no ceremony with me; I have much business, and you have much pleasure, and, therefore, as I hate forms, I will excuse your returning my visit, or sending your nephew to satisfy me of his modesty—and so your servant.

[*Erit.*]

Har. Ha, ha, ha! poor Jack! what a life of suspicion does he lead! I pity the poor fellow, though he ought and will suffer for his folly.—Folly!—'tis treason, murder, sacrilege! When persons of a certain age will indulge their false, ungenerous appetites, at the expense of a young creature's happiness, dame Nature will revenge herself upon them, for thwarting her most heavenly will and pleasure.

[*Erit.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Chamber in Moody's house.

Enter PEGGY and ALITHEA.

Peg. Pray, sister, where are the best fields and woods to walk in in London?

Ali. A pretty question! Why, sister, Vauxhall, Kensington Gardens, and St. James's Park, are the most frequented.

Peg. Pray, sister, tell me why my bud looks so grum here in town, and keeps me up so close, and won't let me go a-walking, nor let me wear my best gown yesterday?

Ali. O, he's jealous, sister!

Peg. Jealous! What's that?

Ali. He's afraid you should love another man.

Peg. How should he be afraid of my loving another man, when he will not let me see any but himself?

Ali. Did he not carry you yesterday to the play?

Peg. Ay; but we sat amongst ugly people: he would not let me come near the gentry, who sat under us, so that I could not see 'em. He told me none but naughty women sat there; but I would have ventured for all that.

Ali. But how do you like the play?

Peg. Indeed I was weary of the play; but I liked hugely the actors; they are the goodliest, properest men, sister.

Ali. O, but you must not like the actors, sister.

Peg. Ay, how should I help it, sister? Pray, sister, when my guardian comes in, will you ask leave for me to go a-walking?

Ali. A-walking! ha, ha, ha! Lord, a country gentlewoman's pleasure is the drudgery of a foot-post; and she requires as much airing as her husband's horses. [*Aside.*] But here comes my brother; I'll ask him, though I'm sure he'll not grant it.

Enter MOODY.

Peg. O my dear, dear bud, welcome home; why dost thou look so frolish? Who has nager'd thee?

Moo. You're a fool: [*PEGGY goes aside and cries.*]

Ali. Faith, and so she is, for crying for no fault; poor, tender creature!

Moo. What, would you have her as impudent as yourself; as arrant a girlfirt, a gadder, a magpie; and to say all, a mere notorious town woman.

Ali. Brother, you are my only censurer; and the honour of your family will sooner suffer in your wife that is to be, than in me, though I take the innocent liberty of the town.

Moo. Hark you, mistress; do not talk so before my wife: the innocent liberty of the town!

Ali. Pray what ill people frequent my lodgings? I keep no company with any woman of scandalous reputation.

Moo. No, you keep the men of scandalous reputation company.

Ali. Would you not have me civil? Answer them at public places? Walk with them when they join me in the Park, Kensington Gardens, or Vauxhall?

Moo. Hold, hold; do not teach my wife where the men are to be found; I believe she's the worse for your town documents already. I bid you keep her in ignorance as I do.

Peg. Indeed, be not angry with her, bud: she will tell me nothing of the town, though I ask her a thousand times a day.

Moo. Then you are very inquisitive to know, I find.

Peg. Not I, indeed, dear; I hate London: our place-house in the country is worth a thousand of't; would I were there again!

Moo. So you shall, I warrant. But were you not talking of plays and players when I came in? You are her encourager in such discourses. [*To ALITHEA.*]

Peg. No, indeed, dear; she chid me just now for liking the player-men.

Moo. Nay, if she is so innocent as to own to me her liking them, there's no harm in't. [*Aside.*] Come, my poor rogue, but thou likest none better than me?

Peg. Yes, indeed, but I do: the player-men are finer folks.

Moo. But you love none better than me?

Peg. You are my own dear bud, and I know you: I hate strangers.

Moo. Ay, my dear, you must love me only; and not be like the naughty town women, who only hate their husbands, and love every man else; love plays, visits, fine coaches, fine clothes, fiddles, balls, treats, and so lead a wicked town life.

Peg. Nay, if to enjoy all these things be a town life, London is not so bad a place, dear.

Moo. How! if you love me you must hate London.

Peg. But, bud, do the town women love the player-men too?

Moo. Ay, I warrant you.

Peg. Ay, I warrant you.

Moo. Why, you do not, I hope?

Peg. No, no, bud; but why have we no player-men in the country?

Moo. Ha! Mrs. Minx, ask me no more to go to a play.

Peg. Nay, why, love? I did not care for going; but when you forbid me, you make me, as it were, desire it. Pray let me go to a play, dear?

Moo. Hold your peace; I won't.

Peg. Why, love?

Moo. Why, I'll tell you.

Peg. Pray, why, dear?

Moo. First, you like the actors: and the gallants may like you.

Peg. What, a homely country girl? No, bud, nobody will like me.

Moo. I tell you yes, they may.

Peg. No, no, you jest—I won't believe you; I will go.

Moo. I tell you, then, that one of the most raking fellows in town, who saw you there, told me he was in love with you.

Peg. Indeed: who, who, pray, who was't?

Moo. I've gone too far, and slept before I was aware. How overjoy'd she is! [*Aside.*]

Peg. Was it any Hampshire gallant? any of our neighbours?—'Promise you I am beholden to him.

Moo. I promise you, you lie; for he would but ruin you, as he has done hundreds.

Peg. Ay, but if he loves me, why should he ruin me? Answer me to that. Methinks he should not; I would do him no harm.

Ali. Ha, ha, ha!

Moo. 'Tis very well; but I'll keep him from doing you any harm, or me either. But here comes company; get you in, get you in.

Peg. But pray, husband, is he a pretty gentleman that loves me?

Moo. In, baggage, in. [*Thrusts her in, and shuts the door.*] What, all the libertines of the town brought to my lodging by this easy coxcomb! 'Sdeath! I'll not suffer it.

Enter SPARKISH, HARCOURT, and BELVILLE.

Spark. Here, Belville, do you approve my choice? Dear little rogue, I told you I'd bring you acquainted with all my friends the wits. [*To ALITHEA.*]

Moo. Ay, they shall know her as well as you yourself will, I warrant you. [*Aside.*]

Spark. This is one of those, my pretty rogue, that are to dance at your wedding to-morrow; and one you must make welcome; for he's modest. [*BELVILLE crosses and salutes ALITHEA; HARCOURT does the same.*] Harcourt makes himself welcome, and has not the same foible, though of the same family.

Har. You are too obliging, Sparkish. [*ALITHEA and SPARKISH retire.*]

Moo. And so he is, indeed. The fop's horns will as naturally sprout upon his brows as mushrooms upon dunghills. [*Aside.*]

Har. This, Mr. Moody, is my nephew you mentioned to me. I would bring him with me; for a sight of him will be sufficient, without poppy or mandragora, to restore you to your rest. [*Joins ALITHEA and SPARKISH.*]

Bel. I am sorry, sir, that any mistake or imprudence of mine should have given you any uneasiness: it was not so intended, I assure you, sir.

Moo. It may be so, sir, but not the less criminal for that. My wife, sir, must not be smirk'd and nodded at from tavern windows. I am a good shot,

young gentleman, and don't suffer magpies to come near my cherries.

Bel. Was it your wife, sir?

Moo. What's that to you, sir? Suppose it were my grandmother.

Bel. I would not dare to offend her.—Permit me to say a word in private to you.

[*Exit* MOODY and BELVILLE.]

Spark. Now old surly is gone, tell me Harcourt, if thou likest her as well as ever.—My dear, don't look down; I should hate to have a wife of mine out of countenance at any thing.

Ali. For shame, Mr. Sparkish!

Spark. Tell me, I say, Harcourt, how dost like her? Thou hast stared upon her enough to resolve me.

Har. So infinitely well, that I could wish I had a mistress too, that might differ from her in nothing but her love and engagement to you.

Ali. Sir, Mr. Sparkish has often told me that his acquaintance were all wits and railers; and now I find it.

Spark. No, by the universe, madam, he does not rally now; you may believe him. I do assure you he is the honestest, worthiest, truest-hearted gentleman; a man of such perfect honour, he would say nothing to a lady he does not mean.

Har. Sir, you are so beyond expectation obliging, that—

Spark. Nay, 'egad, I am sure you do admire her extremely; I see it in your eyes.—He does admire you, madam; he has told me so a thousand and a thousand times; have you not, Harcourt? You do admire her; by the world, you do—don't you?

Har. Yes, above the world, or the most glorious part of it, her whole sex; and till now, I never thought I should have envied you or any man about to marry; but you have the best excuse to marry I ever knew.

Ali. Nay, now, sir, I am satisfied you are of the society of the wits and railers, since you cannot spare your friend, even when he is most civil to you; but the surest sign is, you are an enemy to marriage, the common butt of every railer.

Har. Truly, madam, I was never any enemy to marriage till now, because marriage was never an enemy to me before.

Ali. But why, sir, is marriage an enemy to you now? Because it robs you of your friend here? For you look upon a friend married as one gone into a monastery, that is dead to the world.

Har. 'Tis indeed, because you marry him: I see, madam, you can guess my meaning. I do confess heartily and openly, I wish it were in my power to break the match; by heavens I would.

Spark. Poor Frank!

Ali. Would you be so unkind to me?

Har. No, no; 'tis not because I would be unkind to you.

Spark. Poor Frank! No, egad, 'tis only his kindness to me.

Ali. Great kindness to you, indeed!—Insensible! Let a man make love to his mistress to his face.

[*Aside.*]

Spark. Come, dear Frank, for all my wife there, that shall be, thou shalt enjoy my company sometimes, dear rogue.—By my honour, we men of wit condole for our deceased brother in marriage, as much as for one dead in earnest. I think that was prettily said of me, ha, Harcourt? Pr'ythee, Frank, don't think my wife that shall be, there, a fine person?

Har. I could gaze upon her till I became as blind as you are.

Spark. How as I am? How?

Har. Because you are a lover; and true lovers are blind.

Spark. True, true; but by the world she has wit too, as well as beauty. Go, go, with her into a corner, and try if she has wit; [*He puts HARCOURT over to ALITHEA.*] talk to her anything, she's bashful before me—take her into a corner. [*HARCOURT courts ALITHEA aside.*]

Re-enter MOODY.

Moo. How, sir! If you are not concerned for the honour of a wife, I am for that of a sister. Be a pander to your own wife, bring men to her, let 'em make love before your face, thrust them into a corner together, then leave 'em in private! Is this your town wit and conduct?

Spark. Ha, ha, ha! a silly, wise rogue would make one laugh more than a stark fool, ha, ha, ha! I shall burst. Nay, you shall not disturb 'em; I'll vex thee by the world. What have you done with Belville? [*Struggles with MOODY to keep him from HARCOURT and ALITHEA.*]

Moo. Shewn him the way out of my house, as you should to that gentleman.

Spark. Nay, but pr'ythee let me reason with thee. [*Talks apart with MOODY.*]

Ali. The writings are drawn, sir—settlements made: 'tis too late, sir, and past all revocation.

Har. Then so is my death.

Ali. I would not be unjust to him.

Har. Then why to me so?

Ali. I have no obligations to you.

Har. My love.

Ali. I had his before.

Har. You never had it: he wants, you see, jealousy, the only infallible sign of it.

Ali. Love proceeds from esteem: he cannot distrust my virtue; besides, he loves me, or he would not marry me.

Har. Marrying you is no more a sign of his love, than bribing your woman, that he may marry you is a sign of his generosity. But if you take marriage for a sign of love, take it from me immediately.

Ali. No, now you have put a scruple in my head.—But, in short, sir, to end our dispute, I must marry him; my reputation would suffer in the world else.

Har. No: if you do marry him, with your pardon, madam, your reputation must suffer in the world.

Ali. Nay, now you are rude, sir. Mr. Sparkish, pray come hither, your friend here is very troublesome and very loving.

Har. Hold, hold! [*Aside to ALITHEA.*]

Moo. D'y'e hear that, senseless puppy?

Spark. Why, d'y'e think I'll seem jealous, like a country bumpkin?

Moo. No; rather be dishonour'd, like a credulous driveller. [*They retire.*]

Har. Madam, you would not have been so little generous as to have told him?

Ali. Yes, since you could be so little generous as to wrong him.

Har. Wrong him! no man can do it; he's beneath an injury: a bubble, a coward, a senseless idiot! a wretch, so contemptible to all the world but you, that—

Ali. Hold, do not rail at him; for, since he is like to be my husband, I am resolved to like him:

may, I think I am obliged to tell him, you are not his friend. Mr. Sparkish! Mr. Sparkish!

Spark. What—what? Now, dear rogue, has she not wit?

Har. Not so much as I thought, and hoped she had. [Surlily.]

Ali. Mr. Sparkish, do you bring people to rail at you?

Har. Madam!

Spark. How! No; but if he does rail at me, 'tis but in jest, I warrant: what we wits do for one another, and never take any notice of it.

Ali. He spoke so scurrilously of you, I had no patience to hear him.

Moo. And he was in the right on't.

Ali. Besides, he has been making love to me.

Moo. And I told the fool so.

Har. True; d—d tell-tale woman! [Aside.]

Spark. Psha! to shew his parts; we wits rail and make love often, but to shew our parts: as we have no affections, so we have no malice. We—

Moo. Did you ever hear such an ass?

Ali. He said you were a wretch, below an injury.

Spark. Psha!

Ali. A common bubble.

Spark. Psha!

Ali. A coward!

Spark. Psha! psha!

Ali. A senseless, drivelling idiot.

Moo. True, true, true; all true.

Spark. How, did he disparage my parts? Nay then, my honour's concerned. I can't put up that. Brother, help me to kill him. [Offers to draw.]

Ali. Hold! hold!

Moo. If Harcourt would but kill Sparkish, and run away with my sister, I should be rid of three plagues at once. [Aside.]

Ali. Indeed, to tell the truth, the gentleman said, after all, that what he spoke was but out of friendship to you.

Spark. How! say I am a fool,—that is, no wit,—out of friendship to me!

Ali. Yes, to try whether I was concerned enough for you; and made love to me only to be satisfied of my virtue, for your sake.

Har. Kind, however! [Aside.]

Spark. Nay, if it were so, my dear rogue, I ask thee pardon; but why would not you tell me so, 'faith?

Har. Because I did not think on't, 'faith.

Spark. Come, Belville is gone away: Harcourt, let's be gone to the new play; come, madam.

Ali. I will not go, if you intend to leave me alone in the box, and run all about the house, as you used to do.

Spark. Psha! I'll leave Harcourt with you in the box, to entertain you, and that's as good. If I sat in the box, I should be thought no critic. I must run about, my dear, and abuse the author. Come away, Harcourt, lead her down. B'ye, brother.

[Exit HARCOURT, SPARKISH, and ALITHEA.]

Moo. B'ye, driveller. Well, go thy ways, for the flower of the true town fops; such as spend their estates before they come to 'em, and are cuckolds before they're married. But let me go look to my freehold.

Enter a Countryman.

Country. Master, your worship's servant. Here is the lawyer, counsellor gentleman, with a green bag full of papers, come again, and would be glad to speak to you.

Moo. Now here's some other d—d impediment, which the law has thrown in our way. I shall never marry the girl, nor get clear of the smoke and wickedness of this cursed town. [Aside.] Where is he?

Country. He's below in a coach, with three other lawyers, counsellor gentlemen. [Exit.]

SCENE II.—Another Chamber.

Enter PEGGY and LUCY.

Lucy. What ails you, Miss Peggy? You are grown quite melancholy.

Peg. Would it not make any one melancholy to see your mistress, Alithea, go every day fluttering about abroad to plays and assemblies, and I know not what, whilst I must stay at home, like a poor, lonely, sullen bird in a cage?

Lucy. Dear Miss Peggy, I thought you chose to be confined: I imagined that you had been bred so young to the cage, that you had no pleasure in flying about, and hopping in the open air, as other young ladies who go a little wild about this town.

Peg. Nay, I confess I was quiet enough, till somebody told me what pure lives the London ladies lead, with their dancing-meetings, and junketings, and dress'd every day in their best gowns; and, I warrant you, play at nine-pins every day in the week, so they do.

Lucy. To be sure, miss, you will lead a better life when join'd in holy wedlock with your sweet-temper'd guardian, the cheerful Mr. Moody.

Peg. I can't lead a worse, that's one good thing; but I must make the best of a bad market, for I can't marry nobody else.

Lucy. How so, miss? That's very strange.

Peg. Why, we have a contraction to one another; so we are as good as married, you know.

Lucy. I know it! Heaven forbid, miss!

Peg. Heigho!

Lucy. Don't sigh, Miss Peggy; if that young gentleman, who was here just now, would take pity on me, I'd throw such a contract as your's behind the fire.

Peg. Lord bless us, how you talk!

Lucy. Young Mr. Belville would make you talk otherwise, if you knew him.

Peg. Mr. Belville! Where is he? When did you see him? You have undone me, Lucy. Where was he? Did he say anything?

Lucy. Say anything! very little indeed; he's quite distracted, poor young creature! He was talking with your guardian just now.

Peg. The deuce he was! but where was it, and when was it?

Lucy. In this house, five minutes ago, when your guardian turn'd you into your chamber, for fear of your being seen.

Peg. I knew something was the matter, I was in such a flutter. But what did he say to my bud?

Lucy. What do you call him bud for? Bud means husband, and he is not your husband yet, and I hope never will be; and, if he were my husband, I'd bud him, a surly, unreasonable beast!

Peg. I'd call him any names, to keep him in good humour; if he'd let me marry anybody else (which I can't do), I'd call him husband as long as he lived. But what said Mr. Belville to him?

Lucy. I don't know what he said to him, but I'll tell you what he said to me, with a sigh, and his hand upon his breast as he went out of the door:—"If you ever were in love, young gentlewoman

(meaning me), and can pity a most faithful lover, tell the dear object of my affections——"

Peg. Meaning me, Lucy?

Lucy. Yes, you, to be sure.—"Tell the dear object of my affections, I live but upon the hopes that she is not married; and when those hopes leave me, she knows the rest;" then he cast up his eyes thus,—gnash'd his teeth—struck his forehead;—would have spoke again, but he could not,—fetch'd a deep sigh, and vanish'd.

Peg. That is really very fine: I am sure it makes my heart sink within me, and brings tears into my eyes. O, he's a charming, sweet—But hush, hush! I hear my husband.

Lucy. Don't call him husband. Go into the Park this evening, if you can.

Peg. Mum, mum.

Enter Moody.

Moo. Come, what's here to do? you are putting the town pleasures in her head, and setting her a-longing.

Lucy. Yes, after nine-pins; you suffer none to give her those longings but yourself.

Moo. Come, Mrs. Pippant, good precepts are lost when bad examples are still before us: the liberty your mistress takes abroad makes her hanker after it, and out of humour at home. Poor wretch! she desired not to come to London; I would bring her.

Lucy. O yes, you surfeit her with pleasures.

Moo. She has been this fortnight in town, and never desired, till this afternoon, to go abroad.

Lucy. Was she not at the play yesterday?

Moo. Yes, but she never ask'd me; I was myself the cause of her going.

Lucy. Then if she ask you again, you are the cause of her asking, and not my mistress.

Moo. Well, next week I shall be rid of you all, rid of this town, and my dreadful apprehensions. Come, be not melancholy, for thou shalt go into the country very soon, dearest.

Peg. Pish! what d'ye tell me of the country for?

Moo. How's this? What! flout at the country?

Peg. Let me alone; I am not well.

Moo. O, if that be all—what ails my dearest?

Peg. Truly, I don't know; but I have not been well since you told me there was a gallant at the play in love with me.

Moo. Ha!

Lucy. That's my mistress too.

Moo. Nay, if you are not well, but are so concern'd, because a raking fellow chanced to lie, and say he liked you, you'll make me sick too.

Peg. Of what sickness?

Moo. O, of that which is worse than the plague; jealousy!

Peg. Pish! you jeer: I'm sure there's no such disease in your receipt-book at home.

Moo. No, you never met with it, poor innocent.

Peg. Well, but pray, bud, let's go to a play to-night.

Moo. No, no; no more plays. But why are you so eager to see a play?

Peg. Faith, dear, not that I care one pin for their talk there; but I like to look upon the player-men, and would see, if I could, the gallant you say loves me; that's all, dear bud.

Moo. Is that all, dear bud?

Lucy. [Aside.] This proceeds from my mistress's example.

Peg. Let's go abroad, however, dear bud, if we don't go to the play.

Moo. Come, have a little patience, and thou shalt go into the country next week.

Peg. Therefore I would first see some sights to tell my neighbours of: nay, I will go abroad, that's once.

Moo. What, you have put this into her head?

[To Lucy.]

Lucy. Heaven defend me, what suspicions! somebody has put more things into your head than you ought to have.

Moo. Your tongue runs too glibly, madam; and you have lived too long with a London lady, to be a proper companion for innocence. I am not overfond of you, mistress.

Lucy. There's no love lost between us.

Moo. You admitted those gentlemen into the house, when I said I would not be at home; and there was the young fellow too who behaved so indecent to my wife at the tavern window.

Lucy. Because you would not let him see your handsome wife out of your lodgings.

Peg. Why, O lord, did the gentleman come hither to see me indeed?

Moo. No, no. You are not the cause of that d—d question, too?

[To Lucy.]

Peg. Come, pray, bud, let's go abroad before 'tis late; for I will go, that's flat and plain—only into the Park.

Moo. So! the obstinacy already of the town wife; and I must, while she's here, humour her like one.

[Aside.] How shall we do, that she may not be seen or known?

Lucy. Muffle her up with a bonnet and cloak, and I'll go with her to avoid suspicion.

Moo. No, no, I am obliged to you for your kindness, but she shan't stir without me.

Lucy. What will you do then?

Peg. What, shall we go? I am sick with staying at home: if I don't walk in the Park, I'll do nothing that I'm bid for a week. I won't be mop'd.

Lucy. O, she has a charming spirit! I could stand your friend now, and would, if you had ever a civil word to give me.

[To Moody.]

Moo. I'll give thee a better thing; I'll give thee a guinea for thy good advice, if I like it; and I can have the best of the college for the same money.

Lucy. I despise a bribe: when I am your friend, it shall be without fee or reward.

Peg. Don't be long then, for I will go out.

Lucy. The tailor brought home last night the clothes you intend for a present to your godson in the country.

Peg. You must not tell that, Lucy.

Lucy. But I will, madam. When you were with your lawyers last night, Miss Peggy, to divert me and herself, put 'em on, and they fitted her to a hair.

Moo. Thank you, thank you, Lucy, 'tis the luckiest thought! Go this moment, Peggy, into your chamber, and put 'em on again, and you shall walk with me into the Park, as my godson. Well thought of, Lucy; I shall love you for ever for this.

Peg. And so shall I too, Lucy: I'll put 'em on directly. [Going.] I suppose, bud, I must keep on my petticoats, for fear of showing my legs.

Moo. No, no, you fool! never mind your legs.

[Exeunt.]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Park.*

Enter BELVILLE and HARCOURT.

Bel. And the moment Moody left me, I took an opportunity of conveying some tender sentiments through Lucy to Miss Peggy; and here I am, in expectation of seeing my country goddess.

Har. And so to blind Moody, and take him off the scent of your passion for this girl, and at the same time to give me an opportunity with Sparkish's mistress (and of which I have made the most), you hinted to him with a grave melancholy face, that you were dying for his sister. Gad-a-mercy, nephew! I will back thy modesty against any other in the three kingdoms: it will do, Dick.

Bel. What could I do, uncle? It was my last stake, and I play'd for a great deal.

Har. You mistake me, Dick; I don't say you could do better; I only can't account for your modesty's doing so much: you have done such wonders, that I, who am rather bold than sheepish, have not yet ceased wondering at you. But do you think that you imposed upon him?

Bel. Faith, I can't say; he said very little, grumbled much, shook his head, and shewed me the door. But what success have you had with Alithea?

Har. Just enough to have a glimmering of hope, without having light enough to see an inch before my nose. This day will produce something:—Alithea is a woman of great honour, and will sacrifice her happiness to it, unless Sparkish's absurdity stands my friend, and does everything that the fates ought to do for me.

Bel. Yonder comes the prince of coxcombs, and if your mistress and mine should, by chance, be tripping this way, this fellow will spoil sport: let us avoid him; you can't cheat him before his face.

Har. But I can though, thanks to my wit, and his want of it.

Bel. But you cannot come near his mistress but in his company.

Har. Still the better for me, nephew, for fools are most easily cheated, when they themselves are accessories; and he is to be bubbled of his mistress, or of his money (the common mistress,) by keeping him company.

Enter SPARKISH.

Spark. Who's that that is to be bubbled? Faith, let me snack; I han't met with a bubble since Christmas. 'Gad, I think bubbles, like their brother woodcocks, go out with the cold weather.

Har. He did not hear all, I hope. [*Apart to BEL.*]

Spark. Come, you bubbling rogues, you, where do we sup? O, Harcourt, my mistress tells me you have made love—fierce love to her last night, all the play long—ha, ha, ha!—but I—

Ha. I make love to her?

Spark. Nay, I forgive thee, and I know her; but I am sure I know myself.

Bel. Do you, sir? Then you are the wisest man in the world, and I honour you as such. [*Bows.*]

Spark. O, your servant, sir: you are at your railery, are you? You can't oblige me more; I'm your man: he'll meet with his match. Ha! Harcourt! did not you hear me laugh prodigiously at the play last night?

Har. Yes, and was very much disturb'd at it.

You put the actors and audience into confusion, and all your friends out of countenance.

Spark. So much the better: I love confusion, and to see folks out of countenance: I was in tip-top spirits, faith, and said a thousand good things.

Bel. But I thought you had gone to plays to laugh at the poet's good things, and not at your own.

Spark. Your servant, sir; no, I thank you. 'Gad, I go to a play, as to a country treat: I carry my own wine to one, and my own wit to t'other, or else I'm sure I should not be merry at either; and the reason why we are so often louder than the players is, because we hate authors damnably.

Bel. But why should you hate the poor rogues? You have too much wit, and despise writing, I'm sure.

Spark. O yes, I despise writing; but women, women, that make men do all foolish things, make 'em write songs too. Everybody does it; 'tis e'en as common with lovers, as playing with fans: and you can no more help rhyming to your Phillis, than drinking to your Phillis.

Har. But the poets damn'd your songs, did they?

Spark. D—n the poets! they turn'd them into burlesque, as they call it: that burlesque is a hocus-pocus trick they have got, which, by the virtue of hiccus-doccus, topsy-turvy, they make a clever witty thing absolute nonsense. Do you know, Harcourt, that they ridiculed my last song! "Twang, twang," the best I ever wrote.

Har. That may be, and be very easily ridiculed for all that.

Bel. Favour me with it, sir; I never heard it.

Spark. What, and have all the Park about us?

Har. Which you'll not dislike; and so, pr'ythee begin.

Spark. I never am ask'd twice, and so have at you.

SONG.

*Tell me not of the roses and lilies
Which tinge the fair cheek of your Phillis;
Tell me not of the dimples and eyes,
For which silly Corydon dies.
Let all whining lovers go hang;
My heart, would you hit,
Tip your arrow with wit,
And it comes to my heart with a twang, twang,
And it comes to my heart with a twang.*

[*At the end of the song, HARCOURT and BELVILLE steal away from SPARKISH, and leave him singing; he sinks his voice by degrees at the surprise of their being gone.*]

Re-enter HARCOURT and BELVILLE.

What the deuce did you go away for?

Har. Your mistress is coming.

Spark. The devil she is! O hide, hide me from her! [*Hides behind HARCOURT.*]

Har. She sees you.

Spark. But I will not see her; for I'm engaged, and at this instant. [*Looking at his watch.*]

Har. Pray first take me, and reconcile me to her.

Spark. Another time; faith, it is the lady, and one cannot make excuses to a woman.

Bel. You have need of 'em, I believe.

Spark. Psha! pr'ythee hide me!

Enter MOODY, PEGGY, in boy's clothes, and ALITHEA.

Har. Your servant, Mr. Moody.

Mo. Come along.

To PEGGY.

Peg. La! what a sweet delightful place this is!
Moo. Come along, I say, don't stare about you so; you'll betray yourself.

[*Exit, pulling PEGGY, ALITHEA following.*]

Har. He does not know us.

Bel. Or he won't know us.

Spark. So much the better.

[*Exit, BELVILLE after them.*]

Har. Who is that pretty youth with him, Sparkish?

Spark. Some relation of Peggy's, I suppose; for he is something like her in face and gawkiness.

Re-enter BELVILLE.

Bel. By all my hopes, uncle, Peggy in boy's clothes. I am all over agitation. [*Apart to HARCOURT.*]

Har. Be quiet, or you'll spoil all. They return.—Alithea has seen you, Sparkish, and will be angry if you don't go to her: besides, I would fain be reconciled to her, which none but you can do, my dear friend.

Spark. Well, that's a better reason, dear friend: I would not go near her now for her's or my own sake; but I can deny you nothing: for though I have known thee a great while, never go, if I do not love thee as well as a new acquaintance.

Har. I am obliged to you, indeed, my dear friend; I would be well with her, only to be well with thee still; for these ties to wives usually dissolve all ties to friends.

Spark. But they shan't though. Come along. [*They retire.*]

Re-enter MOODY, PEGGY, and ALITHEA.

Moo. Sister, if you will not go, we must leave you. [*To ALITHEA.*] The fool, her gallant, and she will muster up all the young saunterers of this place. What a swarm of cuckolds and cuckold-makers are here! I begin to be uneasy. [*Aside.*] Come, let's be gone, Peggy.

Peg. Don't you believe that; I han't half my belly-full of sights yet.

Moo. Then walk this way.

Peg. Lord, what a power of fine folks are here!—And Mr. Belville, as I hope to be married. [*Aside.*]

Moo. Come along; what are you muttering at?

Peg. There's the young gentleman there, you were so angry about, that's in love with me.

Moo. No, no; he's a dangler after your sister, or pretends to be; but they are all bad alike. Come along, I say.

[*MOODY pulls PEGGY away. Re-enter PEGGY and MOODY, BELVILLE following. SPARKISH, HARCOURT, and ALITHEA come forward.*]

Spark. Come, dear madam, for my sake you shall be reconciled to him.

Ali. For your sake I hate him.

Har. That's something too cruel, madam, to hate me for his sake.

Spark. Ay, indeed, madam, too cruel to me, to hate my friend for my sake.

Ali. I hate him because he is your enemy; and you ought to hate him too for making love to me, if you love me.

Spark. That's a good one! I hate a man for loving you? If he did love you, 'tis but what he can't help; and 'tis your fault, not his, if he admires you.

Ali. Is it for your honour, or mine, to suffer a man to make love to me, who am to marry you to-morrow?

Har. But why, dearest madam, will you be more concerned for his honour than he is himself? Let

his honour alone, for my sake and his. He has no honour.

Spark. How's that?

Har. But what my dear friend can guard himself.

Spark. O ho—that's right again.

Ali. You astonish me, sir, with want of jealousy.

Spark. And you make me giddy, madam, with your jealousy and fears, and virtue and honour. 'Gad, I see virtue makes a woman as troublesome as a little reading or learning.

Har. Come, madam, you see you strive in vain to make him jealous of me: my dear friend is the kindest creature in the world to me.

Spark. Poor fellow!

Har. But his kindness only is not enough for me, without your favour, your good opinion, dear madam: 'tis that must perfect my happiness. Good gentleman, he believes all I say: 'would you would do so!—Jealous of me! I would not wrong him nor you for the world.

Spark. Look you there: hear him, hear him, and not walk away so; come back again. [*ALITHEA walks carelessly to and fro.*]

Har. I love you, madam, so—

Spark. How's that? Nay, now you begin to go too far indeed.

Har. So much, I confess I say I love you, that I would not have you miserable, and cast yourself away upon so unworthy and inconsiderable a thing as what you see here. [*Claps his hand on his breast, and points to SPARKISH.*]

Spark. No, faith, I believe thou wouldst not; now his meaning is plain; but I knew before thou wouldst not wrong me nor her.

Har. No, no, heavens forbid the glory of her sex should fall so low as into the embraces of such a contemptible wretch, the least of mankind—my dear friend here—I injure him. [*Embraces SPARKISH.*]

Ali. Very well.

Spark. No, no, dear friend, I knew it: madam, you see he will rather wrong himself than me in giving himself such names.

Ali. Do not you understand him yet?

Spark. Come, come, you shall stay till he has saluted you

Re-enter MOODY and PEGGY, BELVILLE at a distance.

Moo. What, invite your wife to kiss men? monstrous! Are you not ashamed?

Spark. Are you not ashamed that I should have more confidence in the chastity of your family than you have? You must not teach me: I am a man of honour, sir, though I am frank and free; I am frank, sir—

Moo. Very frank, sir, to share your wife with your friends.—You seem to be angry, and yet won't go. [*To ALITHEA.*]

Ali. No impertinence shall drive me away.

Moo. Because you like it.—But you ought to blush at exposing your wife as you do. [*To SPARKISH.*]

Spark. What then? It may be I have a pleasure in't as I have to show fine clothes at a play-house the first day, and count money before poor rogues.

Moo. He that shows his wife or money, will be in danger of having them borrowed sometimes.

Spark. I love to be envied, and would not marry a wife that I alone could love. Loving alone is as dull as eating alone; and so good night, for I must to Whitehall. Madam, I hope you are now reconciled to my friend; and so I wish you a good night,

madam, and sleep if you can; for to-morrow, you know, I must visit you early with a canonical gentleman. Good night, dear Harcourt—remember to send your brother. *[Exit.]*

Har. You may depend upon me. Madam, I hope you will not refuse my visit to-morrow, if it should be earlier, with a canonical gentleman, than Mr. Sparkish?

Moo. This gentlewoman is yet under my care, therefore you must yet forbear your freedom with her.

Har. Must, sir?

Moo. Yes, sir, she is my sister.

Har. 'Tis well she is, sir; for I must be her servant, sir.—Madam—

Moo. Come away, sister; we had been gone if it had not been for you, and so avoided these lewd rake-hells, who seem to haunt us.

Har. I see a little time in the country makes a man turn wild and unsociable, and only fit to converse with his horses, dogs, and his herds.

Moo. I have business, sir, and must mind it: your business is pleasure; therefore you and I must go different ways.

Har. Well, you may go on; but this pretty young gentleman *[Takes hold of PEGGY.]* shall stay with us; for I suppose his business is the same with ours, pleasure.

Moo. 'Sdeath, he knows her, she carries it so silly; yet if he does not, I should be more silly to discover it first. *[Aside.]* Come, come.

Har. Had you not rather stay with us? *[To PEGGY.]* Pr'ythee who is this pretty young fellow? *[To MOODY.]*

Moo. One to whom I am guardian.—I wish I could keep her out of your hands. *[Aside.]*

Har. Who is he? I never saw any thing so pretty in all my life.

Moo. Pshaw, do not look upon him so much; he's a poor, bashful youth; you'll put him out of countenance. *[Offers to take her away.]*

Har. Here, nephew, let me introduce this young gentleman to your acquaintance. You are very like, and of the same age, and should know one another. Salute him, Dick, à la Française.

[BELVILLE kisses her.]

Moo. I hate French fashions. Men kiss one another! *[Endeavours to take hold of her.]*

Peg. I am out of my wits. *[Aside.]* What do you kiss me for? I am no woman.

Har. But you are ten times handsomer.

Peg. Nay, now you jeer one; and pray don't jeer me.

Har. Kiss him again, Dick.

Moo. No, no, no;—come away, come away. *[To PEGGY.]*

Har. Why, what haste you are in! Why won't you let me talk with him?

Moo. Because you'll debauch him; he's yet young and innocent.—How she gazes upon him! The devil! *[Aside.]* Come, pray let him go; I cannot stay fooling any longer: I tell you my wife stays upper for us.

Har. Does she? Come then, we'll all go sup with her.

Moo. No, no: now I think on't, having staid so long for us, I warrant she's gone to bed.—I wish she and I were well out of your hands. *[Aside.]*

Har. Well then, if she be gone to bed, I wish her and you a good night. But pray, young gentleman, present my humble service to her.

Peg. Thank you heartily, sir

Moo. 'Sdeath, she will discover herself yet in spite of me. *[Aside.]*

Bel. And mine too, sir.

Peg. That I will indeed. *[Bows.]*

Har. Pray give her this kiss for me.

[Kisses PEGGY.]

Moo. O heavens! What do I suffer? *[Aside.]*

Bel. And this for me. *[Kisses PEGGY.]*

Peg. Thank you, sir.

[Courtesses.—BELVILLE and HARCOURT laugh, and exeunt.]

Moo. O the idiot!—Now 'tis out. Ten thousand cankers gnaw away their lips! *[Aside.]* Come, come, driveller. *[MOODY, PEGGY and ALITHEA go out and return.]* So, they are gone at last.—Sister, stay with Peggy, till I find my servant. Don't let her stir an inch: I'll be back directly. *[Exit.]*

Re-enter HARCOURT and BELVILLE.

Har. What, not gone yet? Nephew, show the young gentlemen Rosamond's pond, while I speak another word to this lady.

[EXECUT BELVILLE and PEGGY; ALITHEA and HARCOURT struggle.]

Ali. My brother will go distracted.

Re-enter MOODY.

Moo. Where? how?—What's become of—gone!—whither?

Ali. In the next walk only, brother.

Moo. Only—only—where?—where? *[Exit hastily.]*

Har. What's the matter with him? Why so much concerned?—But, dearest madam—

Re-enter MOODY.

Moo. Gone, gone—not to be found—quite gone—ten thousand plagues go with 'em!—Which way went they?

Ali. But in t'other walk, brother.

Moo. T'other walk! t'other devil. Where are they, I say?

Ali. You are too abusive, brother.

Moo. You know where they are, you infamous wretch, eternal shame of your family; which you do not dishonour enough yourself, you think, but you must help her to do it too, thou legion of—

Ali. Good brother—

Moo. Damn'd, damn'd sister! *[Exit.]*

SCENE II.—Another part of the Park.

Enter BELVILLE and PEGGY.

Bel. No disguise could conceal you from my heart: I pretended not to know you, that I might deceive the dragon that continually watches over you; but now he's asleep, let us fly from misery to happiness.

Peg. Indeed, Mr. Belville, as well as I like you, I can't think of going away with you so; and as much as I hate my guardian, I must take leave of him a little handsomely, or he will kill me, so he will.

Bel. But, dear miss Peggy, think of your situation; if we don't make the best use of this opportunity, we never may have another.

Peg. Ay but, Mr. Belville, I am as good as married already; my guardian has contracted me, and there wants nothing but the church ceremony to make us one: I call him husband, and he calls me wife already; he made me do so. and we had been married in church long ago, if the writings could have been finished.

Bel. That's his deceit, my sweet creature.—He pretends to have married you, for fear of your lik-

ing any body else.—You have a right to choose for yourself; and there is no law in heaven or earth that binds you before marriage to a man you cannot like.

Peg. I'fack, no more I believe it does: sister Alithea's maid has told me as much. She's a very sensible girl.

Bel. You are in the very jaws of perdition, and nothing but running away can avoid it; the law will finish your chains to-morrow, and the church will rivet them the day after. Let us secure our happiness by escape, and love and fortune will do the rest for us.

Peg. These are fine sayings, to be sure, Mr. Belville; but how shall we get my fortune out of bud's clutches? We must be a little cunning; 'tis worth trying for. We can at any time run away without it.

Bel. I see by your fears, my dear Peggy, that you live in awe of this brutal guardian; and if he has you once more in his possession, both you and your fortune are secured to him for ever.

Peg. Ay, but it shan't though; I thank him for that.

Bel. If you marry without his consent, he can but seize upon half your fortune.—The other half, and a younger brother's fortune, with a treasure of love, are your own.—Take it, my sweetest Peggy, and this moment, or we shall be divided for ever.

[*Kneels, and presses her hand.*]

Peg. I'fackins, but we won't.—Your fine talk has bewitched me.

Bel. [*Rising.*] 'Tis you have bewitch'd me, thou dear, enchanting, sweet simplicity!—Let us fly with the wings of love to my house there, and we shall be safe for ever.

Peg. And so we will then.—There, squeeze my hand again.—Now run away with me; and if my guardy follows us, the devil take the hindmost, I say. [*Going.*]

Enter MOODY hastily, and meets them.

Moo. O! there's my stray'd sheep, and the wolf again in sheep's clothing!—Now I have recovered her, I shall come to my senses again. [*Aside.*] Where have you been, you puppy?

Peg. Been, bud?—We have been hunting all over the Park to find you.

Bel. From one end to t'other, sir. [*Confusedly.*]

Moo. But not where I was to be found, you young devil, you!—Why did you start when you saw me?

Peg. I'm always frighten'd when I see you; and if I did not love you so well, I should run away from you, so I should. [*Pouts.*]

Moo. But I'll take care you don't.

Peg. This gentleman has a favour to beg of you, bud? [*BELVILLE makes signs of dislike.*]

Moo. I am not in a humour to grant favours to young gentlemen, though you may. What have you been doing with this young lady—gentleman, I would say?

Peg. Fie, bud, you have told all.

Bel. I have been as civil as I could to the young stranger; and if you'll permit me, I will take the trouble off your hands, and show the young spark Rosamond's pond; for he has not seen it yet.—Come, pretty youth, will you go with me?

[*Goes to her.*]

Peg. As my guardian please.

Moo. No, no, it does not please me. Whatever I think he ought to see, I shall show him myself. You may visit Rosamond's pond, if you will; and

the bottom of it, if you will.—And so, sir, your servant.

[*Exit MOODY, with PEGGY under his arm, and BELVILLE.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—Moody's House.

Enter LUCY and ALITHEA.

Ali. Hold your peace.

Lucy. Nay, madam, I will ask you the reason why you would banish poor Mr. Harcourt for ever from your sight? How could you be so hard-hearted.

Ali. 'Twas because I was not hard-hearted.

Lucy. No, no; 'twas stark love and madness, I warrant.

Ali. It was so; I would see him no more, because I love him.

Lucy. Hey-day! a very pretty reason.

Ali. You do not understand me.

Lucy. I wish you may yourself.

Ali. I was engaged to marry, you see, another man, whom my justice will not suffer me to deceive or injure.

Lucy. Can there be a greater cheat or wrong done to a man, than to give him your person without your heart? I should make a conscience of it.

Ali. Hold your tongue.

Lucy. That you know I can't do, madam; and upon this occasion, I will talk for ever. What, give yourself away to one, that poor I, your maid, would not accept of.

Ali. How, Lucy?

Lucy. I would not, upon my honour, madam. 'Tis never too late to repent. Take a man, and give up your coxcomb, I say.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Mr. Sparkish, with company, madam, attends you below.

Ali. I will wait upon 'em. [*Exit Servant.*] My heart begins to fail me, but I must go through with it. Go with me, Lucy. [*Exit.*]

Lucy. Not I indeed, madam.—If you will leap the precipice, you shall fall by yourself. What excellent advice have I thrown away!—So I'll e'en take it where it will be more welcome.—Miss Peggy is bent upon mischief against her guardian, and she can't have a better privy counsellor than myself—I must be busy one way or another. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—Another Chamber in Moody's House.

Enter MOODY and PEGGY.

Moo. I saw him kiss your hand before you saw me.—This pretence of liking my sister was all a blind—the young abandon'd hypocrite! [*Aside.*] Tell me, I say—for I know he likes you, and was hurrying you to his house—tell me, I say—

Peg. Lord, han't I told it a hundred times over?

Moo. I would try if, in the repetition of the ungrateful tale, I could find her altering it in the least circumstance; for if her story is false, she is so, too. [*Aside.*] Come, how was't, baggage?

Peg. Lord! what pleasure you take to hear it, sure.

Moo. No, you take more in telling it, I find; but

speaking, how was't? No lies: I saw him kiss you; he kiss'd you before my face.

Peg. Nay, you need not be so angry with him neither; for, to say the truth, he has the sweetest breath I ever knew.

Moo. The devil! You were satisfied with it then, and would do it again?

Peg. Not unless he should force me.

Moo. Force you, changeling?

Peg. If I had struggled too much, you know, he would have known I had been a woman; so I was quiet, for fear of being found out.

Moo. If you had been in petticoats, you would have knock'd him down.

Peg. With what, bud? I could not help myself; besides, he did it so modestly, and blush'd so, that I almost thought him a girl in men's clothes, and upon his mummery too as well as me; and, if so, there was no harm done, you know.

Moo. This is worse and worse. So, 'tis plain she loves him, yet she has not love enough to make her conceal it from me; but the sight of him will increase her aversion for me, and love for him; and that love instruct her how to deceive me, and satisfy him, all idiot as she is. Love; 'twas he gave women first their craft, their art of deluding. I must strangle that little monster whilst I can deal with him. [Aside.] Go; fetch pen, ink, and paper, out of the next room.

Peg. Yes, I will, bud.

Moo. Go then.

Peg. I'm going.

Moo. Why don't you go then?

Peg. Lord! I'm going. {Exit.

Moo. This young fellow loves her, and she loves him; the rest is all hypocrisy. How the young modest villain endeavoured to deceive me! But I'll crush this mischief in the shell. Why should women have more invention in love than men? It can only be because they have more desire, more soliciting passions, more of the devil.

Re-enter PEGGY, with pen, ink, and paper.

Come, minx, sit down and write.

Peg. Ay, dear, dear bud; but I can't do't very well.

Moo. I wish you could not at all!

Peg. But what should I write for?

Moo. I'll have you write a letter to this young man.

Peg. O lord! to the young gentleman a letter?

Moo. Yes, to the young gentleman.

Peg. Lord, you do but jeer; sure, you jest.

Moo. I am not so merry. Come, sit down, and write as I bid you.

Peg. What, do you think I am a fool?

Moo. She's afraid I would not dictate my love to him, therefore she's unwilling. [Aside.] But you had best begin.

Peg. Indeed, and indeed, but I won't, so I won't.

Moo. Why?

Peg. Because he's in town. You may send for him here, if you will.

Moo. Very well; you would have him brought to you? Is it come to this? I say, take the pen and ink, and write, or you'll provoke me.

Peg. Lord! what do you make a fool of me for? Don't I know that letters are never writ but from the country to London, and from London into the country? Now he's in town, and I'm in town too; therefore I can't write to him, you know.

Moo. So, I'm glad it's no worse; she is innocent

enough yet. [Aside.] Yes, you may, when your husband bids, write letters to people that are in town.

Peg. O, may I so? Then I am satisfied.

Moo. Come, begin. Sir—

[Dictates.

Peg. Sha'n't I say *Dear sir*? You know one says always something more than bare *Sir* up in a corner.

Moo. Write as I bid you, or I will write something with this penknife in your face.

Peg. Sir—

[Writes.

Moo. *Though I suffered last night your nauseous, loath'd kisses and embraces—*Write!

Peg. Nay, why should I say so? you know, I told you he had a sweet breath.

Moo. Write!

Peg. Let me put out *loath'd*.

Moo. Write, I say!

Peg. Well then.

[Writes.

Moo. Let me see what you have writ. [Reads.] *Though I suffered last night your kisses and embraces—*thou impudent creature, where is *nauseous* and *loath'd*?

Peg. I can't abide to write such filthy words.

Moo. Once more write as I'd have you, or I will spoil your writing with this; I will stab out those eyes that cause my mischief. [Holds up the penknife.

Peg. O Lord! I will.

[Writes.

Moo. So, so, let's see now: *though I suffered last night your nauseous, loath'd kisses and embraces—*go on—yet I would not have you presume that you shall ever repeat them. So—

[PEGGY writes.

Peg. I have writ it.

Moo. O then—I then conceal'd myself from your knowledge, to avoid your insolencies—

[PEGGY writes.

Peg. To avoid—

Moo. Your insolencies—

Peg. Your insolencies.

[Writes.

Moo. The same reason, now I am out of your hands—

Peg. So—

[Writes.

Moo. *Makes me own to you my unfortunate, though innocent frolic, in being in boy's clothes.*

[PEGGY writes.

Peg. So—

Moo. *That you may for evermore—*

Peg. Evermore—

Moo. Evermore cease to pursue her, who hates and detests you—

[PEGGY writes.

Peg. So—

[Sighs.

Moo. What do you sigh for? Detests you, as much as she loves her husband and her honour.

Peg. I vow, husband, he'll never believe I should write such a letter.

[Writes.

Moo. What, he'd expect a kinder one from you? Come, now your name only.

Peg. What, sha'n't I say—*Your most faithful humble servant till death?*

Moo. No, tormenting fiend. [PEGGY writes.] Her style, I find, would be very soft. [Aside.] Come, wrap it up now, whilst I go fetch wax and a candle, and write on the outside—*For Mr. Belville.* [Exit.

Peg. [Writes.] *For Mr. Belville.* So; I am glad he is gone. Hark! I hear a noise.

Moo. [Within.] Well, well; but can't you call again? Well, walk in then.

Peg. I'fack, there's folks with him.

Moo. [Within.] Very well; if he must see me, I'll come to him.

Peg. That's pure; now I may think a little. Why should I send dear Mr. Belville such a letter? Can one have no shift? Ah, a London woman would have had a hundred presently. Stay; what if I

should write a letter, and wrap it up like this, and write upon it too? Ay; but then my guardian would see't. I don't know what to do. But yet y'vads I'll try, so I will; for I will not send this letter to poor Mr. Belville, come what will on't.—[Writes, and repeats what she writes.] Dear, dear, dear, sweet Mr. Belville—so—My guardian would have me send you a base, rude letter, but I won't—so—and would have me say I hate you; but I won't—there—for I'm sure, if you and I were in the country, at cards together—so—I could not help treading on your toe under the table; so pray keep at home, for I shall be with you as soon as I can; so no more at present from one who am, dear, dear, poor dear Mr. Belville, your loving friend till death do us part, Margaret Thrift. So, now wrap it up just like t'other; so, now write—For Mr. Belville.—But, oh! what shall I do with it? for here comes my guardian. [Puts it in her bosom.]

Re-enter MOODY, with a candle and sealing-wax.

Moo. I have been detained by a sparkish coxcomb, who pretended to visit me; but I fear 'twas to my wife. [Aside.] What, have you done?

Peg. Ay, ay, bud, just now.

Moo. Let's see't; what d'y'e tremble for?

[He opens and reads the first letter.]

Peg. So, I had been finely serv'd, if I had giv'n him this. [Aside.]

Moo. Come, where's the wax and seal?

Peg. Lord! what shall I do? [Aside.] Pray, let me see't. Lord! you think I cannot seal a letter; I will do't, so I will.

[Snatches the letter from him, changes it for the other, seals it, and delivers it to him.]

Moo. Nay, I believe you will learn that and other things too, which I would not have you.

Peg. So, ha'n't I done it curiously? I think I have: there's my letter going to Mr. Belville, since he'll needs have me send letters to folks. [Aside.]

Moo. 'Tis very well; but I warrant you would not have it go now?

Peg. Yes, indeed, but I would, bud, now.

Moo. Well, you are a good girl then. Come, let me lock you up in your chamber till I come back; and be sure you come not within three strides of the window when I am gone, for I have a spy in the street. [Puts her into the chamber.] At least 'tis fit she think so: if we do not cheat women, they'll cheat us. Now I have secur'd all within, I'll deal with the foe without, with false intelligence. [Exit.]

SCENE III.—Belville's Lodgings.

Enter LUCY and BELVILLE.

Lucy. I run great risks, to be sure, to serve the young lady and you, sir; but I know you are a gentleman of honour, and would scorn to betray a friend who means you well, and is above being mercenary.

Bel. As you are not mercenary, Mrs. Lucy, I ought to be the more generous; give me leave to present you with this trifle; [gives her a ring] not as a reward for your services, but as a small token of friendship.

Lucy. Though I scorn to be bribed in any cause, yet I am proud to accept it as a mark of your regard, and as such shall keep it for your sake; and now to business.

Bel. But has the dear creature resolved?

Lucy. Has she! why, she will run away and marry you, in spite of your teeth, the first moment you can break prison: so you, in your turn, must take care

not to have your qualms. I have known several bold gentlemen not able to draw their swords, when a challenge has come too quick upon 'em.

Bel. I assure you, Mrs. Lucy, that I am no bully in love; and Miss Peggy will meet with her match, come when she will.

Lucy. Ay, so you all say; but talking does no business. Stay at home till you hear from us.

Bel. Blessings on thee, Lucy, for the thought.

Moo. [Without.] But I must and will see him, let him have what company he will.

Lucy. As I hope to be married, Mr. Belville, I hear Mr. Moody's voice. Where shall I hide myself? If he sees me, we are all undone.

Bel. This is our cursed luck again. What the devil can he want here? Get into this closet till he is gone. [Puts Lucy into the closet.] Don't you stir, Lucy. I must put the best face upon the matter. Now for it. [Takes a book and reads.]

Enter MOODY.

Moo. You will excuse me, sir, for breaking through forms, and your servant's entreaties, to have the honour—but you are alone, sir—your fellow told me below, that you were with company.

Bel. Yes, sir, the best company. [Shows his book.] When I converse with my betters, I choose to have 'em alone.

Moo. And I chooseto interrupt your conversation: the business of my errand must plead my excuse.

Bel. You shall be always welcome to me; but you seem ruffled, sir. What brings you hither, and so seemingly out of humour?

Moo. Your impertinency; I beg pardon, your modesty I mean.

Bel. My impertinency?

Moo. Your impertinency.

Bel. Sir, from the peculiarity of your character, and your intimacy with my uncle, I shall allow you great privileges; but you must consider, youth has its privileges too; and, as I have not the honour of your acquaintance, I am not obliged to bear with your ill humours, or your ill manners.

Moo. They who wrong me, young man, must bear with both; and if you had not made too free with me, I should have taken no liberties with you.

Bel. I could have wished, sir, to have found you a little more civil, the first time I have the honour of a visit from you.

Moo. If that is all you want, young gentleman, you will find me very civil indeed. There, sir, read that, and let your modesty declare whether I want either kindness or civility. Look you there, sir. [Gives him a letter.]

Bel. What is it?

Moo. Only a love-letter, sir; and from my wife.

Bel. How, is it from your wife? Hum and hum.

[Reads.]

Moo. Even from my wife, sir. Am not I wondrous kind and civil to you now too? But you'll not think her so. [Aside.]

Bel. Ha! is this a trick of his or her's! [Aside.]

Moo. The gentleman's surpris'd, I find. What, you expected a kinder letter?

Bel. No, faith, not I. How could I?

Moo. Yes, yes, I'm sure you did; a man so young and well made as you are, must needs be disappointed, if the women declare not their passion at the first sight or opportunity.

Bel. But what should this mean? It seems he knows not what the letter contains. [Aside.]

Moo. Come, ne'er wonder at it so much.

Bel. Faith, I can't help it.

Moo. Now, I think, I have deserv'd your infinite friendship and kindness; and have shew'd myself sufficiently an obliging kind friend and husband; am I not so, to bring a letter from my wife to her gallant?

Bel. Ay, indeed, you are the most obliging kind friend and husband in the world; ha, ha, ha! Pray, however, present my humble service to her, and tell her I will obey her letter to a tittle, and fulfil her desires, be what they will, or with what difficulty soever I do't; and you shall be no more jealous of me, I warrant her and you.

Moo. Well then, fare you well, and play with any man's honour but mine; kiss any man's wife but mine, and welcome; so, Mr. Modesty, your servant.

[*Going.*]

Enter SPARKISH, meeting him.

Spark. So, brother-in-law that was to have been, I have followed you from home to Belville's; I have strange news for you.

Moo. What, are you wiser than you were this morning?

Spark. Faith, I don't know but I am, for I have lost your sister, and I sha'n't eat half an ounce the less at dinner for it; there's philosophy for you.

Moo. Insensibility you mean. I hope you don't mean to say my sister ill, sir?

Spark. No, sir, she has used me ill; she's in her tantrums; I have had a narrow escape, sir.

Moo. If thou art endow'd with the smallest portion of understanding, explain this riddle.

Bel. Ay, ay, pr'ythee, Sparkish, condescend to be intelligible.

Spark. Why, you must know, we had settled to be married; it is the same thing to me, whether I am married or not; I have no particular fancy one way, or another, and so I told your sister; off or on, 'tis the same thing to me: but the thing was fix'd, you know. You and my aunt brought it about; I had no hand in it. And, to shew you that I was as willing to marry your sister as any other woman, I suffered the law to tie me up to hard terms; and the church would have finish'd me still to harder, but she was taken with her tantrums.

Moo. D—n your tantrums, come to the point.

Spark. Your sister took an aversion to the parson, Frank Harcourt's brother; abused me like a pickpocket, and swore 'twas Harcourt himself.

Moo. And so it was, for I saw him.

Spark. Why, you are as mad as your sister; I tell you it was Ned, Frank's twin brother.

Moo. What, Frank told you so? [story.]

Spark. Ay, and Ned too; they were both in a

Moo. What an incorrigible fellow! Come, come, I must be gone.

Spark. Nay, nay, you shall hear my story out. She walk'd up within pistol-shot of the church, then twirl'd round upon her heel, call'd me every name she could think of; and, when she had exhausted her imagination, and tired her tongue (no easy matter, let me tell you), she call'd her chair, sent her footman to buy a monkey before my face, then bid me good morrow with a sneer, and left us with our mouths open in the middle of a hundred people, who were all laughing at us! If these are not tantrums, I don't know what are.

Moo. Ha, ha, ha! I thank thee, Sparkish, from my soul; 'tis a most exquisite story: I have not had such a laugh for this half year. Thou art a most ridiculous puppy, and I am infinitely obliged to thee; ha, ha, ha! [*Exit.*]

Spark. Did you ever hear the like, Belville?

Bel. O yes; how is it possible to hear such a foolish story, and see thy foolish face, and not laugh at 'em? Ha, ha, ha! [*Lucy in the closet laughs.*]

Spark. Hey-day! what's that? What, have you raised a devil in the closet, to make up a laughing chorus at me? I must take a peep. [*Going to the closet?*]

Bel. Indeed, but you must not.

Spark. It was a woman's voice.

Bel. So much the better for me.

Spark. Pr'ythee, introduce me.

Bel. Though you take a pleasure in exposing your ladies, I choose to conceal mine; so, my dear Sparkish, lest the lady should be sick by too long a confinement, and laughing heartily at you, I must entreat you to withdraw. Pr'ythee, excuse me, I must laugh; ha, ha, ha, ha!

Spark. Do you know that I begin to be angry, Belville?

Bel. I can't help that. Ha, ha, ha!

Spark. My character's at stake; I shall be thought a d—d silly fellow; I will call Alithea to an account directly. [*Exit.*]

Bel. Ha, ha, ha!

Lucy. [*Peeping out.*] Ha, ha, ha, ha! O dear sir, let me have my laugh out, or I shall burst. What an adventure. [*Comes out and laughs.*]

Bel. My sweet Peggy has sent me the kindest letter; and by the dragon himself; there's a spirit for you!

Lucy. There's simplicity for you! Show me a town-bred girl with half the genius. Send you a love-letter, and by a jealous guardian too! Ha, ha, ha! 'Tis too much; too much! Ha, ha, ha! Well, Mr. Belville, the world goes as it should do. My mistress will exchange her fool for a wit; Miss Peggy her brute for a pretty young fellow; I shall dance at two weddings; be well rewarded by both parties; get a husband myself; and be as happy as the best of you; and so your humble servant. [*Exit.*]

Bel. Success attend you, Lucy. [*Exit.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—Moody's house.

PEGGY, discovered alone, leaning on her elbow on a table, with pen, ink, and paper.

Peg. Well, 'tis e'en so; I have got the London disease they call love; I am sick of my guardian, and dying for Mr. Belville! I have heard this distemper call'd a fever, but methinks it is like an ague; for when I think of my guardian, I tremble, and am so cold; but when I think of my gallant, dear Mr. Belville! my hot fit comes, and I am all in a fever indeed. Ah! poor Mr. Belville! Well, I will not stay here; therefore I'll make an end of my letter to him, which shall be a finer letter than my last, because I have studied it like anything. Oh! sick, sick!

Enter MOODY, who, seeing her writing, steals softly behind her, and looking over her shoulder:

Moo. What, [*snatches the paper from her*] writing more letters?

Peg. O Lord, bud! why d'ye fright me so?

[*She offers to run out, he stops her, and reads.*]

Moo. How's this! Nay, you shall not stir, ma-

dam. [*Reads.*] Dear, dear, Mr. Belville. Very well, I have taught you to write letters to good purpose; but let's see't. First, I am to beg your pardon for my boldness in writing to you, which I'd have you to know I would not have done had you not said first you loved me so extremely; which, if you do, you will never suffer me to be another man's, who I loath, nauseate, and detest. Now you can write these filthy words. But what follows!—therefore I hope you will speedily find some way to free me from this unfortunate match, which was never, I assure you, of my choice; but I'm afraid 'tis already too far gone; however, if you love me as I do you, you will try what you can do; you must help me away before to-morrow, or else, alas! I shall be for ever out of your reach, for I can defer no longer our—our—what is to follow our? Speak, what? Our journey into the country, I suppose. Oh, woman! d—d woman! and love! d—d love! their old temper; for this is one of his miracles; in a moment he can make those blind that could see, and those see that were blind; those dumb that could speak, and those prattle who were dumb before. But make an end of your letter, and then I'll make an end of you thus, and all my plagues together.

[*Draws his sword.*]

Peg. O Lord! O Lord! you are such a passionate man, bud!

Moo. Come, take the pen, and make an end of the letter, just as you intended; if you are false in a tittle I shall soon perceive it, and punish you with this as you deserve. [*Lays his hand on his sword.*] Write what was to follow. Let's see.—You must make haste, and help me away before to-morrow, or else I shall be for ever out of your reach, for I can defer no longer our—what follows our?—

[*PEGGY takes the pen, and writes.*]

Peg. Must all out then, bud? Look you there then.

Moo. Let's see;—for I can defer no longer our wedding.—Your slighted ALITHEA. What's the meaning of this? My sister's name to't? Speak; unriddle.

Peg. Yes, indeed, bud.

Moo. But why her name to't? Speak, speak, I say!

Peg. Ay, but you'll tell her again; if you would not tell her again—

Moo. I will not; I am stunn'd; my head turns round. Speak.

Peg. Won't you tell her, indeed, and indeed?

Moo. No; speak, I say.

Peg. She'll be angry with me; but I would rather she should be angry with me than you, bud. And to tell the truth, 'twas she made me write the letter, and taught me what I should write.

Moo. Ha! I thought the style was somewhat better than her own. [*Aside.*] Could she come to you to teach you, since I lock'd you up alone?

Peg. Oh! through the key-hole, bud.

Moo. But why should she make you write a letter for her to him, since she can write herself?

Peg. Why, she said, because—

Moo. Because what; because—

Peg. Why because, bud—

Moo. Because what, I say?

Peg. Because, lest Mr. Belville, as he was so young, should be inconstant, and refuse her; or be vain afterwards, and shew the letter, she might disown it, the hand not being her's.

Moo. Belville again! Am I to be deceiv'd again with that young hypocrite?

Peg. You have deceiv'd yourself, bud; you have

indeed. I have kept the secret for my sister's sake, as long as I could; but you must know it, and shall know it too. [*Cries.*]

Moo. Dry your tears.

Peg. You always thought he was hankering after me. Good law! he's dying for Alithea, and Alithea for him. They have had private meetings; and he was making love to her before yesterday, from the tavern window, when you thought it was me. I would have discovered all, but she made me swear to deceive you; and so I have finely; have not I, bud?

Moo. Why did you write that foolish letter to him then, and make me more foolish to carry it?

Peg. To carry on the joke, bud; to oblige them.

Moo. And will nothing serve her but that great baby? He's too young for her to marry.

Peg. Why do you marry me then? 'Tis the same thing, bud.

Moo. No, no, 'tis quite different. How innocent she is! [*Aside.*] But hark you, madam, your sister went out this morning, and I have not seen her within since.

Peg. Alack-a-day! she has been crying all day above, it seems, in a corner.

Moo. Where is she? let me speak with her.

Peg. O Lord! then she'll discover all. [*Aside.*] Pray hold, bud; what, d'ye mean to discover me? She'll know I have told you then. Pray, bud, let me talk with her first.

Moo. I must speak with her to know whether Belville ever made her any promise, and whether she will be married to Sparkish or no.

Peg. Pray, dear bud, don't till I have spoken with her, and told her that I have told you all; for she'll kill me else.

Moo. Go then, and bid her come to me.

Peg. Yes, yes, bud.

Moo. Let me see—

Peg. I have just got time to know of Lucy, who first set me to work, what lie I shall tell next; for I am e'en at my wits end. [*Aside, and exit.*]

Moo. Well, I resolve it, Belville shall have her: I'd rather give him my sister than lend him my wife; and such an alliance will prevent his pretensions to my wife, sure; I'll make him of kin to her, and then he won't care for her.

Re-enter PEGGY.

Peg. O Lord, bud, I told you what anger you would make me with my sister.

Moo. Won't she come?

Peg. No, she won't, she's ashamed to look you in the face; she'll go directly to Mr. Belville, she says. Pray let her have her way, bud; she won't be pacified if you don't; and will never forgive me. For my part, bud, I believe, but don't tell anybody, they have broken a piece of silver between 'em; or have contracted one another, as we have done, you know, which is the next thing to being married.

Moo. Pooh! you fool; she is ashamed of talking with me about Belville, because I made the match for her with Sparkish! But Sparkish is a fool, and I have no objection to Belville's family or fortune: tell her so.

Peg. I will, bud.

[*Going.*]

Moo. Stay, stay, Peggy, let her have her own way; she shall go to Belville herself, and I'll follow her; that will be best; let her have her whim.

Peg. You're in the right, bud; for they have certainly had a quarrel, by her crying and hanging her head so: I'll be hang'd if her eyes an't swell'd out of her head, she's in such a piteous taking.

Moo. Belleville sha'n't use her ill, I'll take care of that: if he has made her a promise, he shall keep to it: but she had better go first. I will follow her at a distance, that she may have no interruption; and I will wait in the Park before I see them, that they may come to a reconciliation before I come upon 'em.

Peg. La, bud, how wise you are! I wish I had half your wisdom; you see everything at once. Stand a one side then; there, a little further that way.

Moo. And so I will: she shan't see me till I break in upon her at Belleville's.

[*Sits down in the middle of the stage.*]

Peg. Now for it. [*Exit.*]

Moo. My case is something better; for suppose the worst—should Belleville use her ill—I had rather fight him for not marrying my sister, than for debauching my wife, for I will make her mine absolutely to-morrow; and of the two, I had rather find my sister too forward than my wife: I expected no other from her free education, as she calls it, and her passion for the town. Well, wife and sister are names which make us expect love and duty, pleasure and comfort; but we find 'em plagues and torments, and are equally, though differently, troublesome to their keeper. But here she comes.

[*Steps aside.*]

Re-enter PEGGY, dressed like ALITHEA; and as she passes over the stage, seems to sigh, sob, and wipe her eyes.

Peg. Heigho! [*Exit.*]

Moo. [*Comes forward.*] There the poor devil goes, sighing and sobbing, a woeful example of the fatal consequences of a town education; but I am bound in duty, as well as inclination, to do my utmost to save her; but first I'll secure my own property. [*Opens, and calls.*] Peggy! Peggy! my dear! I will return as soon as possible; do you hear me? Why don't you answer? You may read in the book I bought you, till I come back. As the Jew says in the play, "Fast bind, fast find."—[*Locks the door.*] This is the best, and only security for female affections. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—The Park, before Belleville's House.

Enter SPARKISH, fuddled.

Spark. If I can but meet with her, or anybody that belongs to her, they will find me a match for 'em. When a man has wit, and a great deal of it, Champagne gives it a double edge, and nothing can withstand it; 'tis a lighted match to gunpowder. I was right to consult my friends, and they all agree with Moody, that I make a d—d ridiculous figure, as matters stand at present. I'll consult Belleville; this is his house; he's my friend too; and no fool. It shall be so. D—n it, I must not be ridiculous. [*Going to the door, sees PEGGY coming.*] Hold! hold! if the Champagne does not hurt my eye-sight, while it sharpens my wit, the enemy is marching up this way. Come on, madam Alithea; now for a smart fire; and then let's see who will be ridiculous.

Enter PEGGY.

Peg. Dear me, I begin to tremble: there is Mr. Sparkish, and I can't get to Mr. Belleville's house without passing by him. He sees me, and will discover me; he seems in liquor too. Bless me!

Spark. O ho! she stands at bay a little; she don't much relish the engagement. The first blow is half

the battle. I'll be a little figurative with her. [*Aside, approaches her.*] I find, madam, you like a solo better than a duet. You need not have been walking alone this evening, if you had been wiser yesterday. What, nothing to say for yourself? Repentance, I suppose, makes you as awkward and as foolish as the poor country girl your brother has lock'd up in Pall-mall.

Peg. I'm frighten'd out of my wits.

[*Tries to pass him.*]

Spark. Not a step further shall you go till you give me an account of your behaviour, and make me reparation for being ridiculous. What, dumb still! Then if you won't by fair means, I must squeeze you to a confession. [*As he goes to seize her, she slips by him; but he catches hold of her before she reaches BELVILLE'S door.*] Not quite so fast, if you please. Come, come, let me see your modest face, and hear your soft tongue, or I shall be tempted to use you ill.

Enter MOODY.

Moo. Hands off, you ruffian! How dare you use a lady, and my sister, in this manner?

[*Takes SPARKISH from her.*]

Spark. She's my property, sir; transferred to me by you; and though I would give her up to anybody for a dirty sword-knot, yet I won't be bullied out of my right, though it is not worth that.

[*Snaps his fingers.*]

Moo. There's a fellow to be a husband! You are justified in despising him and flying from him. I'll defend you with my purse and my sword. Knock at that door, and let me speak to Belleville. [*PEGGY knocks; when the Footman opens it, she runs in.*] Is your master at home, friend?

Foot. Yes, sir.

Moo. Tell him, then, that I have rescued that lady from this gentleman; and, by her desire, and my consent, she flies to him for protection. If he can get a parson, let him marry her this minute; tell him so, and shut the door. [*Exit Footman.*] And now, sir, if your wine has given you courage, you had better shew it upon this occasion; for you are still d—d ridiculous.

Spark. Did you ever hear the like? Lookye, Mr. Moody, we are in the Park, and to draw a sword is an offence to the court; so you may vapour as long as you please. A woman of so little taste is not worth fighting for; she's not worth my sword: but if you'll fight me to-morrow morning for diversion, I am your man.

Moo. Relinquish your title in the lady to Belleville peaceably, and you may sleep in a whole skin.

Spark. Belleville! he would not have your sister with the fortune of a nabob; no, no, his mouth waters at your country tit-bit at home: much good may it do him.

Moo. And you think so, puppy. Ha, ha, ha!

Spark. Yes, I do, mastiff. Ha, ha, ha!

Moo. Then thy folly is complete. Ha, ha, h!

Spark. Thine will be so, when thou hast married thy country innocent. Ha, ha, ha!

[*They laugh at each other.*]

Enter HARCOURT.

Spark. What, my boy, Harcourt!

Moo. What brings you here, sir?

Har. I followed you to Belleville's, to present a near relation of your's, and a nearer one of mine, to you.

[*Exit.*]

Spark. What's the matter now?

Re-enter HARCOURT, with ALITHEA.

Har. Give me leave, gentlemen, without offence to either, to present Mrs. Harcourt to you.

Spark. Alithea, your wife! Mr. Moody, are you in the clouds too?

Moo. If I am not in a dream, I am the most miserable walking dog that ever run mad with his misfortunes and astonishment!

Har. Why so, Jack? Can you object to my happiness, when this gentleman was unworthy of it?

[*MOODY walks about in a rage.*]

Spark. This is very fine; very fine, indeed. Where's your story about Belville now, 'squire Moody? Pr'ythee, don't chafe, and stare, and stride, and beat thy head, like a mad tragedy poet! but out with thy tropes and figures.

Moo. Zounds! I can't bear it.

[*Goes hastily to BELVILLE'S door, and knocks hard.*]

Ali. Dear brother, what's the matter?

Moo. The devil's the matter! the devil and women together. [*Knocks again.*] I'll break the door down, if they won't answer. [*Knocks again.*]

A Footman appears in the balcony, in flat.

Foot. What would your honour please to have?

Moo. Your master, rascal.

Foot. He is obeying your commands, sir; and the moment he has finished, he will do himself the pleasure to wait on you.

Moo. You sneering villain, you! if your master does not produce that she-devil, who is now with him, and who, with a face of innocence, has cheated and undone me, I'll set fire to his house.

[*Exit Footman from the balcony.*]

Spark. 'Gad so! now I begin to smoke the business. Well said, simplicity! rural simplicity! 'Egad! if thou hast trick'd Cerberus here, I shall be so ravish'd, that I will give this couple a wedding-dinner. Pray, Mr. Moody, who's d—d ridiculous now?

Moo. [*Going to SPARKISH.*] Lookye, sir; don't grin, for if you dare to shew your teeth at my misfortunes, I'll dash 'em down your impudent throat, you jackanapes!

Spark. [*Quite calm.*] Very fine, faith; but I have no weapons to butt with a mad bull, so you may toss and roar by yourself, if you please.

Enter BELVILLE in the balcony.

Bel. What does my good friend want with me?

Moo. Are you a villain, or are you not?

Bel. I have obey'd your commands, sir.

Moo. What have you done with the girl, sir?

Bel. Made her my wife, as you desired.

Spark. Very true, I am your witness.

Moo. She's my wife, and I demand her.

Enter PEGGY in the balcony.

Peg. No; but I an't though, bud. What's the matter, dear? are you angry with me?

Moo. How dare you look me in the face, cockatrice?

Peg. How dare you look me in the face, bud? Have you not given me to another, when you ought

to have married me yourself? Have you not pretended to be married to me, when you knew in your conscience you was not? And have you not been shilly-shally for a long time? So that if I had not married dear Mr. Belville, I should not have married at all; so I should not.

[*BELVILLE and PEGGY retire from the balcony.*]

Spark. Extremely pleasant, faith; ha, ha, ha!

Moo. I am stupified with shame, rage, and astonishment. My fate has overcome me; I can struggle no more with it. [*Sighs.*] What is left me? I cannot bear to look, or be looked upon. I will hurry down to my old house, take a twelvemonth's provision into it, cut down my drawbridge, run wild about my garden, which shall grow as wild as myself; then will I curse the world, and every individual in it; and when my rage and spirits fail me, I will be found dead among the nettles and thistles, a woeful example of the baseness and treachery of one sex, and of the falsehood, lying, perjury, deceit, impudence, and damnation, of the other. [*Exit.*]

Spark. Very droll, and extravagantly comic, I must confess; ha, ha, ha!

Enter BELVILLE and PEGGY.

Lookye, Belville, I wish you joy with all my heart; you have got the prize, and perhaps have caught a Tartar; that's no business of mine. If you want evidence for Mr. Moody's giving his consent to your marriage, I shall be ready. I bear no ill-will to that pair; I wish you happy; [*to ALITHEA and HARCOURT*] though I'm sure they'll be miserable; and so, your humble servant. [*Exit.*]

Peg. I hope you forgive me, Alithea, for playing your brother this trick; indeed, I should have only made him and myself miserable, had we married together.

Ali. Then 'tis much better as it is. But I am yet in the dark how this matter has been brought about; how your innocence, my dear, has outwitted his worldly wisdom.

Peg. I am sure I'll do anything to please my bud, but marry him.

But you, good gentry, what say you to this?

You are to judge me—have I done amiss?

I've reasons will convince you all, and strong ones,

Except old folks, who hanker after young ones.

Bud was so passionate, and grown so thrifty,

'Twas a sad life—and, then, he was near fifty!

I'm but nineteen—my husband too is young,

So soft, so gentle, such a winning tongue!

Have I, pray ladies, speak, done very wrong?

As for poor bud, 'twas honest to deceive him;

More virtuous, sure, to cheat him than to grieve him.

Great folks, I know, will call me simple slut;

"Marry for love," they cry, "the country put!"

Marriage with them's a fashion—soon grows cool;

But I'm for always loving, like a fool.

With half my fortune I would rather part,

Than be all finery with an aching heart.

For these strange awkward notions don't abuse me:

And, as I know no better, pray excuse me. [*Exeunt*]

THE CHANCES;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS;

ALTERED FROM BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER,

BY DAVID GARRICK.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DUKE
DON JOHN
DON FREDERICK
PETRUCHIO
ANTONIO
PETER
ANTHONY
FRANCISCO
PEREZ
PEDRO
GUZMAN
SANCHIO
Gentlemen
Servants

FIRST CONSTANTIA
SECOND CONSTANTIA
Landlady
Nurse

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Chamber.

Enter PETER and ANTHONY.

Peter. 'Would we were remov'd from this town,
Anthony,
That we may taste some quiet! for mine own part,
I'm almost melted with continual trotting
After inquiries, dreams, and revelations, [soldiers!
Of who knows whom, or where? Serve wenching
I'll serve a priest in Lent first, and eat bell-ropes.

Anth. Thou art the forwardest fool—
Peter. Why, good tame Anthony,
Tell me but this: to what end came we hither?
Anth. To wait upon our masters.
Peter. But how, Anthony?
Answer me that; resolve me there, good Anthony.
Anth. To serve their uses.
Peter. Shew your uses, Anthony.
Anth. To be employ'd in anything.
Peter. No, Anthony;
Not anything, I take it, nor that thing
We travel to discover, like a new island;
I'll give 'em warning. [visible woman,
Anth. Come, come, all will be mended: this in-
Of infinite report for shape and beauty,
That bred all trouble to no purpose,
They are determin'd now no more to think on.
Peter. Were there ever
Men known to run mad with report before?
Or wander after that, they knew not where [brains
To find; or, if found, how to enjoy? Are men's
Made, now a-days, with malt, that their affections
Are never sober?
I do believe,
That men in love are ever drunk, as drunken men
Are ever loving.
Anth. Pr'ythee, be thou sober,
And know that they are none of those, not guilty
Of the least vanity of love; only a doubt
Fame might too far report, or rather, flatter
The graces of this woman, made them curious
To find the truth; which, since they find so
Lock'd up from their searches, they are now resolv'd
To give the wonder over.
Peter. 'Would they were resolv'd
To give me some new shoes, too! for I'll be sworn
These are e'en worn out to the reasonable soles,

In their good worship's business : and some sleep
Would not do much amiss, unless they mean
To make a watchman of me.—Here they come !

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter DON JOHN and DON FREDERICK.

Don J. I would we could have seen her though :
for, sure,

She must be some rare creature, or report lies :
All men's reports, too.

Don F. I could well wish I had seen Constantia .
But since she is so conceal'd, plac'd where
No knowledge can come near her, so guarded
As 'twere impossible, though known, to reach her,
I have made up my belief.

Don J. Hang me, from this hour,
If I more think upon her !
But as she came a strange report unto me,
So the next beauteous fame shall lose her.

Don F. 'Tis the next way :—
But whither are you walking ?

Don J. My old round,
After my supper, and then to bed.

Don F. Your servant, then.

Don J. Will not you stir ?

Don F. I have a little business.

Don J. I'd lay my life, this lady still—

Don F. Then you would lose it.

Don J. Pray, let's walk together.

Don F. Now I cannot.

Don J. I have something to impart.

Don F. An hour hence,
I will not miss to meet you.

Don J. Where ?

Don F. I' th' High-street ;

For, not to lie, I have a few devotions
To do first, and then I am your's, Don John.

Don J. Devotions, Frederick ! Well, I leave you
to them :

Speed you well : but remember—

Don F. I will not fail.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—A Street.

*Enter PETRUCHIO, ANTONIO, SANCHIO, and
BAPTISTA.*

Anto. Cut his windpipe, I say.

San. Fie, Antonio ! [him.]

Anto. Or knock his brains out first, and then forgive
If you do thrust, be sure it be to th' hilts,
A surgeon may see through him.

San. You are too violent.

Bapt. Too open ; indiscreet.

Petr. Am I not ruin'd ? [son'd ?]
The honour of my house crack'd ? my blood poi-
My credit and my name ?

Bapt. Be sure it be so,
Before you use this violence. Let not doubt,
And a suspecting anger, so much sway you :
Your wisdom may be question'd.

Anto. I say, kill him,
And then dispute the cause.

Bapt. Hang up a true man,
Because 'tis possible he may be thievish !
Is this good justice ?

Petr. I know, as certain
As day must come again, as clear as truth,
And open as belief can say it to me, [pense,
That I am basely wrong'd, wrong'd above recom-
Maliciously abus'd, blasted for ever
In name and honour, lost to all remembrance,
But what is smear'd and shameful : I must kill him ;

Necessity compels me.

San. But think better.

[me,

Petr. There's no other cure left ; yet, witness with
All that is fair in man, all that is noble,
I am not greedy of his life I seek for, [possible,
Nor thirst to shed man's blood ; and 'would 'twere
I wish it from my soul,
My sword should only kill his crimes : no, 'tis
Honour—honour, my noble friends, that idol honour,
That all the world now worships, not Petruchio,
Must do this justice.

Anto. Let it once be done,
And 'tis no matter whether you, or honour,
Or both, be accessory.

Bapt. Do you weigh, Petruchio,
The value of the person, power, and greatness,
And what this spark may kindle ?

Petr. To perform it,
So much I am tied to reputation,
And credit of my house, let it raise wild-fires,
And storms that toss me into everlasting ruin,
Yet I must through ; if you dare side me.

Anto. Dare !
Say we were all sure to die in this venture,
As I am confident against it, is there any
Amongst us of so fat a sense, so pamper'd,
Would choose luxuriously to lie a-bed,
And purge away his spirit ? send his soul out
In sugar sops, and syrups ? Give me dying,
As dying ought to be, upon my enemy :
Let them be all the world, and bring along
Cain's envy with them, I will on.

San. We'll follow.

Petr. You're friends, indeed !

Anto. Here is none will fly from you ;
Do it in what design you please, we'll back you.

Petr. That's spoken heartily.

Ant. And he that flinches,
May he die, lousy, in a ditch !

San. Is the cause so mortal ? nothing but his life ?

Petr. Believe me,
A less offence has been the desolation
Of a whole name.

San. No other way to purge it ?

Petr. There is, but never to be hop'd for.

Bapt. Think an hour more,
And if, then, you find no safer road to guide you,
We'll set our rest, too.

Anto. Mine's up already,
And hang him, for my part, goes less than life.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter DON JOHN.

Don J. The civil order of this city, Naples,
Makes it below'd and honour'd of all travellers,
As a most safe retirement in all troubles ;
Beside the wholesome seat, and noble temper
Of those minds that inhabit it, safely wise,
And to all strangers courteous. But I see
My admiration has drawn night upon me,
And longer to expect my friend, may pull me
Into suspicion of too late a stirrer,
Which all good governments are jealous of.
I'll home, and think at liberty : yet, certain,
'Tis not so far night as I thought ; for see,
A fair house yet stands open ; yet all about it
Are close, and no lights stirring : there may be
foul play :
I'll venture to look in. If there be knaves,
I may do a good office.

Nurse. [Within.] Signior !

Don J. What ? how is this ?

Nurse. [Within.] Signior Fabritio! [good done.]

Don J. This is a woman's tongue; here may be

Don J. [Within.] Who's there? Fabritio?

Don J. Ay.

Nurse. [Within.] Where are you?

Don J. Here.

Nurse. [Within.] Oh! come, for heaven's sake!

Don J. I must see what this means.

Enter Nurse with a Child.

Nurse. I have stayed this long hour for you; make no noise;

For things are in strange trouble. Here; be secret:

'Tis worth your care: begone now; more eyes watch us,

Than may be for our safeties.

Don J. Harkye—

Nurse. Peace; good night!

Don J. She's gone, and I am loaden. Fortune for me! [Exit.]

It weighs well, and it feels well; it may chance

To be some pack of worth: by th'mass, 'tis heavy!

If it be coin or jewels, it is worth welcome.

I'll ne'er refuse a fortune: I am confident

'Tis of no common price. Now to my lodgings:

If it be right, I'll bless this night. [Exit.]

SCENE III.—Another Street.

Enter DUKE, GUZMAN, PEDRO, and PEREZ.

Duke. Welcome to town. Are ye all fit?

Guz. To point, sir.

Duke. Where are the horses?

Pedro. Where they were appointed.

Duke. Be private all, and whatsoever fortune offer itself, let us stand sure.

Perez. Fear not;

Ere you shall be endanger'd, or deluded,

We'll make a black night out't.

Duke. No more, I know it;

You know your quarters.

Guz. Will you go alone, sir?

Duke. Ye shall not be far from me; the least noise shall bring you to my rescue.

Pedro. We are counsell'd. [Ereunt.]

Enter DON JOHN, with a Child, crying.

Don J. Was ever man so paid for being curious; Ever so bob'd for searching out adventures,

As I am! Did the devil lead me? Must I needs be peeping

Into men's houses, where I had no business,

And make myself a mischief?

What have I got by this now?

A piece of pap and caudle-work—a child:

This comes of peeping!

What a figure do I make now! good white bread,

Let's have no bawling wi' ye. 'Sdeath! have I

Known wenches thus long, all the ways of wenches,

Their snares and subtleties,

And am I now bumfiddled with a bastard?

Well, Don John,

You'll be wiser one day, when you have paid dearly For a collection of these butter prints.

'Twould not grieve me to keep this gingerbread,

Were it of my own baking; but to beggar

Myself in caudles, nurses, coral, bells, and babies,

For other men's iniquities!

What shall I do with it now?

Should I be caught here dandling this pap-spoon,

I shall be sung in ballads;

No eyes are near—I'll drop it, [me!]

For the next curious coxcomb. How it smiles upon

Ha! you little sugar-sop! 'tis a sweet baby; [it; 'Twere barbarous to leave it: ten to one 'twould kill Worse sin than his who got it. Well, I'll take it, And keep it as they keep death's-head, in rings, To cry memento to me, "No more peeping!"

Now all the danger is to qualify [lodge;]

The good old gentlewoman, at whose house we

For she will fall upon me with a catechism

Of four hours long. Come, good wonder,

Let you and I be jogging; your starv'd treble

Will waken the rude watch else. All that be

Curious night-walkers, may they find my fee! [Exit.]

SCENE IV.—A Street.

Enter DON FREDERICK.

Don F. Sure, he's gone home. I have beaten all the purlieus, [here?]

But cannot bolt him: if he be a bobbing—What's

Enter First CONSTANTIA.

1 Con. I am ready, And through a world of dangers am flown to you;

Be full of haste and care, we are undone else.

Where are your people? Which way must we travel?

For heaven's sake, stay not here, sir!

Don F. What may this prove?

1 Con. Alas! I am mistaken, lost, undone, For ever perish'd! Sir, for heaven's sake tell me,

Are you a gentleman?

Don F. I am.

1 Con. Of this place?

Don F. No; born in Spain.

1 Con. As ever you lov'd honour, As ever your desires may gain their ends,

Do a poor wretched woman but this benefit, For I am forc'd to trust you.

Don F. You have charm'd me; Humanity and honour bid me help you

And if I fail your trust—

1 Con. The time's too dangerous To stay your protestations: I believe you,

Alas! I must believe you. From this place, Good, noble sir, remove me instantly;

And, for a time, where nothing but yourself, And honest conversation, may come near me;

In some secure place settle me. What I am, And why thus boldly I commit my credit

Into a stranger's hand, the fear and dangers That force me to this wild course, at more leisure,

I shall reveal unto you.

Don F. Come, be hearty; He must strike through my life that takes you from me. [Ereunt.]

SCENE V.

Enter PETRUCHIO, ANTONIO, SANCHIO, and BAPTISTA.

Petr. He will sure come: are ye all well armed? *Auto.* Never fear us:

Here's that will make them dance without a fiddle.

Petr. We are to look for no weak foes, my friends, Nor unadvis'd ones.

Auto. Best gamesters make the best play; We shall fight close, and home, too.

Sañ. Antonio, You are a thought too bloody.

Auto. Why, all physicians

And penny almanacks allow the opening

Of veins this month. Why do you talk of bloody?
 What come we for, to fall to cuffs for apples?
 What, would you make the cause a cudgel-quarrel?
 On what terms stands this man? Is not his honour
 Open'd t' his hand, and pick'd out like an oyster?
 His credit like a quart-pot knock'd together,
 Able to hold no liquor? Clear out this point.

Petr. Speak soft, gentle cousin.

Anto. I'll speak truly.

What should man do, allied to these disgraces,
 Lick o'er his enemy, sit down, and dance him?
 Cry, "That's my fine boy, thou shalt do so no more,
 child?"

Petr. Here are no such cold pities.

Anto. By St. Jaques, [Andrew,
 They shall not find me one! Here's old tough
 A special friend of mine, and he but hold, [for,
 I'll strike them such a hornpipe! Knocks I come
 And the best blood I'll light on: I profess it
 Not to scare costermongers. If I lose my own,
 My audit's cast, and farewell five-and-fifty.

Petr. Let's talk no longer, place yourself with
 silence,

As I direct you; and when time calls us,

As ye are friends, so shew yourselves.

Anto. So be it.

Oh! how my fingers tingle to be at them!

[*Eceunt.*

SCENE IV.—A Chamber.

Enter Don JOHN and his Landlady.

Land. Nay, son, if this be your regard—

Don J. Good mother— [yourself

Land. Good me no goods. Your cousin and
 Are welcome to me whilst you bear yourselves
 Like honest and true gentlemen. Bring hither,
 To my house, that have ever been reputed
 A gentlewoman of a decent and fair carriage,
 And so behav'd myself—

Don J. I know you have.

Land. Bring hither, as I say, to make my name
 Stink in my neighbours' nostrils, your devices,
 Your brats, got out of allicant and broken oaths;
 Your linsey-wolsey work, your filch'd iniquities!
 You're deceived in me, sir, I am none
 Of those receivers.

Don J. Have I not sworn unto you,

'Tis none of mine, and shew'd you how I found it?

Land. You found an easy fool that let you get it.

Don J. Will you hear me? [your ends,

Land. Oaths! what care you for oaths to gain
 When you are high and pamper'd? What saint
 knows you?

Or what religion, but your wicked passions?

I'm sick to see this dealing.

Don J. Heaven forbid, mother!

Land. Nay, I am very sick.

Don J. Who waits there?

Petr. [Within.] Sir?

Don J. Bring a bottle of canary wine.

Land. Exceeding sick, heaven help me!

Don J. Haste you, sirrah!

I must e'en make her drunk. [*Aside.*] Nay, gentle
 mother—

Land. Now fie upon you! was it for this purpose
 You fetch'd your evening walks for your devotions,
 For this pretended holiness? No weather,
 Not before day, could hold you from the matins.
 Were these your bo-peep prayers?
 Still sicker, sicker!

Enter PETER, with a bottle of wine

Don J. There is no talking to her till I have
 drench'd her: [*Aside.*

Give me: here, mother, take a good round draught.
 It will purge spleen from your spirits: deeper, mother.

Land. Ay, ay, son, you imagine this will mend all.

Don J. All, i'faith! mother.

Land. I confess, the wine

Will do its part.

Don J. I'll pledge you.

Land. But, son John—

[once more.

Don J. I know your meaning, mother; touch it
 Alas! you look not well. Take a round draught,
 And then we'll talk at large.

Land. A civil gentleman!

A stranger: one the town holds a good regard of.

Don J. Now we grow kind and maudlin. [*Aside.*

Land. One that should weigh his fair name!

[*Aside.*] Oh! a stitch!

Don J. There's nothing better for a stitch, good
 mother:

Make no spare of it as you love your health;

Mince not the matter.

Land. As I said, a gentleman lodge in my house!

Now heaven's my comfort, signior!—

Don J. And the wine, good mother.

I look'd for this.

[*Aside.*

Land. I did not think you would have us'd me
 thus;

A woman of credit; one, heaven knows!

That loves you but too tenderly.

Don J. The thunder ceases, and the rain descends.

Land. What do you say, son?

Don J. I say, mother, [it.

That I ever found your kindness, and acknowledge

Land. No, no; I am a fool to counsel you.

Where's the infant?

Come, let's see your workmanship.

Don J. It is none of mine, mother, but I'll fetch it.

Here it is, and a lusty one.

Land. Oh! heaven bless thee! As I live,

Your own eyes, signior; and the nether lip

As like you as you had spit it.

Don J. I am glad on't.

Land. Bless me! what things are these?

Don J. I thought my labour

Was not all lost; 'tis gold, and these are jewels,

Both rich and right, I hope.

Land. Well, well, son John,

Here I am with you now, when, as they say,

Your pleasure comes with profit.

Don J. All this time, good mother,

The child wants looking to, wants meat and nurses.

Land. Now blessing o' thy heart! it shall have all,

And instantly: I'll seek a nurse myself, son.

'Tis a sweet child! Ah! my young Spaniard!

Take you no further care, sir.

Don J. Yes, of these jewels,

I must, by your good leave, mother; these are mine:

The gold for bringing up o't, I freely render

To your charge: for the rest, I'll find a master.

But where's Don Fred'rick, mother?

Land. Ten to one,

About the like adventure; he told me

He was to find you out.

Don J. Why should he stay thus?

There may be some ill chance in't; sleep I will not,

Before I have found him.

Well, my dear mother, let the child be look'd to

And look you to be rewarded. About it
Straight, good mother.

Land. No more words, nor no more children,
Good son, as you love me : this may do well :
This shall do well : eh ! you little, sweet cherub !

[*Exit with the Child.*]

Don J. Away ! So, so ; I thought the wine
would do its duty :
She'll kill the child with kindness : t'other glass,
And she had ravish'd me. There is no way
Of bringing women of her age to reason,
But by this : girls of fifteen are caught
Fifty ways ; they bite as fast as you throw in ;
But with the old cold 'tis a diff'rent dealing,
'Tis wine must warm them to their sense of feeling.
[*Exit.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Chamber.

Enter Don FREDERICK, and ANTHONY with a candle.

Don F. Give me the candle ; so, go you out that way.

Anth. What have we now to do ? [Aside.]

Don F. And, on your life, sirrah ! [ledge ;]
Let none come near the door, without my know-
No, not my landlady, nor my friend.

Anth. 'Tis done, sir. [me.]

Don F. Nor any serious business that concerns

Anth. Is the wind there again ? [Aside.]

Don F. Begone !

Anth. I am, sir. [Exit.]

Fred. Now enter without fear.

Enter First CONSTANTIA.

And, noble lady,
That safety and civility you wish for,
Shall truly here attend you :
No wishes,
Beyond the moderation of a man,
Dare enter here. Your own desires and innocence,
Join'd to my vow'd obedience, shall protect you.

1 Con. You are truly noble,
And worth a woman's trust : let it become me,
(I do beseech you, sir,) for all your kindness,
To render, with my thanks, this worthless trifle :
[Offers a ring.]

I may be longer troublesome.

Don F. Fair offices
Are still their own rewards : heaven bless me, lady,
From selling civil courtesies. May it please you,
If you will force a favour, to oblige me,
Draw but that cloud aside, to satisfy me
For what good angel I'm engag'd.

1 Con. It shall be ;
For I am truly confident you're honest :
The piece is scarce worth looking on.

Don F. Trust me,
The abstract of all beauty, soul of sweetness !
What eyes are there !

Noble lady,
If there be any further service to cast on me,
Let it be worth my life, so much I honour you—

1 Con. Your service is too liberal, worthy sir.
Thus far I shall entreat—

Don F. Command me, lady :
You make your power too poor.

1 Con. That presently,
With all convenient haste, you will retire
Unto the street you found me in :
There, if you find a gentleman oppress'd
With force and violence, do a man's office,
And draw your sword, to rescue him.

Don F. He's safe,
Be what he will ; and let his foes be devils,
Arm'd with your beauty, I shall conjure them.
Retire ; this key will guide you : all things necessary
Are there before you.

1 Con. All my prayers go with you ! [Exit.]

Don F. Men say, gold
Does all, engages all, works through all dangers :
Now, I say, beauty can do more. The king's ex-
chequer,

Nor all his wealthy Indies, could not draw me
Through half those miseries this piece of pleasure
Might make me leap into :

Yet, I vow,
My hopes shall die, and my tongue rot within me,
Ere I infringe my faith. Now to my rescue. [Exit.]

SCENE II.—A Street.

*Enter the DUKE, pursued by PETRUCHIO, ANTONIO,
and that party.*

Duke. You will not all oppress me ?

Anto. Kill him i'th' wanton eye.
Let me come to him.

Duke. Then you shall buy me dearly.

[*They fight ; the DUKE fights and retreats.*]

Enter Don JOHN.

Don J. Sure, 'tis fighting !
My friend may be engag'd. Fie ! gentlemen,
This is unmanly odds. [Duke falls.] Press upon
A fall'n enemy ! it is cowardly :
Thus will I protect him. [Bestrides the DUKE.]

Anto. I'll stop your mouth, sir.

Don J. Nay, then, have at thee freely.
There's a plum to satisfy your longing.

Petr. He's fallen ; I hope I have sped him.
Where's Antonio ?

Anto. I must have one thrust more, sir.

Don J. Come up to me.
Anto. A mischief confound your fingers !
He's given me my *quietus est* ; I felt him
In my small guts ; I'm sure he's feez'd me :
This comes of siding with you.

Petr. I hear more rescue coming.

[*Trampling within*]
Anto. Let's turn back, then ;
My skull's uncloven yet, let me but kill somebody.

Petr. Away, for heaven's sake, with him !

[*They hurry ANTONIO off.*]

Enter the Duke's Party.

Don J. Help, gentlemen ! How is it ?

Duke. Well, sir,
Only a little stagger'd.

Duke's Party. Let's pursue them.

Duke. No ; not a man, I charge you.
My thanks to you, brave sir, whose timely valour
And manly courtesy came to my rescue.

Don J. You had foul play offer'd you, and shame
befall him

That can pass by oppression.

Duke. May I crave, sir,
But this much honour more, to know your name,
And him I am so bound to ?

Don J. For the bond, sir,
'Tis every good man's tie ; to know me further,

Will little profit you; I am a stranger;
My country, Spain; my name, Don John; a gentleman

That came abroad to travel.

Duke. I have heard, sir,
Much worthy mention of you, yet I find
Fame short of what you are.

Don J. You are pleas'd, sir,
To express your courtesy; may I demand
As freely what you are, and what mischance
Cast you into this danger?

Duke. For this present
I must desire your pardon; you shall know me
Ere it be long, sir, and nobler thanks
Than now my will can render.

Don J. Your will's your own, sir. [*Looking about.*
Duke. What is't you look for, sir? Have you
lost anything? [*fellows*

Don J. Only my hat i'th' scuffle; sure, these
Were night-snaps!

Duke. No, believe me, sir; pray, use mine,
For 'twill be hard to find your own now.

Don J. Indeed, I cannot.

Duke. Indeed, you shall: I can command another.
I do beseech you, honour me.

Don J. Well, sir, then I will;

And so I'll take my leave.

Duke. Within these few days
I hope I shall be happy in your knowledge,
Till when, you live in my remembrance.

[*Exit with his party.*

Don J. And you in mine.
This is some noble fellow!

Enter Don FREDERICK.

Don F. 'Tis his tongue, sure.

Don John!

Don J. Don Frederick!

Don F. You're fairly met, sir. [*night,*
Pr'ythee, tell me, what revelations hast thou had to-
That home was never thought of?

Don J. Revelations!

I'll tell thee, Frederick: but before I tell thee,
Settle thy understanding.

Don F. 'Tis prepar'd, sir

Don J. Why, then, mark what shall follow:

This night, Frederick, this wicked night—

Don F. I thought no less.

Don J. This blind night!—

What dost thou think I have got?

Don F. What such wanton fellows ought to get.

Don J. Would 'twere no worse! you talk of re-
velations,

I have got a revelation will reveal me
An arrant coxcomb whilst I live.

Don F. What is't?

Thou hast lost nothing?

Don J. No, I have got, I tell thee.

Don F. What hast thou got?

Don J. One of the infantry—a child.

Don F. How!

Don J. A chopping child, man.

Don F. 'Give you joy, sir!

Don J. I'll give it you, sir, if it is joy. Frederick,

This town's abominable, that's the truth on't.

Don F. I still told you, John,

Your venching must come home; I counsel'd you;
But where no grace is—

Don J. 'Tis none of mine, man.

Don F. Answer the parish so.

Don J. Cheated, in troth!

Peeping into a house, by whom I know not,

ACT. DRAMA.—NOS. 85 & 86.

Nor where to find the place again; but, Frederick,
'Tis no poor one,

That's my best comfort, for't has brought about it
Enough to make it, man.

Don F. Where is't?

Don J. At home.

Don F. A saving voyage; but what will you say,
signior,

To him that, searching out your serious worship,
Has met a stranger fortune?

Don J. How, good Frederick?

A little squeaking girl to this boy would hit it.

Don F. No, mine's a nobler venture; what do
you think, sir,

Of a distress'd lady, one whose beauty

Would oversell all Italy?

Don J. Where is she?

Don F. A woman of that rare behaviour,

So qualified, as love and admiration

Dwell round about her; of that perfect spirit—

Don J. Ay, marry, sir?

Don F. That admirable carriage,

That sweetness in discourse: young as the morning,
Her blushes staining his.

Don J. But where's this creature?

Shew me but that.

Don F. That's all one; she's forthcoming.

I have her sure, boy.

Don J. Harkye! Frederick;

What truck betwixt my infant?

Don F. 'Tis too light, sir;

Stick to your charge, good Don John; I am well.

Don J. But is there such a wench?

Don F. First tell me this:

Did you not lately, as you walk'd along,
Discover people that were arm'd, and likely
To do offence?

Don J. Yes, marry, and they urg'd it

As far as they had spirit.

Don F. Pray, go forward. [*them,*

Don J. A gentleman I found engag'd amongst

It seems, of noble breeding, I'm sure, brave mettle,

As I return'd to look you; I set into him,

And without hurt (I thank heaven!) rescu'd him.

Ecce signum. [*Shewing the hat.*

Don F. What the devil's that, John?

Don J. Only the laurel I gain'd in the scuffle.

Don F. Bravo! then all my work is done.

And now, to satisfy you, there is a woman—

Oh! John, there is a woman—

Don J. Oh! Frederick, where is she? [*you;*

Don F. And one of no less worth than I assure
And, which is more, fall'n under my protection.

Don J. I'm glad of that; forward, sweet Frede-
rick. [*too, sir.*

Don F. And, which is most of all, she is at home,

Don J. Come, let's begone, sir.

Don F. Yes; but 'tis most certain,

You cannot see her, sir.

Don J. Why?

Don F. She has sworn me,

That none else shall come near her; not my mother,
Till some doubts are clear'd. [*she in?*

Don J. Not look upon her? What chamber is

Don F. In ours.

Don J. Let's go, I say:

A woman's oaths are wafers, break with making.

They must for modesty a little: we all know it.

Let's go, I say.

Don F. No, I'll assure you, sir.

Don J. Not see her! [*rick;*

I smell an old dog trick of your's. Lookye! Frede-

You talk'd to me of wenching; let's have fair play,
Square dealing, I would wish you.

Don F. You may depend upon it, John.

Don J. Tell me,
And tell me true: is the cause honourable,
Or for your pleasure?

Don F. By all our friendship, John,
'Tis honest, and of great end.

Don J. I'm answer'd;
But let me see her though.

Don F. I can't.

Don J. Leave the door open as you go in.

Don F. I dare not.

Don J. Not wide open, but a little, very little,
So as a jealous husband

Would level at his wanton wife through.

Don F. That courtesy,

If you desire no more—

Don J. No more.

Don F. And keep it strictly—

Don J. Upon my honour. [morning.]

Don F. I dare afford you. Come, 'tis now near

Don J. Along, along, then, dear Frederick. [Exeunt.]

Enter PETER and ANTHONY.

Peter. Nay, the old woman's gone, too.

Anth. She's a caterwauling
Amongst the gutters: but, conceive me, Peter,
Where our good masters should be.

Peter. Where they should be,
I do conceive; but where they are, good Anthony—

Anth. Ay, there it goes. My master's bo-peep
with me,

With his sly popping in and out again,
Argued a cause—

Peter. My saint-like Don has hired a chapel
In the corner there, for his pious uses;

Where I, against my will, watch, fast, and pray.

Anth. Hark! [Lute sounds.]

Peter. What?

Anth. Dost not hear a noise?

Again!—'tis a lute.

Peter. Odd! it's a lute, or a drum. Where is it?

Anth. Above, in my master's chamber.

Peter. There is no creature: he hath the key him-
self, man.

Anth. Let him have it; this is his lute.

[Singing within.]

Peter. I grant you; but who strikes it?

Anth. An admirable voice, too! Hark you!

Peter. Anthony,

Art sure we are at home?

Anth. Without all doubt, Peter.

Peter. Then it must be the devil.

Anth. Let it be.

Good devil, sing again. Oh! dainty devil!

Peter, believe it a most delicate devil!

The sweetest devil—

Enter DON FREDERICK and DON JOHN.

Don F. If you will be content with peeping?

Don J. I will, I will.

Don F. Then come in softly;

And, as you love your faith, presume no further
Than you have promis'd.

Don J. Basta!

Don F. What makes you up so early, sir?

Don J. You, sir, in your contemplations?

Peter. Oh! pray you, peace, sir.

Anth. Hush, hush!

Don F. Why peace, sir?

[Lute sounds.]

Anth. Why—hush, hush!

Peter. Do you hear?

Don J. 'Tis your lute: she's playing on't.

Anth. The house is haunted, sir;

For this we have heard this half year.

Don F. You saw nothing?

Anth. Not I.

Peter. Nor I, sir.

Don F. Get out our breakfast, then;
And make no words on't.

Don J. We'll undertake this spirit, if it be one.

Anth. This is no devil, Peter.

Mum! there be bats abroad. [Exit with PETER.]

Don F. Stay; now she sings.

Why didst thou shrug so?

Either allay this heat, or, as I live, I will not trust [you.]

Don J. Pass on; I warrant you. [Exeunt.]

SCENE III.—Another Chamber.

Enter First CONSTANTIA, with a lute.

1 Con. Thou friendly, soothing instrument! my
better

Genius has surely laid thee in my way,
That thy sweet melancholy strain might echo
To the sorrows of my heart, lest it, o'erburden'd,
Should, from reflection, sink into despair.
To curse those stars, that men say govern us—
To rail at fortune, to fall out with fate,
And tax the general world, will help me nothing:
Alas! our own desires

Are our own fates, our own stars all our fortune,
Which, as we sway them, so abuse, or bless us. [Retires and sits.]

Enter DON FREDERICK. DON JOHN peeping.

Don F. Peace to your meditations!

Don J. Plague on you!

Stand out of the light. [Aside.]

1 Con. I crave your mercy, sir. [Nerly.]

My mind, o'ercharg'd with care, made me unman-

Don F. Pray you, set that mind at rest; all shall
be perfect. [son!]

Don J. I like the person rare: a handsome per-
A wond'rous handsome body! Would she would
turn!

See, an that spiteful puppy be not got

Between me and my light again! [Aside.]

Don F. 'Tis done;

As all that you command, shall be: the gentleman
Is safely off all danger.

Don J. What a rare creature! [Aside.]

1 Con. How shall I thank you, sir? how satisfy—

Don F. Gentle lady, all's rewarded.

Now does he melt like marmalade. [Aside.]

Don J. Nay, 'tis certain,

Thou art the sweetest woman, eyes e'er look'd on!

Pray, heaven, thou art not honest! [Aside.]

Don F. None disturb'd you?

1 Con. Not any, sir; nor any sound came near
I thank your care.

Don F. 'Tis well.

Pull in your head, and be hang'd! [To Don J.]

Don J. Harkye! Frederick,

I have brought you home your pack-saddle.

Don F. Fie upon you!

[To Don J.—Shuts the door.]

1 Con. Nay, let him enter. Fie! my lord duke;
Stand peeping at your friends!

Don F. You are cozen'd, lady;

Here is no duke.

I Con. I know him, full well, signior.

I do beseech your grace, come in.

Don F. Shall he enter,

Whoe'er he be?

I Con. With all my heart.

Don F. Come in, then.

Enter *Don JOHN.*

Don J. Bless you, lady! [*CONSTANTIA starts.*]

Don F. Nay, start not; though he be a stranger to you,

He's of a noble strain; my kinsman, lady;

My countryman, and fellow-traveller.

He's truly honest.

Don J. That's a lie. [*Aside.*]

Don F. And trusty,

Beyond your wishes; valiant to defend,

And modest to converse with as your blushes.

Don J. Modest to converse with! Here's a fellow!

Now may I hang myself: this commendation

Has broke the neck of all my hopes; for now

Must I cry, "No, forsooth!" and "Ay, forsooth!"

And "Truly, as I live!" and "As I am honest!"

He's done these things on purpose; for he knows,

Like a most envious rascal as he is,

I am not honest this way. Oh! the traitor!

He has watch'd his time. I shall be quit with him.

[*Aside.*]

I Con. Sir, I credit you.

Don F. Go, salute her, John.

Don J. Plague o' your commendations! [*Aside.*]

I Con. Sir, I shall now desire to be a trouble.

Don J. Never to me, sweet lady. Thus I seal

My faith, and all my services. [*Kisses her hand.*]

I Con. One word, signior. [*To Don F.*]

Don J. What a hand the rogue has! softer than down,

And whiter than the lily; and then, her eyes!

What points she at? my leg, I warrant; or

My well-knit body: sit fast, Don Frederick.

Don F. 'Twas given him by that gentleman. You took such care of, his own being lost i'the scuffle. [*one,*]

I Con. With much joy may he wear it! 'tis a right

I can assure you, gentlemen; and right happy

May he be in all fights for that noble service.

Don F. Why do you blush?

I Con. It had almost cozen'd me.

For, not to lie, when I saw that, I look'd for

Another owner of it. But 'tis well.

Don F. Who's there? [*Knocking.*]

Pray you, retire, madam. [*Exit I CON.*] Come in, sir.

Enter *ANTHONY.*

Now, what's the news with you?

Anth. There is a gentleman without

Would speak with Don John.

Don F. [*To Don J. who is peeping after CON.*] Don John!

Don J. [*Still peeping.*] What's the matter?

Don F. Leave peeping, John; you are wanted.

Don J. Who is it?

Anth. I do not know, sir; but he shews a man Of no mean reckoning.

Don J. Let him shew his name,

And you return a little wiser. [*Exit* *ANTHONY.*]

Don F. How do you like her, John?

Don J. As well as you, Frederick,

For all I am honest; you shall find it, too.

Don F. Art thou not honest?

Don J. Art thou an ass?

"And modest as her blushes!" What a blockhead

Would e'er have popp'd out such a dry apology

For his dear friend? And to a gentlewoman,

A woman of her youth and delicacy!

They are arguments to draw them to abhor us.

An honest, moral man! 'tis for a constable,

A handsome man, a wholesome man,

A liberal man, a likely man,

Stout, strong, and valiant— [*ing;*]

These had been things to hearken to; things catch-

But you have such a spite'd consideration,

Such qualms upon your worship's conscience,

Such chilblains in your blood, that all things pinch you,

Which nature and the liberal world make custom;

And nothing but fair honour! dear honour! sweet honour!

Oh! damn your water-gruel honour!

Don F. I am sorry, John— [*that?*]

Don J. And so am I, Frederick; but what of

Fie upon thee! a man of thy discretion! [*in;*]

That I was trusty and valiant, were things well put

But modest! a modest gentleman!

Oh! wit, wit! where wast thou?

Don F. It shall be mended;

And henceforth you shall have your due.

Re-enter *ANTHONY*

Don F. I look for't. How now, who is't?

Anth. A gentleman of this city,

And calls himself Petrucchio.

Don J. Petrucchio! I'll attend him.

[*Exit* *ANTHONY.*]

Re-enter *First* *CONSTANTIA.*

I Con. How did he call himself?

Don F. Petrucchio:

Does it concern you aught?

I Con. Oh! gentlemen,

The hour of my destruction is come on me;

I am discover'd, lost, left to my ruin:

As ever you had pity—

Don J. Do not fear; [*first.*]

Let the great devil come, he shall come though me

Lost here, and we about you!

I Con. To you, and your humanity, a hapless

Helpless creature, begs for safety. Oh! grant

Me your protection; to your honours, sirs,

I fly, as to the altar, for a refuge:

Be your nobleness

My sanctuary, and shield a woe-sick heart

From all its terrors and afflictions. [*Kneeling.*]

Don J. Pray, rise. [*Kneels.*] I can't bear it.

Don F. Fall before us!

I Con. Oh! my unfortunate estate! all anger

Compar'd to his, to his—

Don F. Let his and all men's, [*ven's sake!*]

Whilst we have power and life; bear up, for hea-

Don J. And for my sake, be comforted.

I Con. I have offended heaven, too; yet heaven

knows—

Don J. Ay, heaven knows, that we are all evil;

Yet heaven forbid we should have our deserts.

What is he?

I Con. Too, too near to my offence, sir.

Oh! he will cut me piece-meal!

Don F. 'Tis no treason?

Don J. Let it be what it will, if he cut here,

I'll find him cut-work.

Don F. He must buy you dear;

With more than common lives.

Don J. Fear not, nor weep not;

By heaven, I'll fire the town before you perish!
And then the more the merrier; we'll jog with you.

Don F. Come in, and dry your eyes.

Don J. Pray, no more weeping,
Spoil a sweet face for nothing! My return
Shall end all this, I warrant you.

I Con. Heaven grant it!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*An Apartment in Don Frederick's Lodgings.*

Enter PETRUCHIO, with a letter.

Petr. This man should be of quality and worth,
By Don Alvaro's letter; for he gives
No slight recommendation of him:
I'll e'en make use of him.

Enter Don JOHN.

Don J. Save you, sir; I am sorry
My business was so unmannerly, to make you
Wait thus long here.

Petr. Occasions must be serv'd, sir.

But is your name Don John?

Don J. It is, sir.

Petr. Then,

First, for your own brave sake, I must embrace you:
Next, for the credit of your noble friend,
Hernanda de Alvaro, make you mine:
Who lays his charge upon me, in this letter,
To look you out; and for the virtue in you,
Whilst your occasions make you resident
In this place, to supply you, love and honour you;
Which had I known sooner—

Don J. Noble sir,

[*sir;*

You'll make my thanks too poor. I wear a sword,
And have a service to be still dispos'd of,
As you shall please command it.

[*sir;*

Petr. That manly courtesy is half my business,
And, to be short, to make you know I honour you,
And in all points believe your worth-like oracle;
This day, Petruchio,
One that may command the strength of this place,
Hazard the boldest spirits, hath made choice
Only of you, and in a noble office.

Don J. Forward, I am free to entertain it.

Petr. Thus, then;

I do beseech you, mark me.

Don J. I shall, sir.

[*worthy!*

Petr. Ferrara's duke—Would I might call him
But that he has razed out from his family,
As he has mine, with infamy—This man,
Rather, this powerful monster, we being left
But two, of all our house, to stock our memories,
My sister Constantia and myself, with arts and
witchcrafts,

Vows, and such oaths heaven has no mercy for,
Drew to dishonour this weak maid by stealth,
And secret passages, I knew not of.
Oft he obtain'd his wishes, oft abus'd her,
I am asham'd to say the rest. This purchas'd,
And his hot blood allay'd, he left her
And all our name to ruin.

Don J. This was foul play,
And ought to be rewarded so.

Petr. I hope so:

He 'scap'd me yesternight; which, if he dare
Again adventure for, I will pardon him.

Don J. Sir, what commands have you to lay on me?

Petr. Only thus: by word of mouth to carry him
A challenge from me, that so (if he have honour in
him)

We may decide all difference betwixt us.

Don J. Fair and noble;
And I will do it home. When shall I visit you?

Petr. Please you, this afternoon, I will ride with
you;

For, at the castle, six miles hence, we are sure
To find him.

Don J. I'll be ready.

Petr. My man shall wait here,
And conduct you to my house.

Don J. I shall not fail you. [*Exit PETRUCHIO.*]

Enter Don FREDERICK.

Don F. How now?

Don J. All's well, and better than thou couldst
expect; for this wench is certainly no vestal. But
who do you think that she is? guess, an' thou canst.

Don F. I cannot.

Don J. Be it known, then, to all men, by these
presents, this is she, she, and only she, our curious
coxcombs have been so long hunting after.

Don F. Who, Constantia? Thou talk'st of cocks
and bulls, John.

Don J. I talk of wenches, Frederick. This is
the pullet we two have been crowing after.

Don F. It cannot be.

Don J. It can be, it shall be, and must be—sister
to Don Petruchio; her name Constantia; I know
all, man.

Don F. Now I believe—

Don J. I both believe and hope it.

Don F. Why do you hope it?

Don J. First, because she is handsome; and next,
because she is kind: there are two reasons for you.
Now do you find out a third, a better, if you can:
for take this, Frederick, for a certain rule, since
she has once begun, she'll never give it over: ergo,
if we have good luck, in time she may fall to our
share.

Don F. I can't believe her dishonest for all this.
She has not one loose thought about her.

Don J. No matter for that, she's no saint. There
has been fine work, dainty doings, Frederick!

Don F. How can you talk so?

Don J. Because I think so. Now you think so,
and talk otherwise; therefore, I am the honestest,
though you may be the modestest man.

Don F. Well, well; there may have been a slip.

Don J. Ay, and a tumble, too, poor creature! I
think the boy will prove her's, I took up last night.

Don F. The devil!

Don J. Ay, ay; he has been at work. Let us go
in, and comfort her; that she is here, is nothing
yet suspected. Anon I'll tell you why her brother
came, (who, by this light, is a brave fellow,) and
what honour he has done me, in calling me to
serve him. [*John.*]

Don F. There be irons heating for some, Don

Don J. Then we must take care not to burn our
fingers, Frederick. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Chamber.*

Enter Landlady and ANTHONY

Land. Come, sir, who is it that keeps your mas-
ter company?

Anth. I say to you, Don John.

Land. I say, what woman?

Anth. I say so, too.

Land. I say again, I will know.

Anth. I say, 'tis fit you should.

Land. And I tell thee, he has a woman here.

Anth. I tell thee, 'tis, then, the better for him.

Land. Was ever gentlewoman

So trumf'd up with a fool! Well, saucy sirrah,

I will know who it is, and to what purpose.

I pay the rent, and I will know how my house

Comes by these inflammations,

Anth. 'Twould be a great ease to your age.

Enter Don FREDERICK.

Don F. How now?

Why, what's the matter, Landlady?

Land. What's the matter!

You use me decently among you, gentlemen.

Don F. Who has abus'd her? you, sir?

Land. Od's my witness!

I will not be thus treated, that I will not.

Anth. I gave her no ill language.

Land. Thou liest, sirrah!

Thou took'st me up at every word I spoke,

As I had been a maukin, a flirt gillian:

And thou think'st, because thou canst write and read,

Our noses must be under thee.

Don F. Dare you, sirrah?

[you:

Anth. Let but the truth be known, sir, I beseech

She raves of veuchers, and I know not what, sir.

Land. Go to, thou know'st too well, thou wicked

varlet!

Thou instrument of evil!

Anth. As I live, sir, she's ever thus, till dinner.

Don F. Get you in, sir; I'll answer you anon.

[*Exit* ANTHONY.

Now to your grief: what is't? for I can guess—

Land. You may, with shame enough, Don Fre-

derick,

[on,

If there were shame amongst you: nothing thought

But how you may abuse my house.

Don F. No more of these words;

Nor no more murmurings, woman:

I did suspect your anger:

But turn it presently and handsomely,

And bear yourself discreetly to this lady;

For such a one there is, indeed.

Land. 'Tis well, sir!

[melancholies,

Don F. Leave off your devil's matins, and your

Or we shall leave our lodgings.

Land. But, mine honour—

And 'twere not for mine honour—

Don F. Come, your honour,

Your house, and you, too, if you dare believe me,

Are well enough. Sleep up yourself, leave crying;

For I must have you entertain this lady

With all civility. When you know her,

[it.

You'll find your own fault; no more words, but do

Land. You know you may command me.

Enter Don JOHN.

Don J. Worshipful landlady,

How does thy swainskin petticoat? By heav'n,

Thou look'st most amiable!

Land. You'll leave this roguery,

When you come to my years.

Don J. By this light,

Thou art not above fifteen yet; a mere girl!

Thou hast not half thy teeth!

[*Knocking.*

Don F. Somebody knocks;

See who it is; and do not mind this fellow.

Land. I beg, sir, that you'll use me with decorum.

Don J. Ay, ay, I'll promise you; with nothing

else.

[*Exit Landlady.*

Was there ever such a piece of touchwood?

Don F. Pr'ythee, John, let her alone; she has

been

Well vex'd already. She'll grow stark mad, man.

Don J. I would fain see her mad. An old mad

woman—

Don F. Don't be a fool.

[tooth-ache.

Don J. Is like a miller's mare troubled with the

She makes the rarest faces—

Don F. Pr'ythee, be sober.

Re-enter Landlady.

Don J. What, again!

[hills.

Nay, then, it is decreed, though hills were set on

And seas met seas to guard thee, I would through!

Land. Od's my witness! if you ruffle me, I'll

spoil your sweet face for you.

Don J. Oh! raptures, raptures!

[*Kissing her.* She runs after him.

What, will you hurt your own son?

Land. Well, well! go, go to the door, there's a

gentleman there would speak with you.

Don J. Upon my life, Petruchio. Good, dear

landlady, carry him into the dining-room, and I'll

wait upon him presently.

Land. Well, Don John, the time will come that

I shall be even with you.

[*Exit.*

Don J. I must begone about this business.

Won't you go too, Frederick?

Don F. I am not requested, you know; besides,

the lady will want advice and consolation.

Don J. Yes; and I know, too, with all your mo-

desty, that you will be ready to give it her.

[so?

Don F. For shame, John; how can you ramble

You know you may trust me.

[*Frederick.*

Don J. I had rather trust a cat with sweet milk,

Don F. I'll but speak to her, and follow you.

Don J. Indeed?

Don F. Indeed.

Don J. Upon your honour?

Don F. Upon my honour.

Don J. And your modesty?

Don F. Phoo, phoo! don't be a fool.

Don J. Well, well, I shall trust you,—now I'm

easy.

[*Exit.*

Enter First CONSTANTIA.

I Con. What, no way to divert this certain dan-

ger?

Don F. Impossible! their honours are engag'd.

I Con. Then there must be murder, and I the

cause!

Which, gen'rous sir, I shall no sooner hear of,

Than make one in't. You may, if you please, sir,

Make all go less. Do, sir, for heaven's sake,

Let me request one favour.

Don F. It is granted.

I Con. Your friend, sir, is, I find, too resolute,

Too hot and fiery for the cause: as ever

You did a virtuous deed, for honour's sake,

Go with him, and allay him: your fair temper,

And noble disposition, like wish'd showers,

May quench those eating fires, that would spoil all

I see in him destruction.

[ation.

Don F. I will do it: and it is a wise consider-

I'll alter him, lady.

The old gentleman

Shall wait upon you; she is discreet and secret,

And you may trust her in all points.

I Con. You are noble.

Don F. And so I take my leave.

I hope, lady, a happy issue for all this.

I Con. All heaven's care upon you, and my

prayers!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—Antonio's House.

*Enter Surgeon and a Gentleman.**Gent.* What symptoms do you find in him?*Surg.* None, sir, dangerous, if he be ruled.*Gent.* Why, what does he do?*Surg.* Nothing that he should. First, he will let no liquor down but wine; and then, he has a fancy that he must be dressed always to the tune of John Dory.*Gent.* How to the tune of John Dory?*Surg.* Why, he will have fiddlers, and make them play and sing it to him all the while.*Gent.* An odd fancy, indeed!*Enter ANTONIO**Anto.* Give me some wine.*Surg.* I told you so—"Tis death, sir.*Anto.* 'Tis a horse, sir. Dost thou think I shall recover with the help of barley-water only?*Gent.* Pie, Antonio, you must be governed.*Anto.* Why, sir, he feeds me with nothing but rotten roots, and drowned chickens, stewed pericraniums and pia-maters; and when I go to bed, (by heaven 'tis true, sir) he rolls me up in lints, with labels at them, that I am just the man in the almshouse; my head and face is in Aries' place.*Surg.* Will it please you to let your friends see you opened?*Anto.* Will it please you, sir, to give me a brimmer? I feel my body open enough for that. Give it me, or I'll die upon thy hand, and spoil thy custom.*Surg.* How, a brimmer?*Anto.* Why, look you, sir, thus I am used still;—I can get nothing that I want. In how long a time canst thou cure me?*Surg.* In forty days.*Anto.* I'll have a dog shall lick me whole in twenty. In how long a time canst thou kill me?*Surg.* Presently.*Anto.* Do it; that's the shorter, and there's more delight in it.*Gent.* You must have patience.*Anto.* Man, I must have business; this foolish fellow hinders himself; I have a dozen rascals to hurt within these five days. Good man-mender, stop me up with parsley like stuffed beef, and let me walk abroad, and let me be dressed to that warlike tune, John Dory.*Surg.* You shall walk shortly.*Anto.* I will walk presently, sir, and leave your salads there, your green salves and your oils; I'll to my old diet again, strong food and rich wine, and see what that will do.*Surg.* Well, go thy ways, thou art the maddest old fellow I ever met with! *[Exeunt severally.]*

SCENE III.—Don FREDERICK's lodging.

*Enter First CONSTANTIA and Landlady.**1 Con.* I have told all I can, and more than yet These gentlemen know of me, ever trusting Your concealment—but are they such strange creatures?*Land.* There's the younger, ay, and the wildest, Don John, the arrant'st Jack in all this city: Has been a dragon in his days! the truth is, Whose chastity he chops upon he cares not; He flies at all! bastards, upon my conscience, He has now a hundred of 'em. The last night

He brought home one; I pity her that bore it. Some rich woman (For wise I dare not call her) was the mother, For it was hung with jewels; the bearing cloth No less than crimson velvet.

1 Con. How?*Land.* 'Tis true, lady.*1 Con.* Was it a boy, too?*Land.* A brave boy!*1 Con.* May I see it?

For there is a neighbour of mine, a gentlewoman, Has had a late mischance, which willingly I would know further of; now if you please To be so courteous to me—

Land. You shall see it: *[know 'em?]*

But what do you think of these men, now you Be wise, or you may repent too late. I tell you But for your own good, and as you will find it.

1 Con. I am advised.*Land.* No more words then; do that, And instantly, I told you of; be ready: Don John, I'll fit you for your frumps. *[Aside.]**1 Con.* I will, dame:

But shall I see this child?

Land. Within this half hour.Let's in, and then think better. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE IV.—Near the Castle of the Duke.

*Enter PETRUCHIO, DON JOHN, and FREDERICK.**Don J.* Sir, he is worth your knowledge, and a gentleman*(If I that so much love him, may commend him)* That's full of honour: and one, if foul play Should fall on us, will not fly back for fillips.*Petr.* You much honour me, And once more I pronounce you both mine.*Don F.* Stay;

What troop is that below i' th' valley there?

Don J. Hawking, I take it. *[gentlemen;]**Petr.* They are so; 'tis the Duke, 'tis even he, I know him by his company.*Don F.* I think too, He bends up this way.*Petr.* So he does.*Don J.* Stand you still, Within that covert, till I call: You, Frederick, By no means be not seen, unless they offer To bring on odds upon us: He comes forward, Here will I wait him fairly: To your places.*Petr.* I need no more instruct you.*Don J.* Fear me not.*[PETRUCHIO and FREDERICK retire.]**Enter DUKE and his Party.**Duke.* Feed the hawks up, We'll fly no more to-day. Oh, my blest fortune, Have I so fairly met the man!*Don J.* You have, sir; And him you know by this. *[Showing his hat.]**Duke.* Sir, all the honour, And love—*Don J.* I do beseech your grace stay there. Dismiss your train a little.*Duke.* Walk aside, And out of hearing, I command ye: Now, sir, Be plain.*Don J.* I will, and short, You have wronged a gentleman beyond all justice, Beyond the mediation of all friends.*Duke.* The man, and manner of wrong?*Don J.* Petruchio is the man; The wrong is, you have dishonour'd his sister.

Duke. Now, stay you, sir,
And hear me a little. This gentleman's [loved;
Sister, that you have named, 'tis true I have long
As true, I have possess'd her: No less truth,
I have a child by her. But that she, or he,
Or any of that family, are tainted;
Suffer disgrace or ruin by my pleasures,
I wear a sword to satisfy the world, no,
And him in this case when pleases; for know, sir,
She is my wife, contracted before heaven;
(A witness I owe more tie to than her brother)
Nor will I fly from that name, which long since
Had had the church's seal and approbation,
But for his jealous nature.

Don J. Sir, your pardon;
And all that was my anger, now my service. [we
Duke. Fair sir, I knew I should convert you; had
But that rough man here now too—

Don J. You shall, sir.

What, ho, ho!

Duke. I hope you have laid no ambush?

Enter PETRUCHIO.

Don J. Only friends.

Duke. My noble brother, welcome.
Come, put your anger off, we'll have no fighting.
Unless you will maintain I am unworthy
To bear that name.

Petr. Do you speak this heartily?

Duke. Upon my soul, and truly: The first priest
Shall put you out of these doubts.

Petr. Now I love you,
And beseech you, pardon my suspicious;
You are now more than a brother, a brave friend too.

Don J. The good man's overjoy'd. What, ho,
Mr. Modesty, you may come forth now—

Enter DON FREDERICK.

Don F. How goes it? [all's well.

Don J. Why, the man has his mare again, and
The Duke professes freely he's her husband.

Don F. 'Tis a good hearing.

Don J. Yes, for modest gentlemen;
I must present you—May it please your grace,
To number this brave gentleman, my friend,
And noble kinsman, among these your servants.
He is truly valiant, and modest to converse with.

Duke. Oh, my brave friend! you shower your
bounties on me. [ber

Amongst thy best thoughts, signior, in which num-
ber You being worthily disposed already,
May freely place your friend.

Don F. Your grace honours me. [brother,

Petr. Why, this is wond'rous happy. But now,
Now comes the bitter to our sweet: Constantia!

Duke. Why, what of her?

Petr. Nor what, nor where do I know: [ledge,
Wing'd with her fears, last night, beyond my know-
She quit my house, but whither—

Don F. Let not that—

Duke. No more, good sir, I have heard too much.

Petr. Nay, sink not,

She cannot be so lost.

Don J. Nor shall not, gentlemen;

Be free again, the lady's found: That smile, sir,
Shows you distrust your servant.

Duke. I do beseech you. [safe.

Don J. You shall believe me; by my soul, she's

Duke. Heaven knows I would believe, sir.

Don F. You may safely.

Don J. And under noble usage: This modest
gentleman—

Speak, Frederick.—

Don F. I met her in all her doubts last night,
and to my guard
(Her fears being strong upon her) she gave her
person;

I waited on her to our lodging; where all respect,
Civil and honest service, now attend her.

Petr. You may believe now.

Duke. Yes, I do, and strongly:

Well, my good friends, or rather my good angels,
For you have both preserved me; when these virtues
Die in your friend's remembrance—

Don J. Good, your grace,

Lose no more time in compliments, 'tis too precious;
I know it by myself, there can be no hell
To his that hangs upon his hopes.

Petr. He has hit it.

[crown you

Don F. To horse again then, for this night I'll
With all the joys you wish for.

Petr. Happy gentlemen!

[Exeunt.

SCENE V.—The Suburbs.

Enter FRANCISCO and a Man.

Fran. This is the maddest mischief: never fool
was so fobbed off as I am, made ridiculous, and to
myself mine own ass; trust a woman! I'll trust the
devil first, for he dares be better than his word
sometimes. Pray tell me, in what observance have
I ever failed her?

Man. Nay, you can tell that best yourself.

Fran. Let us consider.

Enter DON FREDERICK and DON JOHN.

Don F. Let them talk, we'll go on before.

Fran. Where didst thou meet Constantia, and
this woman?

Don F. Constantia! what are these fellows? Stay
by all means. [They listen.

Man. Why, sir, I met her in that great street
that comes from the market-place, just at the turn-
ing by a goldsmith's shop.

Don F. Stand still, John.

Fran. Well, Constantia has spun herself a fine
thread, now; what will her best friend think of
this?

Don F. John, I smell some juggling, John.

Don J. Yes, Frederick, I fear it will be proved so.

Fran. But what should the reason be, dost think,
of this so sudden change in her?

Don F. 'Tis she.

Man. Why, truly I suspect she has been enticed
to it by a stranger.

Don J. Did you mark that, Frederick?

Fran. Stranger! who?

[town.

Man. A wild gentleman, that's newly come to

Don F. Mark that, too.

Don J. Yes, sir.

Don F. Why do you think so?

Man. I heard her grave conductress twattle
something as they went along, that makes me guess it.

Don J. 'Tis she, Frederick.

Don F. But who that he is, John?

Fran. I do not doubt to bolt them out, for they
must certainly be about the town. Ha! no more
words. Come, let's be gone. [Francisco and Man
seeing Don J. and F. they retire.]

Don F. Well.

Don J. Very well.

Don F. Discreetly.

Don J. Finely carried.

Don F. You have no more of these tricks?

Don J. Ten to one, sir.

I shall meet with them if you have.

Don F. Is this fair? [ble ?

Don J. Was it in you a friend's part to deal doubt I am no ass, Don Frederick.

Don F. And, Don John, It shall appear I am no fool: disgrace me To make yourself thus every woman's courtesey? 'Tis boyish, 'tis base.

Don J. 'Tis false; I privy to this dog-trick! Clear yourself, for I know where the wind sits: Or, as I have a life— [Trampling within.

Don F. No more, they are coming: show no discontent, let's quickly away. If she be at home, our jealousies are over; if not, you and I must have a farther parley, John.

Don J. Yes, Don Frederick, you may be sure we shall. But, where are these fellows? Plague on them, we have lost them too in our spleens, like fools.

Enter DUKE and PETRUCHIO.

Duke. Come, gentlemen, let's go a little faster: Suppose you have all mistresses, and mend Your pace accordingly. [another man.

Don J. Sir, I should be as glad of a mistress as *Don F.* Yes, on my conscience wouldst thou, and of any other man's mistress too, that I'll answer for.

Don J. You'll answer!—Oh! You're a good one! [Exeunt.

SCENE VI.—Antonio's House.

Enter ANTONIO and his Man.

Anto. With all my gold?

Man. The trunk broken open, and all gone!

Anto. And the mother in the plot?

Man. And the mother and all.

Anto. And the devil and all; and all his imps go with them. Belike they thought I was no more of this world, and those trifles would but disturb my conscience.

Man. Sure, they thought, sir, you would not live to disturb them.

Anto. Well, my sweet mistress, I'll try how handsomely your ladyship can caper in the air; there's your master-piece. No imaginations where they should be?

Man. None, sir; yet we have searched all places we suspected; I believe they have taken towards the port.

Anto. Give me then a water-conjurer, one that can raise water-devils! I'll part them—play at duck and drake with my money! Get me a conjurer, I say; inquire out a man that lets out devils.

Man. I don't know where.

Anto. In every street, Tom Fool; any blear-eyed people with red heads and flat noses can perform it. Thou shalt know them by their half gowns and no breeches. Find me out a conjurer, I say, and learn his price, how he will let his devils out by the day. I'll have them again, if they be above ground.

[Exeunt.

SCENE VII.—Street before Don Frederick's Lodging.

Enter DUKE, PETRUCHIO, DON FREDERICK, and DON JOHN.

Petr. Your grace is welcome now to Naples; so you are all, gentlemen.

Don J. Don Frederick, will you step in, and give the lady notice who comes to visit her?

Petr. Bid her make haste; we come to see no stranger—a night-gown will serve her turn.

Don F. I'll tell her what you say, sir. [Exit.

Petr. Now will the sport be to observe her alterations, how, betwixt fear and joy, she will behave herself.

Duke. Dear brother, I must entreat you—

Petr. I conceive your mind, sir; I will not chide her, but like a summer's evening against heat—

Enter DON FREDERICK and PETER.

Don J. How now?

Don F. Not to abuse your patience longer, nor hold you off with tedious circumstances; for you must know—

Don J. What I knew before.

Petr. What?

Duke. Where is she?

Don F. Gone, sir.

Duke. How!

Petr. What did you say, sir?

Don F. Gone; by heaven removed. The woman of the house, too.

Petr. What, that reverend old woman, that tired me with compliments?

Don F. The very same.

Don J. Well, Don Frederick.

Don F. Don John, it is not well: but—

Don J. But what?

Petr. Come!

Don F. This fellow can satisfy I lie not.

Petr. A little after my master was departed, sir, with this gentleman, my fellow and myself being sent on business, as we must think, on purpose—

Don J. Yes, yes, on purpose.

Petr. Hang these circumstances, they always serve to usher in ill ends.

Don J. Gone! now could I eat that rogue, I am so angry. Gone?

Petr. Gone?

Don F. Directly gone, fled, shifted; what would you have me say?

Duke. Well, gentlemen, wrong not my good opinion.

Don F. For your dukedom, sir, I would not be a knave.

Don J. He that is, a rot run in his blood.

Petr. But harkye, gentlemen, are ye sure you had her here? Did you not dream this?

Don J. Have you your nose, sir?

Petr. Yes, sir.

Don J. Then we had her.

Petr. Since you are so short, believe your having her shall suffer more construction.

Don J. Well, sir, let it suffer.

[Turns off peevishly.

Don F. How to convince you, sir, I can't imagine; but my life shall justify my innocence, or fall with it.

Duke. Thus, then—for we may be all abused.

Petr. 'Tis possible.

Duke. Here let's part until to-morrow this time; we to our way to clear this doubt, and you to your's. Pawning our honours then to meet again; when, if she be not found—

Don F. We stand engaged to answer any worthy way we are called to.

Duke. We ask no more.

Petr. To-morrow, certain.

Don J. If we out-live this night, sir.

[Exeunt DUKE and PETRUCHIO.

Don F. Very well, Don John!

Don J. Very ill, Don Frederick!

Don F. We have somewhat now to do

Don J. With all my heart, I love to be doing.

Don F. If she be not found we must fight.

Don J. I am glad on't I have not fought a great while.

Don F. I am glad you are so merry, sir.

Don J. I am sorry you are so dull, sir.

Don F. Here let us part; and if the lady be Not forthcoming,

'Tis this, Don John, shall damp your levity!

[Clapping his hand upon his sword.

Don J. Or this shall tickle up your modesty!

[Éreunt.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Tavern.

Enter Second CONSTANTIA and her Mother.

Mother. Hold, Cons, hold, for goodness, hold! I am in that desertion of spirit, for want of breath, that I am almost reduced to the necessity of not being able to defend myself against the inconvenience of a fall.

2 Con. Dear mother, let us go a little faster, to secure ourselves from Antonio: for my part, I am in that terrible fright, that I can neither think, speak, nor stand still, till we are safe a ship-board, and out of sight of the shore.

Mother. Out of sight of the shore! why, do you think I'll depatriate?

2 Con. Depatriate? what's that?

Mother. Why, you fool, you, leave my country; what, will you never learn to speak out of the vulgar road?

2 Con. Oh lord! this hard word will undo us.

Mother. As I am a Christian, if it were to save my honour (which is ten thousand times dearer to me than life) I would not be guilty of so odious a thought.

2 Con. Pray, mother, since your honour is so dear to you, consider that if we are taken, both it and we should depatriate! There's it; mother, the world does not care a pin, if both you and I were hanged; and that we shall be certainly, if Antonio takes us, for you have run away with his gold.

Mother. Did he not tell you that he kept it in his trunk for us? and had not I a right to take it whenever I pleased? you have lost your reasoning faculty, Cons!

2 Con. Yes, mother, but you was to have it upon a certain condition, which condition I would sooner starve than agree to. I can't help my poverty, but I can keep my honour, and the richest old fellow in the kingdom sha'n't buy it. I'll sooner give it away than sell it; that's my spirit, mother.

Mother. But what will become of me, Cons? I have so indelible an idea of my dignity, that I must have the means to support it; these I have got, and I will ne'er depart from the demarches of a person of quality; and let come what will, I shall rather choose to submit myself to my fate, than strive to prevent it, by any depatriation that is not congruous in every degree to the steps and measures of a strict practitioner of honour.

2 Con. Would not this make one stark mad? your style is no more out of the way, than your manner of reasoning; you first sell me to an ugly old fellow,

then you run away with me and all his gold; and now, like a strict practitioner of honour, resolve to be taken, rather than depatriate, as you call it.

Mother. As I am a Christian, Cons, a tavern, and a very decent sign; I'll in, I am resolved, though by it I should run a risk of never so stupendous a nature!

2 Con. There's no stopping her. What shall I do?

[Aside.

Mother. I'll send for my kinswoman and some music, to revive me a little: for really, Cons, I am reduced to that sad imbecility, by the injury I have done my poor feet, that I am in a great incertitude, whether they will have liveliness sufficient to support me up to the top of the stairs or no.

[Exit Mother.

2 Con. I have a great mind to leave this fantastical mother-in-law of mine, with her stolen goods, take to my heels and seek my fortune; but to whom shall I apply? Generosity and humanity are not to be met with at every corner of the street. If any young fellow would but take a liking to me, and make an honest woman of me, I would make him the best wife in the world: but what a fool am I to talk thus? Young men think of young women now-a-days, as they do of their clothes: it is genteel to have them, to be vain of them, to show them to everybody, and to change them often; when their novelty and fashion is over, they are turned out of doors, to be purchased and worn by the first buyer. A wife, indeed, is not so easily got rid of: it is a suit of mourning, that lies neglected at the bottom of the chest, and only shows itself now and then, upon melancholy occasions. What a terrible prospect! However, I do here swear and vow to live for ever chaste, till I find a young fellow who will take me for better and for worse. La, what a desperate oath have I taken!

Mother. [Looking out of the window.] Come up, Cons, the fiddles are here.

2 Con. I come.—[Mother goes from the window.] I must begone, though whither I cannot tell; these fiddles, and her discreet companions, will quickly make an end of all she has stolen; and then for five hundred new pieces will she sell me to another old fellow, whom I will serve in the same manner. She has taken care not to leave me a farthing; yet I am so, better than under her conduct, 'twill be at worst but begging for my life:

And starving were to me an easier fate,

Than to be forc'd to live with one I hate.

Mother. Come, Cons, make haste.

[Goes up to her Mother.

Enter Don JOHN.

Don J. It will not out of my head, but that Don Frederick has sent away this wench, for all he carries it so quietly; yet methinks he should be honestier than so; but these grave men are never touched upon such occasions. [Music above.] What's here, music and women? the best mixture in the world!—'would I were among them. [Music again, and a woman appears in the balcony.] That's a right one, I know it by her smile. I have an eye that never fails me. [Another lady appears.] Ah, rogue! she's right, too; I'm sure on't; here's a brave parcel of them! [Music still, and dancing.

Mother. Come, come, let's dance in t'other room; 'tis a great deal better.

Don J. Say you so? what, now, if I should go up and dance too? It is a tavern—rot this business! why should a man be hunting upon a cold scent,

when there is so much better sport near at hand? I'll in, I am resolved, and try my own fortune; 'tis hard luck if I don't get one of them.

[*As he goes to the door,*

Enter Second CONSTANTIA.

See, here's one bolted already! Fair lady, whither so fast?

2 Con. I don't know, sir.

Don J. May I have the honour to wait upon you?

2 Con. Yes, if you please, sir.

Don J. Whither?

2 Con. I tell you, I don't know.

Don J. She's very quick. Would I might be so happy as to know you, lady!

2 Con. I dare not let you see my face, sir.

Don J. Why?

2 Con. For fear you should not like it, and then leave me; for, to tell you true, I have, at this present, very great need of you.

Don J. Hast thou? Then I declare myself thy champion: and let me tell thee, there is not a better knight-errant in all Christendom than I am to succour distressed damsels.

2 Con. What a proper, handsome, spirited fellow this is! If he'd love me now as he ought, I would never seek out farther. Sir, I am young, and unexperienced in the world.

Don J. If thou art young, 'tis no great matter what thy face is.

2 Con. Perhaps this freedom in me may seem strange; but, sir, in short, I'm forced to fly from one I hate; will you protect me?

Don J. Yes, that I will, before I see your face; your shape has charmed me enough for that already.

2 Con. But if we should meet him, will you here promise me, he shall not take me from you?

Don J. If any one takes you from me, he shall take my life too; if I love one, I won't keep t'other; they shall go together.

2 Con. For heaven's sake, then, conduct me to some place where I may be secured a while from the sight of any one whatsoever.

Don J. By all the hopes I have to find thy face as lovely as thy shape, I will.

2 Con. Well, sir, I believe you; for you have an honest look.

Don J. An honest look! Zounds! I am afraid Don Frederick has been giving her a character of me too. Come, pray, unveil.

2 Con. Then turn away your face, for I'm resolved you shall not see a bit of mine, till I have set it in order, and then—

Don J. What then?

2 Con. I'll strike you dead.

Don J. A mettled wench, I warrant her! If she be young now, and have but a nose on her face, she'll be as good as her word. Come, my dear, I'm even panting with impatience. Are you ready? [*As he turns slowly round, she gets on the other side.*]

'Sdeath! where is she?

2 Con. Here! stand your ground, if you dare!

Don J. By this light, a rare creature! ten thousand times handsomer than her we seek for! this can be sure no common one: 'pray heaven she be a kind one!

[*Aside.*

2 Con. Well, sir, what say you now?

Don J. Nothing: I'm so amazed, I'm not able to speak. Prythee, my sweet creature, don't let us be talking in the street, but run home with me, that I may have a little private innocent conversation with you.

2 Con. No, sir; no private dealing, I beseech you.

Don J. 'Sheart, what shall I do? I'm out of my wits. Harkye, my dear soul, canst thou love me?

2 Con. If I could, what then?

Don J. Why, then I should be the happiest man alive!

[*Kissing her hand.*

2 Con. Nay, good sir, hold—remember the conditions.

Don J. Conditions! what conditions? I would not wrong thee for the universe!

2 Con. Then you'll promise?

Don J. What, what? I'll promise anything, everything, thou dear, sweet, bewitching, heavenly woman!

2 Con. To make me an honest woman?

Don J. How the devil, my angel, can I do that, if you are undone to my hands?

2 Con. Ay, but I am not; I am a poor innocent lamb, just escaped from the jaws of an old fox.

Don J. Art thou, my pretty lamb? then I'll be thy shepherd, and fold thee in these arms.

[*Kisses her hand.*

2 Con. Ay, but you must not eat the lamb yourself.

Don J. I like you so well, I will do anything for thee, my dear delightful incognita! I love you so much, it is impossible to say how much I love thee! My heart, my mind, and my soul, are transported to such a degree, that—that—that—d—n it, I can't talk; so let us run home, or the old fox, my lamb, will overtake us.

[*They run out.*

SCENE II.—The Street.

Enter Don FREDERICK and FRANCISCO.

Don F. And art thou sure it was Constantia, sayest thou, that he was leading?

Fran. Am I sure I live, sir? Why, I dwelt in the house with her; how can I choose but know her?

Don F. But didst thou see her face?

Fran. Lord, sir, I saw her face as plain as I see yours just now, not two streets off.

Don F. Yes, 'tis even so; I suspected it at first, but then he forswore it with that confidence—Well, Don John, if these be your practices, you shall have no more a friend of me, sir, I assure you. Perhaps, though, he met her by chance, and intends to carry her to her brother, and the duke.

Fran. A little time will show. Gadso, here he is!

Don F. I'll step behind the shop, and observe him.

Enter Don JOHN and Second CONSTANTIA.

Don J. Here, now go in, and let me see who will get you out again without my leave.

2 Con. Remember, you have given your honour.

Don J. And my love—and when they go together, you may always trust them.

Don F. Dear Don John!

[*Don J. puts CON. in, and locks the door.*

Don J. Oh! how do you do, Frederick? D—n him, now will he ask me forty foolish questions, and I have such a mind to talk to this wench, that I cannot think of one excuse for my life!

Don F. Your servant, sir: pray, who's that you locked in just now, at the door?

Don J. Why, a friend of mine, that's gone up to read a book.

Don F. A book! that's a quaint one, i'faith! prythee, Don John, what library hast thou been buying this afternoon? for in the morning, to my knowledge, thou hadst never a book there, except it were an almanack, and that was none of thy own neither.

Don J. No, no, it's a book of his own, he brought along with him: a scholar, that's given to reading.

Don F. And do scholars, Don John, wear petticoats now-a-days?

Don J. Plague on him, he has seen her! Well, Don Frederick, thou knowest I am not good at lying: 'tis a woman, I confess it, make your best on't: what then?

Don F. Why then, Don John, I desire you'll be pleased to let me see her.

Don J. Why, 'faith, Frederick, I should not be against the thing, but you know that a man must keep his word, and she has a mind to be private.

Don F. But, John, you may remember, when I met a lady so before, this very self-same lady too, that I got leave for you to see her, John.

Don J. Why, do you think then, that this here is Constantia?

Don F. I cannot properly say I think it, John, because I know it; this fellow, here, saw her, as you led her in the streets.

Don J. Well, and what then? Who does he say it is?

Don F. Ask him, sir, and he'll tell ye.

Don J. Harkye, friend, dost thou know this lady?

Fran. I think I should, sir; I have lived long enough in the house to know her, sure.

Don J. And how do they call her, pr'ythee?

Fran. Constantia.

Don J. How! Constantia?

Fran. Yes, sir; the woman's name is Constantia, that's flat.

Don J. It is so, sir? and so is this too. *[Strikes him.*

Fran. Oh, oh! *[Runs out.*

Don J. Now, sirrah, you may safely say you have not borne false witness for nothing.

Don F. Fie, Don John, why do you beat the poor fellow for doing his duty, and telling truth?

Don J. Telling truth! thou talkest as if thou hadst been hired to bear false witness too: you are a very fine gentleman!

Don F. What a strange confidence he has! but is there no shame in thee? nor no consideration of what is just or honest, to keep a woman thus against her will, that thou knowest is in love with another man too? Dost think a judgment will not follow this?

Don J. Good, dear Frederick, do thou keep thy sentences and thy sentiments, which are now out of fashion, for some better opportunity; this here is not a fit subject for them: I tell thee, she is no more Constantia than thou art.

Don F. Why won't you let me see her then?

Don J. Because I can't: besides, she's not for thy taste.

Don F. How so?

Don J. Why, thy genius lies another way; thou art all for flames and darts, and those fine things! now I am for pure, plain, simple love, without any embroidery; I am not so curious, Frederick, as thou art.

Don F. Very well, sir; but is there no shame? but is this worthy in you to delude—

Don J. But is there no shame! but is this worthy! What a many butes are here! If I should tell thee now solemnly thou hast but one eye, and give thee reasons for it, wouldst thou believe me

Don F. I think hardly, sir, against my own knowledge.

Don J. Then why dost thou, with that grave face, go about to persuade me against mine? You should do as you would be done by, Frederick.

Don F. And so I will, sir, in this very particular, since there's no other remedy; I shall do that for the Duke and Petruchio, which I should expect from them upon the like occasion: in short, to let you see I am as sensible of my honour, as you can be careless of yours, I must tell you, sir, that I'm resolved to wait upon this lady to them.

Don J. Are you so, sir? Why, I must then, sweet sir, tell you again, I am resolved you sha'n't. Never stare nor wonder! I have promised to preserve her from the sight of any one whatsoever, and with the hazard of my life will make it good; but that you may not think I mean an injury to Petruchio, or the Duke, know, Don Frederick, that though I love a pretty girl perhaps a little better, I hate to do a thing that's base, as much as you do. Once more, upon my honour, this is not Constantia; let that satisfy you.

Don F. All that will not do. *[Goes to the door.*

Don J. No! why, then this shall. *[Draws.]* Come not one step nearer, for if thou dost, by heaven, I'm through you!

Don F. This is an insolence beyond the temper of a man to suffer. Thus, I throw off thy friendship; and since thy folly has provoked my patience beyond its natural bounds, know it is not in thy power now to save thyself.

Don J. That's to be tried, sir, though by your favour. *[Looks up at the balcony.]* Mistress What-d'ye-call-'em, pr'ythee look out now a little, and see how I'll fight for thee.

Don F. Come, sir, are you ready?

Don J. Oh lord, sir, your servant! *[Fight.*

Enter DUKE and PETRUCHIO.

Petr. What's here? fighting! Let's part them. How! Don Frederick against Don John? How came you to fall out, gentlemen? What's the cause?

Don F. Why, sir, it is your quarrel, and not mine, that drew this on me: I saw him lock Constantia up into that house, and I desired to wait upon her to you; that's the cause.

Duke. Oh! it may be, he designed to lay the obligation upon us himself. Sir, we are beholden to you for this favour beyond all possibility of—

[Approaching Don J.]
Don J. Pray, your grace, keep back, and don't throw away your thanks, before you know whether I have deserved them or no. Oh, is that your design? Sir, you must not go in there.

[PETRUCHIO is going to the door.]

Petr. How, sir! not go in?

Don J. No, sir; most certainly not go in.

Petr. She's my sister, and I will speak to her.

Don J. If she were your mother, sir, you should not, though it were but to ask her blessing.

Petr. Since you are so positive, I'll try.

Don J. You shall find me a man of my word, sir.

Duke. Nay, pray, gentlemen, hold; let me compose this matter. Why do you make a scruple of letting us see Constantia?

Don J. Why, sir, 'twould turn a man's head round to hear these fellows talk so: there is not one word true of all that he has said.

Duke. Then you do not know where Constantia is?

Don J. Not I, by heavens!

Don F. Oh, monstrous impudence! Upon my life, sir, I saw him force her up into that house, lock her up, and the key is now in his pocket.

Don J. Now that is two lies; for, first, he did not see her: and next, all force is unnecessary, she is so very willing

Duke. But lookye, sir, this doubt may easily be cleared: let either Petruchio or me but see her, and if she be not Constantia, we engage our honours (though we should know her) never to discover who she is.

Don J. Ay, but there's the point now, that I can never consent to.

Duke. Why?

Don J. Because I gave her my word to the contrary.

Petr. Pish! I won't be kept off thus any longer. Sir, either let me enter, or I'll force my way.

Don F. No, pray, sir, let that be my office: I will be revenged on him, for having betrayed me to his friendship.

[*PETRUCHIO and Don F. offer to fight with Don J.*
Duke. Nay, you shall not offer him foul play, neither. Hold, brother, pray a word; and with you too, sir.

Don J. Harkye, gentlemen, I'll make ye a fair proposition; leave off this ceremony among yourselves, and those dismal threats against me: fillip up, cross or pile, who shall begin first, and I'll do the best I can to entertain you all, one after another.

Enter ANTONIO.

Anto. Now do my fingers itch to be about somebody's ears, for the loss of my gold. Ha! what's here to do? swords drawn! I must make one, though it cost me the singing of ten John Dories more. Courage, brave boy! I'll stand by you as long as this tool here lasts: and it was once a good one.

Petr. Who's this? Antonio! Oh, sir! you are welcome! you shall be even judge between us.

Anto. No, no, no; not I, sir, I thank you: I'll make work for others to judge of, I'm resolved to fight.

Petr. But we won't fight with you.

Anto. Then put up your swords, or by this hand I'll lay about me! [*They put up their swords.*]

Don J. Well said, old Bilboa, i'faith!

Petr. Pray hear us, though: this gentleman saw him lock up my sister into this house, and he refuses to let us see her.

Anto. How, friend, is this true? [*Going to him.*]

Don J. Not so hasty, I beseech you. Lookye, gentlemen, to show you that all are mistaken, and that my formal friend there is an ass—

Don F. I thank you, sir.

Don J. I'll give you my consent, that this gentleman here shall see her, if his information can satisfy you.

Duke. Yes, yes; he knows her very well.

Don J. Then, sir, go in here, if you please: I dare trust him with her, for he is too old to do any mischief. [*ANTONIO goes in.*]

Don F. I wonder how my gentleman will get off from all this?

Don J. I shall be even with you, Don Frederick, another time, for all your grinning. [*Noise within.*] How now! what noise is that?

Enter PETER.

Peter. The gentleman!—

Don J. Where is he?

Peter. He's run out of the back door, sir.

Don J. How so?

Peter. Why, sir, he's run after the gentlewoman you brought in.

Don J. 'Sdeath! how durst you let her out?

Peter. Why, sir, I knew nothing.

Don J. No? thou ignorant rascal! and therefore

I'll beat something into thee. [*Beats him.*] Run after her, you dog, and bring her back, or—

[*PETER runs off.*]

Don F. What, you won't kill him?

Don J. Nay, come not near me, for if thou dost, by heavens, I'll give thee as much! and would do so however, but that I won't lose time from looking after my dear, sweet—a plague confound you all!

[*Goes in, and shuts the door after him.*]

Duke. What, he has shut the door!

Don F. It's no matter: I'll lead you a private back way, by that corner, where we shall meet him.

[*Ereunt.*]

Enter First CONSTANTIA.

1 Con. Oh! whither shall I run to hide myself? the constable has seized the landlady, and, I am afraid, the poor child too. How to return to Don Frederick's house, I know not: and, if I knew, I durst not, after those things the landlady has told me of him. I am faulty, I confess, but greater faults have often met with lighter punishments.

Enter Don JOHN.

Don J. I am almost dead with running, and will be so quite, but I will overtake her.

1 Con. Hold, Don John, hold!

Don J. What's that? ha! is it you, my dear?

1 Con. For heaven's sake, sir, carry me from hence, or I'm utterly undone.

Don J. Phoo, plague, this is the other! now could I almost beat her, for but making me the proposition. Madam, there are some a-coming, that will do it a great deal better: but I am in such haste, that, I vow to gad, madam—

1 Con. Nay, pray, sir, stay; you are concerned in this as well as I; for your woman is taken.

Don J. Ha! my woman! [*Goes back to her.*] I vow to gad, madam, I do so highly honour your ladyship, that I would venture my life, a thousand times, to do you service. But, pray, where is she?

1 Con. Why, sir, she is taken by the constable.

Don J. Constable! Which way went he?

1 Con. I cannot tell; for I ran out into the streets, just as he had seized upon your landlady.

Don J. Plague o' my landlady! I mean the other woman.

1 Con. Other woman, sir! I have seen no other woman, never since I left your house!

Don J. 'Sdeath! what have I been doing here, then, all this while! Madam, your most humble—

1 Con. Good sir, be not so cruel as to leave me in this distress.

Don J. No, no, no; I'm only going a little way, and will be back again presently.

1 Con. But, pray, sir, hear me; I'm in that danger—

Don J. No, no, no; I vow to gad, madam, no danger in the world. Let me alone, I warrant you.

[*Hurries off.*]

1 Con. He's gone! and I a lost, wretched, miserable creature, for ever.

Enter ANTONIO.

Anto. Oh! there she is.

1 Con. Who's this? Antonio! the fiercest enemy I have. [*Runs away.*]

Anto. Are you so nimble-footed, gentlewoman? A plague confound all whores! [*Exit.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A Street.**Enter Mother and Kinswoman.*

Kins. But, madam, be not so angry; perhaps she'll come again.

Mother. Oh! kinswoman, never speak of her more; for she's an odious creature to leave me thus in the lurch. I have given her all her breeding, and instructed her with my own principles of education.

Kins. I protest, madam, I think she's a person that knows as much of all that as—

Mother. Knows, kinswoman! there's ne'er a female in Italy, of thrice her years, knows so much the procedures of a true gallantry, and the infallible principles of an honourable friendship, as she does.

Kins. And, therefore, madam, you ought to love her.

Mother. No, fie upon her! nothing at all, as I am a Christian. When once a person fails in fundamentals, she's at a period with me. Besides, with all her wit, Constantia is but a fool; and calls all the *minauderies* of a *bonne mine*, affectation.

Kins. Bless me, sweet goodness! But, pray, madam, how came Constantia to fall out with your ladyship? Did she take anything ill of you?

Mother. As I am a Christian, I can't resolve you, unless it were that I led the dance first: but for that she must excuse me; I know she dances well, but there are others, who, perhaps, understand the right swim of it as well as she—

Enter Don FREDERICK.

And, though I love Constantia—

Don F. How's this? Constantia!

Mother. I know no reason why I should be debarred the privilege of shewing my own geno too sometimes.

Don F. If I am not mistaken, that other woman is she, Don John and I were directed to, when we came first to town, to bring us acquainted with Constantia. I'll try to get some intelligence from her. Pray, lady, have I never seen you before?

Kins. Yes, sir, I think you have, with another stranger, a friend of yours, one day, as I was coming out of the church.

Don F. I'm right then. And, pray, who were you talking of?

Mother. Why, sir, of an inconsiderate, inconsiderable person, that has at once both forfeited the honour of my concern, and the concern of her own honour.

Don F. Very fine, indeed! and is all this intended for the beautiful Constantia?

Mother. Oh! fie upon her, sir, an odious creature, as I'm a Christian, no beauty at all.

Don F. Why, does not your ladyship think her handsome?

Mother. Seriously, sir, I don't think she's ugly; but, as I am a Christian, my position is, that no true beauty can be lodged in that creature, who is not, in some measure, buoyed up with a just sense of what is incumbent to the devoir of a person of quality.

Don F. That position, madam, is a little severe; but however she has been incumbent formerly, as your ladyship is pleased to say, now that she's mar-

ried, and her husband owns the child, she is sufficiently justified for what she has done.

Mother. Sir, I must, blushing, beg leave to say, you are in an error. I know there has been the passion of love between them, but with a temperament so innocent and so refined, as it did impose a negative upon the very possibility of her being with child. No, sir; I assure you my daughter Constantia has never had a child. A child! Ha, ha, ha! Oh, goodness, save us, a child!

Don F. Well, madam, I shall not dispute this with you any farther; but give me leave to wait upon your daughter; for her friend, I assure you, is in great impatience to see her.

Mother. Friend, sir! I know none she has. I'm sure she loaths the very sight of him.

Don F. Of whom?

Mother. Why, of Antonio, sir; he that you were pleased to say—ha, ha, ha!

Don F. I tell you I do not know Antonio, nor never named him to you. I told you, that the Duke has owned Constantia for his wife, and that her brother and he are friends, and are now both in search after her.

Mother. Then, as I'm a Christian, I suspect we have both been equally involved in the misfortune of a mistake. Sir, I am in the dernier confusion to avow, that, though my daughter, Constantia, has been liable to several addresses, yet she had never the honour to be produced to his grace.

Don F. So, now the thing is out, and I'm a d—d rogue for what I did to Don John; for, on my conscience, this is that Constantia the fellow told me of! I'll make him amends, whate'er it cost me. Lady, you must give me leave not to part with you, till you meet with your daughter, for some reasons I shall tell you hereafter.

Mother. Sir, I am so highly your *obligée* for the manner of your enquiries, and you have grounded your determinations upon so just a basis, that I shall not be ashamed to own myself a votary to all your commands. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*A Street.**Enter Second CONSTANTIA.*

2 *Con.* So, thanks to my youth and my heels, I am once more free from Antonio! What an escape! and yet, what a misfortune! I have no great reason to rejoice—for, though I have got clear from the old fellow, I have lost the young one too. I did not wish to outrun them both; but whither to go now? that's the question—I wish my spirited young Spaniard were here to answer it; but that this wild spark, whom I liked so well, and who swore he liked me, should send that old piece of mischief to distress me, and drive me out of the house, puzzles me exceedingly! I wish I could see him once more, to explain this matter to me. May I never be married if he is not coming this way! Should he prove false, my poor heart will have a terrible time of it. Now for the proof— [*Walks aside.*]

Enter Don JOHN, holding PETER.

Don J. Did you run after her, as I ordered you, sirrah!

Peter. Like any greyhound, sir.

Don J. And have you found her, rascal?

Peter. Not quite, sir.

Don J. Not quite, sir! You are drunk, fellow!

Peter. A little, sir; I run the better for it.

Don J. Have you seen her? speak quickly, or speak no more. [*Shaking him.*]

Petr Yes, yes, I have seen her.

Don J. Where? where?

Peter. There! there!

Don J. Where's there, sirrah?

Peter. There where I saw her—in the street.

Don J. Did you overtake her?

Peter. I was overtaken myself, sir, and—hic—fell down.

Don J. Then she is gone! irrecoverably gone! and I shall run distracted! [*Second Constantia taps him on the shoulder; he turns, and they gaze on each other.*] Heigho!

Peter. Never was so near death in all my life!

[*Exit.*]

Don J. Oh! my dear soul, take pity on me, and give me comfort; for I'm e'en dead for want of thee.

2 Con. Oh! you're a fine gentleman, indeed, to shut me up in your house, and send another man to me.

Don J. Pray, hear me.

2 Con. No, I will never hear you more, after such an injury; what would you have done, if I had been kind to you, that you could use me thus before?

Don J. By my troth, that's shrewdly urged.

2 Con. Besides, you basely broke your word.

Don J. But will you hear nothing? nor did you hear nothing? I had three men upon me at once, and had I not consented to let that old fellow up, who came to my rescue, they had all broken in whether I would or no.

2 Con. It may be so; for I remember I heard a noise; but suppose it was not so, what then? why, then I'll love him, however. Harkye, sir, I ought now to use you very scurvily; but I can't find in my heart to do so.

Don J. Then heaven's blessing on thy heart for it!

2 Con. But a—

Don J. What?

2 Con. I would fain know—

Don J. What, what? I'll tell thee anything, everything.

2 Con. I would fain know, whether you can be kind to me.

Don J. Look in your glass, my charmer, and answer for me.

2 Con. You think me very vain.

Don J. I think you devilish handsome.

2 Con. I shall find you a rogue at last.

Don J. Then you shall hang me for a fool; take your garters, and do it now, if you will. [*Sighing.*]

2 Con. You are no fool.

Don J. Oh, yes, a loving fool.

2 Con. Will you love me for ever?

Don J. I'll be bound to you for ever; you can't desire better security.

2 Con. I have better security.

Don J. What's that, my angel?

2 Con. The tenderest affection for you now, and the kindest behaviour to you, for evermore.

Don J. And I, upon my knees, will swear, that, that—what shall I swear?

2 Con. Nay, use what words you please, so they be not hearty.

Don J. I swear, then, by thy fair self, that looks so like a deity, and art the only thing I now can think of, that I'll adore you to my dying day.

2 Con. And here I vow, the minute thou dost leave me, I'll leave the world—that's, kill myself.

Don J. Oh! my dear heavenly creature, we'll

love as long as we live, and then we'll die together; and there's an end of both of us. But who is this my old friend has got there?

Enter First CONSTANTIA and ANTONIO, who seizes her.

Anto. Oh! have I caught you, gentlewoman, at last? Come, give me my gold.

1 Con. I hope he takes me for another; I won't answer, for I had rather you should take me for any one, than who I am. [the hand?]

Don J. Pray, sir, who is that you have there by *Anto.* A person of honour, that has broken open my trunks, and run away with all my gold; yet, I'll hold ten pounds I'll have it whipped out of her again.

2 Con. Done, I'll hold you ten pounds of that now.

Anto. Ha! by my troth, you have reason; and, lady, I ask your pardon; but I'll have it whipped out of you, then gossip. [Going to her.]

Don J. Hold, sir, you must not meddle with my goods. [Stopping him.]

Anto. Your goods! how came she to be yours? I'm sure I bought her of her mother for five hundred good pieces in gold.

Don J. Ay, sir, but that bargain won't hold good in our court; besides, sir, as I told you before, she's mine, Don.

Anto. Yours, sir! by what right?

Don J. The right of possession, sir; the law of love, and consent of the parties.

Anto. And is this so, young lady?

2 Con. Yes, young gentleman, it is. You purchase me! And could you imagine, you old fool you, that I would take up with you, while there was a young fellow to be had for love or money! Purchase yourself a little wit, and a great deal of flannel, against the cold weather, or, on my word, you'll make a melancholy figure. Ha, ha, ha!

Don J. He does make a melancholy figure! ha, ha! you had better let her alone, Don; why, she's too hard for me—

Anto. Indeed, I think so. But, pray, sir, by your leave, I hope you will allow me the speech of one word to your goods here, as you call her; 'tis but a small request.

Don J. Ay, sir, with all my heart—how, Constantia! Madam, now you have seen that lady, I hope you will pardon the haste you met me in a little while ago; if I committed a fault, you must thank her for it.

1 Con. Sir, I do know too well the power of love, by my own experience, not to pardon all the effects of it in another.

Anto. Well, then, I'll promise you, if you will but help me to recover my gold again, that I'll never trouble you more.

2 Con. A match; and 'tis the best that you and I could ever make.

Don J. Pray, madam, fear nothing; by my love, I'll stand by you, and see that your brother shall do you no harm.

2 Con. Harkye, sir, a word; how dare you talk of love to any lady but me, sir?

Don J. By my troth, that was a fault, but I meant it only civilly.

2 Con. Ay, but if you are so very civil a gentleman, we shall not be long friends: I scorn to share your love with any one whatsoever; and, for my part, I'm resolved to have either all or none.

Don J. Well, well, my dear little covetous rogue, thou shalt have it all—thus I sign and seal—[*Kisses*]

her hand.] and transfer all my stock of love to thee, for ever and for ever.

2 Con. I accept it, in the warmest spirit of love and gratitude.

Enter DON FREDERICK and Mother.

Don F. Come, now, madam, let us not speak one word more, but go quietly about our business; not but that I think it the greatest pleasure in the world to hear you talk, but—

Mother. Do you, indeed, sir? I swear then, good wits jump, sir; for I have thought so myself a very great while.

Don F. You have all the reason imaginable. Oh, Don John, I ask thy pardon! but I hope I shall make thee amends, for I have found out the mother, and she has promised to help thee to thy mistress again.

Don J. Sir, you may save your labour; the business is done, and I am fully satisfied.

Don F. And dost thou know who she is?

Don J. No, 'faith, I never asked her name.

Don F. Why, then, I'll make thee more satisfied; this lady, here, is that very Constantia—

Don J. Ha! thou hast not a mind to be knocked o'er the pate too, hast thou?

Don F. No, sir; nor dare you do it neither; but, for certain, this is that very self-same Constantia that thou and I so long looked after.

Don J. I thought she was something more than ordinary: but shall I tell thee now a stranger thing than all this?

Don F. What's that?

Don J. Why, I will never more think of any other woman, for her sake.

Don F. That, indeed, is strange; but you are much altered, John: it was but this morning that women were such hypocrites that you would not trust a single mother's daughter of them.

Don J. Ay, but when things are at the worst, they'll mend; example does everything, Frederick, and the fair sex will certainly grow better whenever the greatest is the best woman in the kingdom; that's what I trust to.

Don F. Well parried, John!

Don J. See here, Frederick! the lost jewel is found.

[Showing First Constantia.

Don F. Madam, I am heartily glad to meet your ladyship here; we have been in very great disorder since we saw you.

2 Con. Come, mother, deliver your purse; I have delivered myself up to this young fellow, and the bargain's made with that old fellow; so he may have his gold again, that all shall be well.

Mother. As I am a Christian, sir, I took it away, only to have the honour of restoring it again; for my hard fate having not bestowed upon me a fund

which might capacitate me to make you presents, I had no way left for the exercise of my generosity but by putting myself into a condition of giving back what was yours.

Anto. A very generous design, indeed! So now I'll e'en turn a sober person, and leave off this wenching and this fighting, for I begin to find it does not agree with me.

Don J. What's here? Our landlady and the child again!

Enter PETRUCHIO and Landlady, with the Child.

Petr. Yes, we met her going to be whipped, in a drunken constable's hands that took her for another.

Don J. Why, then, pray let her e'en be taken, and whipped for herself, for, on my word, she deserves it.

Land. Yes, I'm sure of your good word at any time.

1 Con. Harkye, dear landlady!

Land. Oh, sweet goodness! is it you? I have been in such a pack of troubles since I saw you; they took me, and they tumbled me, and they hauled me, and they pulled me, and they called me painted Jezebel, and the poor little babe here did so take on!

Enter DUKE.

Come hither, my lord, come hither: here is Constantia!

1 Con. Yonder's my brother!

Duke. No, madam, there is no danger

1 Con. Were there a thousand dangers in those arms, I would run thus to meet them.

Duke. O, my dear! it were not safe that any should be here at present; for now my heart is so overpressed with joy, that I should scarce be able to defend thee.

Petr. Sister, I'm so ashamed of all my faults which my mistake has made me guilty of, that I know not how to ask your pardon for them.

1 Con. No, brother, the fault was mine, in mistaking you so much as not to impart the whole truth to you at first; but, having begun my love without your consent, I never durst acquaint you with the progress of it.

Duke. Come, let the consummation of our present joys blot out the memory of all these past mistakes.

Don J. And when shall we consummate our joys?

2 Con. ————Never:

We'll find out ways to make them last for ever.

Don J. A match, my girl!—Come, let us all away,

And celebrate THE CHANCES of this day;
My former vanities are past and gone,
And now I fix to happiness and one:
Change the wild wanton, for the sober plan,
And, like my friend become a modest man.

THE CLANDESTINE MARRIAGE;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS;

BY G. COLMAN AND D. GARRICK.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LORD OGLEBY
SIR JOHN MELVIL
STERLING
LOVEWELL
SERGEANT FLOWER
TRAVERSE
TRUEMAN
CANTON
BRUSH
Servants.

MRS. HEIDELBERG
MISS STERLING
FANNY
BETTY
Chambermaid
TRUSTY.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Room in Sterling's House.

Enter Miss FANNY, and BETTY meeting

Bet. [Running in.] Ma'am! Miss Fanny! ma'am!

Fan. What's the matter, Betty?

Bet. Oh la! Ma'am! as sure as I am alive, here is your husband: I saw him crossing the court-yard in his boots.

Fan. I am glad to hear it. But pray now, my dear Betty, be cautious. Don't mention that word again on any account. You know we have agreed never to drop any expressions of that sort, for fear of an accident.

Bet. Dear, ma'am, you may depend upon me. There is not a more trustier creature on the face of the earth than I am: though I say it, I am as secret as the grave; and if it is never told till I tell it, it may remain untold till doomsday for Betty.

Fan. I know you are faithful; but in our circumstances we cannot be too careful.

Bet. Very true, ma'am; and yet I vow and protest there's more plague than pleasure with a secret;

especially if a body mayn't mention it to four or five of one's particular acquaintance.

Fan. Do but keep this secret a little while longer, and then I hope you may mention it to anybody. Mr. Lovewell will acquaint the family with the nature of our situation as soon as possible.

Bet. The sooner the better, I believe; for if he does not tell it, there's a little tell-tale, I know of, will come and tell it for him.

Fan. Fie, Betty!

Bet. Ah! you may well blush. But you're not so sick, and so pale, and so wan, and so many qualms—

Fan. Have done! I shall be quite angry with you.

Bet. Angry! Bless the dear puppet! I am sure I shall love it as much as if it was my own. I meant no harm, heaven knows.

Fan. Well, say no more of this; it makes me uneasy.—All I have to ask of you is, to be faithful and secret, and not to reveal this matter till we disclose it to the family ourselves.

Bet. Me reveal it! If I say a word, I wish I may be burned. I would not do you any harm for the world; and as for Mr. Lovewell, I am sure I have loved the dear gentleman ever since he got a tide-waiter's place for my brother. But let me tell you both, you must leave off your soft looks to each other, and your whispers, and your glances, and your always sitting next to one another at dinner, and your long walks together in the evening. For my part, if I had not been in the secret, I should have known you were a pair of lovers at least, if not man and wife, as—

Fan. See there now again! Pray be careful.

Bet. Well, well; nobody hears me. Man and wife—I'll say no more.—What I tell you is very true, for all that.

Love. [Within.] William!

Bet. Hark! I hear your husband—

Fan. What!

Bet. I say here comes Mr. Lovewell. Mind the caution I gave you: I'll be whipped now if you are not the first person he sees or speaks to in the family. However, if you choose it, it's nothing at all to me: as you sow, so you must reap; as you brew, so you must bake. I'll e'en slip down the back stairs, and leave you together. *[Exit.]*

Fan. I see, I see, I shall never have a moment's

ease till our marriage is made public. New distresses crowd in upon me every day. The solicitude of my mind sinks my spirits, preys upon my health, and destroys every comfort of my life. It shall be revealed, let what will be the consequence.

Enter LOVEWELL.

Love. My love! How's this? In tears? Indeed this is too much. You promised me to support your spirits, and to wait the determination of our fortune with patience. For my sake, for your own, be comforted. Why will you study to add to our uneasiness and perplexity.

Fan. Oh, Mr. Lovewell! the indelicacy of a secret marriage grows every day more and more shocking to me. I walk about the house like a guilty wretch: I imagine myself the object of the suspicion of the whole family, and am under the perpetual terrors of a shameful detection.

Love. Indeed, indeed, you are to blame. The amiable delicacy of your temper, and your quick sensibility, only serve to make you unhappy. To clear up this affair properly to Mr. Sterling, is the continual employment of my thoughts. Everything now is in a fair train. It begins to grow ripe for a discovery; and I have no doubt of its concluding to the satisfaction of ourselves, of your father, and the whole family.

Fan. End how it will, I am resolv'd it shall end soon—very soon. I would not live another week in this agony of mind to be mistress of the universe.

Love. Do not be too violent neither. Do not let us disturb the joy of your sister's marriage with the tumult this matter may occasion. I have brought letters from Lord Ogleby and Sir John Melvil to Mr. Sterling. They will be here this evening; and, I dare say, within this hour.

Fan. I am sorry for it.

Love. Why so?

Fan. No matter: only let us disclose our marriage immediately.

Love. As soon as possible

Fan. But directly.

Love. In a few days you may depend on it.

Fan. To-night; or to-morrow morning.

Love. That, I fear, will be impracticable.

Fan. Nay, but you must.

Love. Must! Why?

Fan. Indeed you must: I have the most alarming reasons for it.

Love. Alarming, indeed! for they alarm me, even before I am acquainted with them. What are they?

Fan. I cannot tell you.

Love. Not tell me?

Fan. Not at present. When all is settled, you shall be acquainted with everything.

Love. Sorry they are coming! Must be discovered! What can this mean? Is it possible you can have any reasons that need be concealed from me?

Fan. Do not disturb yourself with conjectures; but rest assur'd, that though you are unable to divine the cause, the consequence of a discovery, be it what it will, cannot be attended with half the miseries of the present interval.

Love. You put me upon the rack: I would do anything to make you easy; but you know your father's temper. Money (you will excuse my frankness) is the spring of all his actions, which nothing but the idea of acquiring nobility or magnificence, can ever make him forego; and these he thinks his money will purchase. You know, too, your aunt's,

ACT. DRAMA.—NOS. 87 & 88.

Mrs. Heidelberg's, notions of the splendour of high life; her contempt for everything that does not relish of what she calls quality; and that from the vast fortune in her hands, left her by her late husband, she absolutely governs Mr. Sterling and the whole family. Now if they should come to the knowledge of this affair too abruptly, they might perhaps be incensed beyond all hopes of reconciliation.

Fan. Manage it your own way. I am persuaded.

Love. But in the meantime make yourself easy.

Fan. As easy as I can, I will. We had better not remain together any longer at present.

Enter STERLING.

Ster. Hey-day! who have we got here?

Fan. [Confused.] Mr. Lovewell, sir.

Ster. And where are you going, hussy?

Fan. To my sister's chamber, sir. [Exit.

Ster. Ah, Lovewell! What! always getting my foolish girl yonder into a corner? Well, well, let us but once see her eldest sister fast married to Sir John Melvil, we'll soon provide a good husband for Fanny, I warrant you.

Love. Would to heaven, sir, you would provide her one of my recommendation.

Ster. Yourself, eh, Lovewell?

Love. With your pleasure, sir.

Ster. Mighty well!

Love. And I flatter myself, that such a proposal would not be very disagreeable to Miss Fanny.

Ster. Better and better!

Love. And if I could but obtain your consent, sir—

Ster. What! You marry Fanny? No, no; that will never do, Lovewell. You're a good boy, to be sure: I have a great value for you; but can't think of you for a son-in-law. There's no stuff in the case—no money, Lovewell.

Love. My pretensions to fortune, indeed, are but moderate; but though not equal to splendour, sufficient to keep us above distress,—add to which, that I hope by diligence to increase it, and have love, honour—

Ster. But not the stuff, Lovewell. Add one little round 0 to the sum total of your fortune, and that will be the finest thing you can say to me. You know I've a regard for you—would do anything to serve you—anything on the footing of friendship; but—

Love. If you think me worthy of your friendship, sir, be assured that there is no instance in which I should rate your friendship so highly.

Ster. Psha! psha! that's another thing, you know. Where money or interest is concerned, friendship is quite out of the question.

Love. But where the happiness of a daughter is at stake, you would not scruple, sure, to sacrifice a little to her inclinations.

Ster. Inclinations! why you would persuade me that the girl is in love with you, eh, Lovewell?

Love. I cannot absolutely answer for Miss Fanny, sir; but am sure that the chief happiness or misery of my life depends entirely upon her.

Ster. Why, indeed, now, if your kinsman, Lord Ogleby, would come down handsomely for you—but that's impossible—No, no—'twill never do. I must hear no more of this. Come, Lovewell, promise me that I shall hear no more of this.

Love. [Hesitating.] I am afraid, sir, I should not be able to keep my word with you, if I did promise.

Ster. Why, you would not offer to marry her without my consent! would you, Lovewell?

3 T

Love. Marry her, sir!

[*Confused.*]

Ster. Ay, marry her, sir! I know very well, that a warm speech or two from such a dangerous young spark as you are, would go much further towards persuading a silly girl to do what she has more than a month's mind to do, than twenty grave lectures from fathers, or mothers, or uncles, or aunts, to prevent her. But you would not, sure, be such a base fellow, such a treacherous young rogue, as to seduce my daughter's affections, and destroy the peace of my family in that manner. I must insist on it, that you give me your word not to marry her without my consent.

Love. Sir—I—I—as to that—I—I—beg, sir,—Pray, sir, excuse me on this subject at present.

Ster. Promise, then, that you will carry this matter no further without my approbation.

Love. You may depend on it, sir, that it shall go no further.

Ster. Well, well, that's enough. I'll take care of the rest, I warrant you. Come, come, let's have done with this nonsense! What's doing in town? Any news upon 'Change?

Love. Nothing material.

Ster. Have you seen the currants, the soap, and Madeira, safe in the warehouse? Have you compared the goods with the invoice, and bills of lading, and are they all right?

Love. They are, sir.

Ster. And how are stocks?

Love. Fell one and a half this morning.

Ster. Well, well; some good news from America, and they'll be up again. But how are Lord Ogleby and Sir John Melvil? When are we to expect them?

Love. Very soon, sir. I came on purpose to bring you their commands. Here are letters from both of them.

[*Giving letters.*]

Ster. Let me see; let me see. 'Slife! how his lordship's letter is perfumed! It takes my breath away. [*Opening it.*] And French paper too!—with a slippery gloss on it that dazzles one's eyes. "*My dear Mr. Sterling*"—[*Reading.*]*—*Mercy on me! his lordship writes a worse hand than a boy at his exercise.—But how's this? Eh! "*With you to-night—Lawyers to-morrow morning.*"—To-night! That's sudden indeed. Where's my sister Heidelberg? She should know of this immediately. Here, John! Harry! Thomas! [*Calls the Servants.*] Harkye, Lovewell!

Love. Sir.

Ster. Mind, now, now I'll entertain his lordship and Sir John. We'll show your fellows at the other end of the town how we live in the city. They shall eat gold, and drink gold, and lie in gold. Here, cook! butler! [*Calling.*] What signifies your birth, and education, and title? Money, money! that's the stuff that makes the great man in this country.

Love. Very true, sir.

Ster. True, sir! Why then have done with your nonsense of love and matrimony. You're not rich enough to think of a wife yet. A man of business should mind nothing but his business. Where are these fellows? John! Thomas! [*Calling.*] Get an estate, and a wife will follow of course.—Ah! Lovewell! an English merchant is the most respectable character in the universe. 'Slife! man, a rich English merchant may make himself a match for the daughter of a nabob. Where are all my rascals? Here, William!

[*Exit calling.*]

Love. So; as I suspected: quite averse to the match, and likely to receive the news of it with

great displeasure. What's best to be done? Let me see. Suppose I get Sir John Melvil to interest himself in this affair. He may mention it to Lord Ogleby with a better grace than I can, and more probably prevail on him to interfere in it. I can open my mind also more freely to Sir John. He told me, when I left him in town, that he had something of consequence to communicate, and that I could be of use to him. I am glad of it: for the confidence he reposes in me, and the service I may do him, will ensure me his good offices. Poor Fanny! it hurts me to see her so uneasy, and her making a mystery of the cause adds to my anxiety. Something must be done upon her account; for, at all events, her solicitude shall be removed. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—Miss Sterling's Dressing-room.

MISS STERLING and FANNY discovered.

Miss S. O, my dear sister, say no more. This is downright hypocrisy. You shall never convince me that you don't envy me beyond measure. Well, after all, it is extremely natural. It is impossible to be angry with you.

Fan. Indeed, sister, you have no cause.

Miss S. And you really pretend not to envy me?

Fan. Not in the least.

Miss S. And you don't in the least wish that you was just in my situation?

Fan. No, indeed, I don't. Why should I?

Miss S. Why should you? What! on the brink of marriage, fortune, title! But I had forgot: there's that dear, sweet creature, Mr. Lovewell, in the case. You would not break your faith with your true-love now for the world, I warrant you.

Fan. Mr. Lovewell! always Mr. Lovewell! Lord! what signifies Mr. Lovewell, sister?

Miss S. Pretty, peevish soul! O, my dear, grave, romantic sister! a perfect philosopher in petticoats! Love, and a cottage! eh, Fanny! Ah, give me indifference and a coach and six!

Fan. And why not a coach and six without the indifference? But pray, when is this happy marriage of your's to be celebrated? I long to give you joy.

Miss S. In a day or two: I cannot tell exactly. Oh, my dear sister! I must mortify her a little. [*Aside.*] I know you have a pretty taste. Pray, give me your opinion of my jewels. How do you like the style of this esclavage.

[*Shewing jewels.*]

Fan. Extremely handsome, and well fancied.

Miss S. What d'ye think of these bracelets? I shall have a miniature of my father set round with diamonds to one, and Sir John's to the other; and this pair of ear-rings, set transparent. Here, the tops, you see, will take off, to wear in a morning, or in an undress: how d'ye like them?

Fan. Very much, I assure you. Bless me, sister! you have a prodigious quantity of jewels: you'll b. the very queen of diamonds.

Miss S. Ha, ha, ha! very well, my dear! I shall be as fine as a little queen indeed. I have a bouquet to come home to-morrow, made up of diamonds, and rubies, and emeralds, and topazes, and amethysts; jewels of all colours, green, red, blue, yellow, intermixed; the prettiest thing you ever saw in your life! The jeweller says I shall set out with as many diamonds as anybody in town, except Lady Brilliant, and Polly What-d'ye-call-it, Lord Squander's kept mistress.

Fan. But what are your wedding-clothes, sister?

Miss S. O, white and silver, to be sure, you know. I bought them at Sir Joseph Lutestring's, and sat above an hour in the parlour behind the shop, consulting Lady Lutestring about gold and silver stuffs, on purpose to mortify her.

Fan. Fie, sister! how could you be so abominably provoking?

Miss S. Oh, I have no patience with the pride of your city-knights' ladies. Did you ever observe the airs of Lady Lutestring, dressed in the richest brocade out of her husband's shop, playing crown whist at Haberdashers'-hall; whilst the civil smirking Sir Joseph, with a snug wig trimmed round his broad face as close as a new cut yew hedge, and his shoes so black that they shine again, stands all day in his shop, fastened to his counter like a bad shilling?

Fan. Indeed, indeed, sister, this is too much. If you talk at this rate, you will be absolutely a by-word in the city. You must never venture on the inside of Temple-bar again.

Miss S. Never do I desire it: never, my dear Fanny, I promise you. Oh, how I long to be transported to the dear regions of Grosvenor-square! far, far from the dull districts of Aldersgate, Cheap, Candlewick, and Farringdon Without and Within! My heart goes pit-a-pat at the very idea of being introduced at court. Gilt chariot! pieballed horses! laced liveries! and then the whispers buzzing round the circle—"Who is that young lady? Who is she?" "Lady Melvil, ma'am!"—Lady Melvil! my ears tingle at the sound. And then at dinner, instead of my father perpetually asking, "Any news upon 'Change?" to cry, "Well, Sir John! anything new from Arthur's?" or to say to some other woman of quality, "Was your ladyship at the Duchess of Rubber's last night? Did you call at Lady Thunder's? In the immensity of crowd, I swear I did not see you. Scarce a soul at the Opera last Saturday. Shall I see you at Carlisle-house next Thursday?" Oh, the dear beau monde! I was born to move in the sphere of the great world.

Fan. And so, in the midst of all this happiness, you have no compassion for me; no pity for us poor mortals in common life.

Miss S. [*Affectedly.*] You? You're above pity. You would not change conditions with me. You're over head and ears in love, you know. Nay, for that matter, if Mr. Lovewell and you come together, as I doubt not you will, you will live very comfortably, I dare say. He will mind his business; you'll employ yourself in the delightful care of your family; and once in a season, perhaps, you'll sit together in a front box at a benefit play, as we used to do at our dancing-master's, you know; and perhaps I may meet you in the summer, with some other citizens, at Tunbridge. For my part, I shall always entertain a proper regard for my relations. You sha'n't want my countenance, I assure you.

Fan. Oh, you're too kind, sister!

Enter Mrs. HEIDELBERG.

Mrs. H. Here this evening! I vow and pertest we shall scarce have time to provide for them. Oh, my dear! [*To Miss STERLING.*] I am glad to see you're not quite in a dish-abbille. Lord Ogleby and Sir John Melvil will be here to-night.

Miss S. To-night, ma'am?

Mrs. H. Yes, my dear; to-night. Oh, put on a smarter cap, and change those ordinary ruffles. Lord! I have such a deal to do, I shall scarce have time to slip on my Italian lutestring. Where is this dawdle of a housekeeper?

Enter TRUSTY.

Oh, here, Trusty! do you know that people of quality are expected here this evening?

Trus. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. H. Well; do you be sure now that everything is done in the most genteel manner, and to the honour of the family.

Trus. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. H. Well, but mind what I say to you.

Trus. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. H. His lordship is to lie in the chintz bed-chamber; d'ye hear? and Sir John in the blue damask-room: his lordship's valet-de-chamb in the opposite.

Trus. But Mr. Lovewell is come down; and you know that's his room, ma'am.

Mrs. H. Well, well; Mr. Lovewell may make shift, or get a bed at the George. But harkye, Trusty.

Trus. Ma'am

Mrs. H. Get the great dining-room in order as soon as possible. Unpaper the curtains, take the kivers off the couch and the chairs; and, do you hear? take the China dolls out of my closet, and put them on the mantelpiece immediately.

Trus. Yes, ma'am.

[*Going.*]

Mrs. H. And mind, as soon as his lordship comes in, be sure you set all their heads a-nodding.

Trus. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. H. Be gone, then! fly, this instant! Where's my brother, Sterling?

Trus. Talking to the butler, ma'am.

Mrs. H. Very well. [*Exit TRUSTY.*] Miss Fanny, I pertest I did not see you before. Lord, child! what's the matter with you?

Fan. With me? nothing, ma'am.

Mrs. H. Bless me! why your face is as pale, and black, and yellow—of fifty colours, I vow and pertest. And then you have drest yourself as loose and as big! I declare, there is not such a thing to be seen now, as a young woman with a fine waist. You all make yourselves as round as Mrs. Deputy Barter. Go, child! You know the quality will be here by-and-by. Go, and make yourself a little more fit to be seen. [*Exit FANNY.*] She is gone away in tears; absolutely crying, I vow and pertest. This ridiculous love! we must put a stop to it. It makes a perfect natural of the girl.

Miss S. Poor soul! she can't help it. [*Affectedly.*]

Mrs. H. Well, my dear; now I shall have an opportunity of convincing you of the absurdity of what you was telling me concerning Sir John Melvil's behaviour to you.

Miss S. Oh, it gives me no manner of uneasiness. But indeed, ma'am, I cannot be persuaded but that Sir John is an extremely cold lover. Such distant civility, grave looks, and lukewarm professions of esteem for me and the whole family. I have heard of flames and darts, but Sir John's is a passion of mere ice and snow.

Mrs. H. Oh, fie, my dear; I am perfectly ashamed of you. That's so like the notions of your poor sister. What you complain of as coldness and indifference, is nothing but the extreme gentility of his address; an exact picture of the manners of quality.

Miss S. O, he is the very mirror of complaisance; full of formal bows and set speeches. I declare, if there was any violent passion on my side, I should be quite jealous of him.

Mrs. H. Jealous! I say jealous, indeed. Jealous of who, pray?

Miss S. My sister Fanny. She seems a much greater favourite than I am; and he pays her infinitely more attention, I assure you.

Mrs. H. Lord! d'ye think a man of fashion, as he is, cannot distinguish between the genteel and the vulgar part of the family? Between you and your sister, for instance; or me and my brother? Be advised by me, child. It is all purliteness and good-breeding. Nobody knows the quality better than I do.

Miss S. In my mind, the old lord, his uncle, has ten times more gallantry about him than Sir John. He is full of attentions to the ladies, and smiles, and grins, and leers, and ogles, and fills every wrinkle of his old wizen face with comical expressions of tenderness. I think he would make an admirable sweetheart.

Enter STERLING.

Ster. No fish? Why, the pond was dragged but yesterday morning; there's carp and tench in the boat. Plague on't! if that dog, Lovewell, had any thought, he would have brought down a turbot, or some of the land-carriage mackerel.

Mrs. H. Lord, brother! I am afraid his lordship and Sir John will not arrive while it is light.

Ster. I warrant you. But pray, sister Heidelberg, let the turtle be dressed to-morrow, and some venison; and let the gardener cut some pine-apples, and get out some ice. I'll answer for wine, I warrant you. I'll give them such a glass of champagne as they never drank in their lives; no, not at a duke's table.

Mrs. H. Pray, now, brother, mind how you behave. I am always in a fright about you with people of quality. Take care that you don't fall asleep directly after supper, as you commonly do. Take a good deal of snuff, and that will keep you awake. And don't burst out with your horrible loud horse-laughs. It is monstrous vulgar.

Ster. Never fear, sister. Who have we here?

Mrs. H. It is Mons. Cantoon, the Swiss gentleman that lives with his lordship, I vow and pertest.

Enter CANTON.

Ster. Ah, mounseer! your servant. I am very glad to see you, mounseer.

Can. Mosh oblige to Mons. Sterling. Ma'am, I am yours: Matemoiselle, I am your— [*Bowing round.*]

Mrs. H. Your humble servant, Mr. Cantoon!

Can. Kiss your hand, matam!

Ster. Well, mounseer; and what news of your good family? When are we to see his lordship and Sir John?

Can. Mons. Sterling, mi Lor Ogleby and Sir Jean Melvil will be here in one quarter hour.

Ster. I am glad to hear it.

Mrs. H. O, I am perdigious glad to hear it. Being so late, I was afraid of some accident. Will you please to have anything, Mr. Cantoon, after your journey?

Can. No, tank you, ma'am.

Mrs. H. Shall I go and shew you the apartments, sir?

Can. You do me great honour, ma'am.

Mrs. H. Come, then! Come, my dear! [*Ereunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*An Ante-room to Lord Ogleby's Bed-chamber. Table, with chocolate, and small case for medicines.*

BRUSH and Chambermaid discovered.

Brush. You shall stay, my dear, I insist upon it.

Cham. Nay pray, sir, don't be so positive; I cannot stay indeed.

Brush. You shall drink one cup to our better acquaintance.

Cham. I seldom drinks chocolate; and, if I did, one has no satisfaction with such apprehensions about one. If my lord should wake, or the Swiss gentleman should see one, or Madam Heidelberg should know of it, I should be frightened to death; besides, I have had my tea already this morning: I'm sure I hear my lord. [*In a fright.*]

Brush. No, no, madam, don't flutter yourself. The moment my lord wakes, he rings his bell, which I answer sooner or later, as it suits my convenience.

Cham. But should he come upon us without ringing—

Brush. I'll forgive him if he does. This key [*Takes a phial out of the case*] locks him up till I please to let him out.

Cham. La! sir, that's potecary's stuff.

Brush. It is so; but without this he can no more get out of bed, than he can read without spectacles. [*Sips.*] What with qualms, age, rheumatism, and a few surfeits in his youth, he must have a great deal of brushing, oiling, screwing, and winding-up, to set him a-going for the day.

Cham. [*Sips.*] That's prodigious indeed. [*Sips.*] My lord seems quite in a decay.

Brush. Yes, he's quite a spectacle: [*Sips.*]—a mere corpse, till he is revived and refreshed from our little magazine here. When the restorative pills and cordial waters warm his stomach, and get into his head, vanity frisks in his heart, and then he sets up for the lover, the rake, and the fine gentleman.

Cham. [*Sips.*] Poor gentleman! but should the Swiss gentleman come upon us. [*Frightened.*]

Brush. Why then the English gentleman would be very angry. No foreigner would break in upon my privacy. [*Sips.*] But I can assure you, Monsieur Cantoon is otherwise employed. He is obliged to skim the cream of half a score newspapers for my lord's breakfast: ha, ha, ha! Pray, madam, drink your cup peaceably. My lord's chocolate is remarkably good; he won't touch a drop, but what comes from Italy.

Cham. [*Sipping.*] 'Tis very fine, indeed! [*Sips.*] and charmingly perfumed: it smells for all the world like our young ladies' dressing-boxes.

Brush. You have an excellent taste, madam; and I must beg of you to accept of a few cakes for your own drinking. [*Takes them out of a drawer in the table.*] And in return, I desire nothing but to taste the perfume of your lips. [*Kisses her.*] A small return of favours, madam, will make, I hope, this country and retirement agreeable to us both. [*He bows, she courtesies.*] Come, pray sit down. Your young ladies are fine girls, faith! [*Sips.*] though, upon my soul, I am quite of my old lord's mind about them; and were I inclined to matrimony, I should take the youngest. [*Sips.*]

Cham. Miss Fanny! The most affablest, and the most best-natur'd creter!

Brush. And the eldest a little haughty or so.

Cham. More haughtier and prouder than Saturn himself; but this I say quite confidential to you; for one would not hurt a young lady's marriage, you know. [*Sips.*]

Brush. By no means; but you cannot hurt it with us. We don't consider tempers: we want money, Mrs. Nancy. Give us plenty of that, we'll abate you a great deal of other particulars; ha, ha, ha!

Cham. Bless me, here's somebody! [*Bell rings.*] Oh, 'tis my lord! Well, your servant, Mr. Brush. I'll clean the cups in the next room.

Brush. Do so; but never mind the bell: I sha'n't go this half hour. Will you drink tea with me in the afternoon?

Cham. Not for the world, Mr. Brush. I'll be here to set all things to rights; but I must not drink tea indeed; and so, your servant.

[*Exit, with teaboard. Bell rings again.*]

Brush. Yes, yes; I hear you. It is impossible to stupify one's self in the country for a week, without some little flirting with the abigails. This is much the handsomest wench in the house, except the old citizen's youngest daughter, and I have not time enough to lay a plan for her. [*Bell rings.*] O, my lord!

[*Going.*]

Enter CANTON, with newspapers in his hand.

Can. Monsieur Brush! Maistre Brush! my lord stirra, yet?

Brush. He has just rung his bell: I am going to him. [*Exit.*]

Can. Dépêchez vous donc. [*Puts on his spectacles.*] I wish de deveil had all dese papiers. I forget as fast as I read. De Advertise put out of my head de Gazette, de Chronique, and so dey all go l'un après l'autre. I must get some nouvelle for my lor, or he'll be enragé contre moi. Voyons! [*Reads the paper.*] Here is noting but Anti-Sejans and advertise—

Enter Maid with chocolate things.

Vat you want, chil?

Maid. Only the chocolate things, sir.

Can. O, ver well; dat is good girl; and very prit too. [*Exit Maid.*]

Lord O. [*Within.*] Canton! he, he! [*Coughs.*] Canton!

Can. I come, my—Vat shall I do? I have no news: he will make great tintamarre!

Lord O. [*Within.*] Canton! I say, Canton! Where are you?

Enter Lord OGLEBY, leaning on BRUSH.

Can. Here, my lor! I ask pardon, my lor, I have not finish de papiers.

Lord O. D—n your pardon and your papiers; I want you here, Canton.

Can. Den I run, dat is all. [*Shuffles along.*]

[*LORD OGLEBY leans upon CANTON too, and comes forward.*]

Lord O. You Swiss are the most unaccountable mixture: you have the language and the impertinence of the French, with the laziness of Dutchmen.

Can. 'Tis very true, my lor; I can't help—

Lord O. [*Cries out.*] O Diavolo!

Can. You are not in pain, I hope, my lor?

Lord O. Indeed, but I am, my lor. That vulgar fellow, Sterling, with his city politeness, would force me down his slope last night to see a clay-

coloured ditch, which he calls a canal; and what with the dew and the east wind, my hips and shoulders are absolutely screwed to my body.

Can. A littel veritable eau d'arquibusede vil set all to right.

[*LORD OGLEBY sits down, and BRUSH gives chocolate.*]

Lord O. Where are the palsy drops, Brush?

Brush. Here, my lord!

[*Pours out.*]

Lord O. Quelle nouvelle avez vous, Canton?

Can. A great deal of papier, but no news at all.

Lord O. What! nothing at all, you stupid fellow?

Can. Oui, my lor, I have little advertise here vil give you more plaisir den all de lies about noting at all. La voila!

[*Puts on his spectacles.*]

Lord O. Come, read it, Canton, with good emphasis, and good discretion.

Can. I vil, my lor. [*Reads.*] *Dere is no question but dat de cosmetique royale vil utterly take away all heats, pimps, frecks, oder eruptions of de skin, and likewise de urininge of old age, &c. &c. A great deal more, my lor. Be sure to ask for de cosmetique royale, signed by de docteur own hand. Dere is more raison for dis caution dan good men vil tink. Eh bien, my lor?*

Lord O. Eh bien, Canton! Will you purchase any?

Can. For you, my lor?

Lord O. For me, you old puppy! for what?

Can. My lor!

Lord O. Do I want cosmetics?

Can. My lor!

Lord O. Look in my face; come, be sincere. Does it want the assistance of art?

Can. [*With his spectacles.*] En vérité, non. 'Tis very smooth and brilliant; but tote dat you might take a littel by way of prevention.

Lord O. You thought like an old fool, monsieur, as you generally do. Try it upon your own face, Canton; and if it has any effect, the doctor cannot have a better proof of the efficacy of his nostrum. The surfeit water, Brush! [*Brush pours out.*] What do you think, Brush, of this family we are going to be connected with? Eh!

Brush. Very well to marry in, my lord; but it would never do to live with.

Lord O. You are right, Brush; there is no washing the blackmoor white. Mr. Sterling will never get rid of Blackfriars; always taste of the Borachio; and the poor woman, his sister, is so busy, and so notable, to make one welcome, that I have not yet got over the fatigue of her first reception; it almost amounted to suffocation! I think the daughters are tolerable. Where's my cephalic snuff?

[*BRUSH gives him a box.*]

Can. Dey tink so of you, my lor; for dey look at noting else, ma foi.

Lord O. Did they? Why, I think they did a little. Where's my glass? [*Brush puts one on the table.*] The youngest is delectable. [*Takes snuff.*]

Can. O oui, my lor, very delect inteed; she made doux yeux at you, my lor.

Lord O. She was particular. The eldest, my nephew's lady, will be a most valuable wife; she has all the vulgar spirits of her father and aunt happily blended with the termagant qualities of her deceased mother. Some peppermint-water, Brush. How happy is it, Canton, for young ladies in general, that people of quality overlook everything in their marriage contract but their fortune.

Can. C'est bien heureux, et commode aussi.

Lord O. Brush, give me that pamphlet by my

bedside. [*Brush goes for it.*] Canton, do you wait in the ante-chamber, and let nobody interrupt me till I call you.

Can. Mush good may do your lordship. [*Exit.*]

Lord O. [*To Brush, who brings the pamphlet.*] And now, Brush, leave me a little to my studies. [*Exit Brush.*] What can I possibly do among these women here, with this confounded rheumatism? It is a most grievous enemy to gallantry and address. [*Gets off his chair.*] Eh! courage, my lor! by heavens, I'm another creature! [*Hums and dances a little.*] It will do, faith! Bravo, my lor! These girls have absolutely inspired me. If they are for a game of romps; me voilà prêt! [*Sings and dances.*] Oh! that's an ugly twinge; but it's gone. I have rather too much of the lily this morning in my complexion; a faint tincture of the rose will give a delicate spirit to my eyes for the day. [*Unlocks a drawer at the bottom of the glass, and takes out rouge; while he is painting himself, a knocking at the door.*] Who's there? I won't be disturb'd.

Can. [*Within.*] My lor! my lor! here is Monsieur Sterling, to pay his devoir to you this morn in your chambre.

Lord O. What a fellow! [*Softly.*] I am extremely honoured by Mr. Sterling. Why don't you see him in, monsieur? [*Aloud.*] I wish he was at the bottom of his stinking canal. [*Softly.*] Door opens. Oh, my dear Mr. Sterling, you do me a great deal of honour.

Enter STERLING and LOVEWELL.

Ster. I hope, my lord, that your lordship slept well last night. I believe there are no better beds in Europe than I have. I spare no pains to get them, nor money to buy them. His majesty, God bless him! don't sleep upon a better out of his palace; and if I had said in too, I hope no treason, my lord.

Lord O. Your beds are like everything else about you, incomparable! They not only make one rest well, but give one spirits, Mr. Sterling.

Ster. What say you then, my lord, to another walk in the garden? You must see my water by day-light, and my walks, and my slopes, and my clumps, and my bridge, and my flowering trees, and my bed of Dutch tulips. Matters look'd but dim last night, my lord. I feel the dew in my great toe; but I would put on a cut shoe, that I might be able to walk you about: I may be laid up to-morrow.

Lord O. I pray heaven you may. [*Aside.*]

Ster. What say you, my lord?

Lord O. I was saying, sir, that I was in hopes of seeing the young ladies at breakfast: Mr. Sterling, they are, in my mind, the finest tulips in this part of the world; he, he, he, he!

Can. Bravissimo, mi lor! ha, ha, ha, ha!

Ster. They shall meet your lordship in the garden; we won't lose our walk for them; I'll take you a little round before breakfast, and a larger before dinner; and in the evening you shall go the grand tour, as I call it; ha, ha, ha!

Lord O. Not a foot, I hope, Mr. Sterling; consider your gout, my good friend: you'll certainly be laid by the heels for your politeness; he, he, he!

Can. Ha, ha, ha! 'tis admirable, en verite!

Ster. If my young man here [*to LOVEWELL.*] would but laugh at my jokes, which he ought to do, as mounseer does at your's, my lord, we should be all life and mirth.

Lord O. What say you, Canton, will you take my kinsman into your tuition? You have certainly the

most companionable laugh I ever met with, and never out of tune.

Can. But when your lordship is out of spirits.

Lord O. Well said, Canton! But here comes my nephew, to play his part.

Enter Sir JOHN MELVIL.

Well, Sir John, what news from the island of love? Have you been sighing and serenading this morning?

Sir J. I am glad to see your lordship in such spirits this morning.

Lord O. I'm sorry to see you so dull, sir. What poor things, Mr. Sterling, these very young fellows are! They make love with faces as if they were burying the dead; though, indeed, a marriage sometimes may be properly called a burying of the living; eh, Mr. Sterling?

Ster. Not if they have enough to live upon, my lord; ha, ha, ha!

Can. Dat is all Monsieur Sterling tink of.

Sir J. Pr'ythee, Lovewell, come with me into the garden; I have something of consequence for you, and I must communicate it directly.

[*Apart to LOVEWELL.*]

Love. We'll go together. [*Apart.*] If your lordship and Mr. Sterling please, we'll prepare the ladies to attend you in the garden.

[*Reunt Sir JOHN MELVIL and LOVEWELL.*]

Ster. My girls are always ready; I make them rise soon, and to bed early; their husbands shall have them with good constitutions and good fortunes, if they have nothing else, my lord.

Lord O. Fine things, Mr. Sterling!

Ster. Fine things, indeed, my lord! Ah, my lord, had you not run off your speed in your youth, you had not been so crippled in your age, my lord.

Lord O. Very pleasant; he, he, he!

Ster. Here's mounseer now, I suppose, is pretty near your lordship's standing; but having little to eat, and little to spend in his own country, he'll wear three of your lordship out. Eating and drinking kills us all.

Lord O. Very pleasant, I protest. What a vulgar dog!

Can. My lor so old as me! He is chicken to me; and look like a boy to pauvre me.

Ster. Ha, ha, ha! Well said, mounseer: keep to that, and you'll live in any country of the world. Ha, ha, ha! But, my lord, I will wait upon you in the garden; we have but a little time to breakfast. I'll go for my hat and cane, fetch a little walk with you, and then for the hot rolls and butter! [*Exit.*]

Lord O. I shall attend you with pleasure. Hot rolls and butter in July! I sweat with the thoughts of it.

Can. C'est un barbare.

Lord O. He is a vulgar dog; and if there was not so much money in the family, which I can't do without, I would leave him and his hot rolls and butter directly. Come along, monsieur! [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—The Garden.

Enter Sir JOHN MELVIL and LOVEWELL.

Love. In my room this morning? Impossible.

Sir J. Before five this morning, I promise you.

Love. On what occasion?

Sir J. I was so anxious to disclose my mind to you that I could not sleep in my bed; but I found that you could not sleep neither. The bird was flown, and the nest long since cold. Where was you, Lovewell?

Love. Pooh! pr'ythee, ridiculous.

Sir J. Come, now, which was it: Miss Sterling's maid? a pretty little rogue! or Miss Fanny's Abigail? a sweet soul too! or—

Love. Nay, nay, leave trifling, and tell me your business.

Sir J. Well, but where was you, Lovewell?

Love. Walking, writing; what signifies where I was?

Sir J. Walking! yes, I dare say. It rained as hard as it could pour. Sweet, refreshing showers, to walk in! No, no, Lovewell. Now would I give twenty pounds to know which of the maids—

Love. But your business! your business, Sir John!

Sir J. Let me a little into the secrets of the family.

Love. Psha!

Sir J. Poor Lovewell! he can't bear it, I see. [*Aside.*] She charged you not to kiss and tell, eh, Lovewell? However, though you will not honour me with your confidence, I'll venture to trust you with mine. What do you think of Miss Sterling?

Love. What do I think of Miss Sterling?

Sir J. Ay, what do you think of her?

Love. An odd question! but I think her a smart, lively girl, full of mirth and sprightliness.

Sir J. All mischief and malice, I doubt.

Love. How!

Sir J. But her person: what d'ye think of that?

Love. Pretty and agreeable.

Sir J. A little grisette thing.

Love. What is the meaning of all this?

Sir J. I'll tell you. You must know, Lovewell, that notwithstanding all appearances—[*A loud laugh heard without.*] We are interrupted. When they are gone, I'll explain.

Enter Lord OGLEBY, STERLING, CANTON, Mrs. HEIDELBERG, Miss STERLING, and FANNY.

Lord O. Great improvements indeed, Mr. Sterling; wonderful improvements! The four seasons in lead, the flying Mercury, and the bason with Neptune in the middle, are in the very extreme of fine taste. You have as many rich figures as the man at Hyde-park-corner.

Ster. The chief pleasure of a country house is to make improvements, you know, my lord. I spare no expense, not I. This is quite another guess sort of a place than it was when I first took it, my lord. We were surrounded with trees. I cut down above fifty to make the lawn before the house, and let in the wind and the sun, smack smooth, as you see. Then I made a green-house out of the old laundry, and turned the brew-house into a pinery. The high octagon summer-house, you see yonder, is raised on the mast of a ship, given me by an East Indian captain, who has turned many a thousand of my money. It commands the whole road. All the coaches, and chariots, and chaises, pass and repass under your eye. I'll mount you up there in the afternoon, my lord.

Lord O. No, I thank you, Mr. Sterling.

Ster. 'Tis the pleasantest place in the world to take a pipe and a bottle; and so you shall say, my lord.

Lord O. Ay, or a bowl of punch, or a can of flip, Mr. Sterling; for it looks like a cabin in the air. If flying chairs were in use, the captain might make a voyage to the Indies in it still, if he had but a fair wind.

Can. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Mrs. H. My brother's a little comical in his ideas, my lord. But you'll excuse him. I have a little

Gothic dairy, fitted up entirely in my own taste. In the evening, I shall hope for the honour of your lordship's company to take a dish of tea there, or a sullybub warm from the cow

Lord O. I have every moment a fresh opportunity of admiring the elegance of Mrs. Heidelberg, the very flower of delicacy and cream of politeness.

Mrs. H. O, my lord! [*Leers at Lord OGLEBY.*]

Lord O. O, madam! [*Leers at Mrs. HEIDELBERG.*]

Ster. How d'ye like these close walks, my lord?

Lord O. A most excellent serpentine! It forms a perfect maze, and winds like a true-lover's knot.

Ster. Ay, here's none of your strait lines here; but all taste; zigzag, crinkum-crankum, in and out, right and left, to and again; twisting and turning like a worm, my lord.

Lord O. Admirably laid out indeed, Mr. Sterling! one can hardly see an inch beyond one's nose anywhere in these walks. You are a most excellent economist of your land, and make a little go a great way. It lies together in as small parcels as if it were placed in pots out at your window in Gracechurch-street.

Can. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Lord O. What d'ye laugh at, Canton?

Can. Ah! que cette similitude est drôle! so clever what you say, my lord!

Lord O. You seem mightily engaged, madam. What are those pretty hands so busily employed about? [*To FANNY.*]

Fan. Only making up a nosegay, my lord! Will your lordship do me the honour of accepting it?

Lord O. I'll wear it next my heart, madam. I see the young creature dotes on me. [*Aside.*]

Miss S. Lord, sister! you've loaded his lordship with a bunch of flowers as big as the cook, or the nurse, carries to town, on a Monday morning, for a beaupot. Will your lordship give me leave to present you with this rose and a sprig of sweetbriar?

Lord O. The truest emblems of yourself, madam! all sweetness and poignancy. A little jealous, poor soul! [*Aside.*]

Ster. Now, my lord, if you please, I'll carry you to see my ruins.

Mrs. H. You'll absolutely fatigue his lordship with over-walking, brother.

Lord O. Not at all, madam. We're in the garden of Eden, you know; in the region of perpetual spring, youth, and beauty! [*Leers at the Women.*]

Mrs. H. Quite the man of quality, I vow and per-test. [*Aside.*]

Can. Take-a my arm, my lord!

[*Lord O. leans on him.*]

Ster. I'll only shew his lordship my ruins, and the cascade, and the Chinese bridge, and then we'll go in to breakfast.

Lord O. Ruins, did you say, Mr. Sterling?

Ster. Ay; ruins, my lord; and they are reckoned very fine ones, too. You would think them ready to tumble on your head. It has just cost me a hundred and fifty pounds to put my ruins in thorough repair. This way, if your lordship pleases.

Lord O. [*Going, stops.*] What steeple's that we see yonder? The parish church, I suppose.

Ster. Ha, ha, ha! that's admirable. It is no church at all, my lord! it is a spire that I have built against a tree, a field or two off, to terminate the prospect. One must always have a church, or an obelisk, or something to terminate the prospect, you know. That's a rule in taste, my lord!

Lord O. Very ingenious indeed! For my part, I desire no finer prospect than this I see before me:

[*leers at the Women:*] simple, yet varied; bounded, yet extensive. Get away, Canton! [*Pushes CANTON away.*] I want no assistance; I'll walk with the ladies.

Ster. This way, my lord.

Lord O. Lead on, sir. We young folks here will follow you. Madam; Miss Sterling; Miss Fanny; I attend you. [*Exit after STER., gallanting the Ladies.*]

Can. [*Following.*] He is cock o'de game, ma foi! [*Exit.*]

Sir J. Hark ye, Lovewell; you must not go. At length, thank Heaven! I have an opportunity to unbosom. I know you are faithful, Lovewell, and flatter myself you would rejoice to serve me.

Love. Be assured you may depend upon me.

Sir J. You must know then, notwithstanding all appearances, that this treaty of marriage between Miss Sterling and me will come to nothing.

Love. How!

Sir J. It will be no match, Lovewell.

Love. No match?

Sir J. No.

Love. You amaze me. What should prevent it?

Sir J. I.

Love. You! Wherefore?

Sir J. I don't like her.

Love. Very plain indeed! I never supposed that you were extremely devoted to her from inclination; but thought you always considered it as a matter of convenience rather than affection.

Sir J. Very true. I came into the family without any impressions on my mind; with an unimpassioned indifference, ready to receive one woman as soon as another. I looked upon love, serious sober love, as a chimera, and marriage as a thing of course, as you know most people do. But I, who was lately so great an infidel in love, am now one of its sincerest votaries. In short, my defection from Miss Sterling proceeds from the violence of my attachment to another.

Love. Another? So, so! here will be fine work. And pray who is she?

Sir J. Who is she! who can she be but Fanny; the tender, amiable, engaging Fanny?

Love. Fanny! What Fanny?

Sir J. Fanny Sterling, her sister. Is not she an angel, Lovewell?

Love. Her sister? Confusion! [*Aside.*] You must not think of it, Sir John.

Sir J. Not think of it! I can think of nothing else. Nay, tell me, Lovewell, was it possible for me to be indulged in a perpetual intercourse with two such objects as Fanny and her sister, and not find my heart led by insensible attraction towards her? You seem confounded. Why don't you answer me?

Love. Indeed, Sir John, this event gives me infinite concern. Why did not you break this affair to the family before?

Sir J. Under such embarrassed circumstances as I have been, can you wonder at my irresolution or perplexity? Nothing but despair, the fear of losing my dear Fanny, could bring me to a declaration even now; and yet I think I know Mr. Sterling so well, that strange as my proposal may appear, if I can make it advantageous to him as a money transaction, as I am sure I can, he will certainly come into it.

Love. But even suppose he should, which I very much doubt, I don't think Fanny herself would listen to your addresses.

Sir J. You are deceived a little in that particular.

Love. You'll find I'm in the right.

Sir J. I have some little reason to think otherwise.

Love. You have not declared your passion to her already.

Sir J. Yes, I have.

Love. Indeed! And—and—and how did she receive it?

Sir J. I think it is not very easy for me to make my addresses to any woman, without receiving some little encouragement.

Love. Encouragement! Did she give you any encouragement?

Sir J. I don't know what you call encouragement; but she blushed, and cried, and desired me not to think of it any more: upon which I pressed her hand; kissed it; swore she was an angel; and I could see it tickled her to the soul.

Love. And did she express no surprise at your declaration?

Sir J. Why, faith, to say the truth, she was a little surprised; and she got away from me too before I could thoroughly explain myself. If I should not meet with an opportunity of speaking to her, I must get you to deliver a letter for me.

Love. I! a letter! I had rather have nothing—

Sir J. Nay, you promised me your assistance; and I am sure you cannot scruple to make yourself useful on such an occasion. You may, without suspicion, acquaint her verbally of my determined affection for her, and that I am resolved to ask her father's consent.

Love. As to that, I—your commands, you know; that is, if she—Indeed, Sir John, I think you are in the wrong.

Sir J. Well, well, that's my concern. Ha! there she goes, by heaven! along that walk yonder, d'ye see? I'll go to her immediately!

Love. You are too precipitate. Consider what you are doing.

Sir J. I would not lose this opportunity for the universe.

Love. Nay, pray don't go! Your violence and eagerness may overcome her spirits. The shock will be too much for her. [*Detains him.*]

Sir J. Nothing shall prevent me. Ha! now she turns into another walk. Let me go. [*Breaks from him.*] I shall lose her. [*Going, turns back.*] Be sure now to keep out of the way! If you interrupt us, I shall never forgive you. [*Exit hastily.*]

Love. 'Sdeath! I can't bear this. In love with my wife! acquaint me with his passion for her! make his addresses before my face! I shall break out before my time. This was the meaning of Fanny's uneasiness. She could not encourage him; I am sure she could not. Ha! they are turning into the walk, and coming this way. Shall I leave the place? Leave him to solicit my wife? I can't submit to it. They come nearer and nearer. If I stay, it will look suspicious. It may betray us, and incense him. They are here. I must go. I am the most unfortunate fellow in the world! [*Exit.*]

Re-enter, Sir JOHN MELVIL and FANNY.

Fan. Leave me, Sir John; I beseech you, leave me! Nay, why will you persist to follow me with idle solicitations, which are an affront to my character, and an injury to your own honour?

Sir J. I know your delicacy, and tremble to offend it: but let the urgency of the occasion be my excuse. Consider, madam, that the future happiness of my life depends on my present application to you. Consider that this day must determine my

fate; and these are perhaps the only moments left me to incline you to warrant my passion, and to entreat you not to oppose the proposals I mean to open to your father.

Fan. For shame, for shame, Sir John! Think of your previous engagements. Think of your own situation, and think of mine. What have you discovered in my conduct, that might encourage you to so bold a declaration? I am shocked that you should venture to say so much, and blush that I should even dare to give it a hearing. Let me be gone.

Sir J. Nay, stay, madam, but one moment. Your sensibility is too great. Engagements! what engagements have been pretended on either side, more than those of family convenience? I went on in the trammels of a matrimonial negotiation, with a blind submission to your father and Lord Ogleby; but my heart soon claimed a right to be consulted. It has devoted itself to you, and obliges me to plead earnestly for the same tender interest in your's.

Fan. Have a care, Sir John! do not mistake a depraved will for a virtuous inclination. By these common pretences of the heart, half our sex are made fools, and a greater part of your's despise them for it.

Sir J. Affection, you will allow, is involuntary. We cannot always direct it to the object on which it should fix; but when it is once inviolably attached, inviolably as mine is to you, it often creates reciprocal affection. When I last urged you on this subject, you heard me with more temper, and I hoped with some compassion.

Fan. You deceived yourself. If I forbore to exert a proper spirit—nay, if I did not even express the quickest resentment at your behaviour, it was only in consideration of that respect I wish to pay you in honour to my sister; and be assured, sir, woman as I am, that my vanity could reap no pleasure from a triumph that must result from the blackest treachery to her.

[Going, he stops her.]

Sir J. One word, and I have done. Your sister, I verily believe, neither entertains any real affection for me, or tenderness for you. Your father, I am inclined to think, is not much concerned by means of which of his daughters the families are united. Now, as they cannot, shall not be connected, otherwise than by my union with you, why will you, from a false delicacy, oppose a measure so conducive to my happiness, and, I hope, your own? I love you, most passionately and sincerely love you, and hope to propose terms agreeable to Mr. Sterling: if then you don't absolutely loath, abhor, and scorn me; if there is no other happier man—

Fan. Hear me, sir; hear my final determination. Were my father and sister as insensible as you are pleased to represent them; were my heart for ever to remain disengaged to any other—I could not listen to your proposals. What! you, on the very eve of a marriage with my sister; I, living under the same roof with her, bound not only by the laws of friendship and hospitality, but even the ties of blood, to contribute to her happiness, and not to conspire against her peace, the peace of a whole family, and that of my own too! Away, away, Sir John! At such a time, and in such circumstances, your addresses only inspire me with horror. Nay, you must detain me no longer: I will go.

Sir J. Do not leave me in absolute despair. Give me a glimpse of hope.

[Falls on his knees.]

Fan. I cannot. Pray, Sir John.

[Struggles to go.]

Sir J. Shall this hand be given to another?

[Kisses her hand.] No, I cannot endure it. My whole soul is your's, and the whole happiness of my life is in your power.

Re-enter Miss STERLING.

Fan. Ha! my sister here! Rise, for shame, Sir John.

Sir J. Miss Sterling!

[Rises.]

Miss S. I beg pardon, sir! You'll excuse me, madam. I have broke in upon you a little inopportune, I believe; but I did not mean to interrupt you: I only came, sir, to let you know that breakfast waits, if you have finished your morning's devotion.

Sir J. I am very sensible, Miss Sterling, that this may appear particular, but—

Miss S. O dear, Sir John, don't put yourself to the trouble of an apology; the thing explains itself.

Sir J. It will soon, madam. In the meantime, I can only assure you of my profound respect and esteem for you, and make no doubt of convincing Mr. Sterling of the honour and integrity of my intentions. And—and—your humble servant, madam!

[Exit in confusion.]

Miss S. Respect! Insolence! Esteem! Very fine truly. And you, madam! my sweet, delicate, innocent, sentimental sister! will you convince my papa too of the integrity of your intentions?

Fan. Do not upbraid me, my dear sister. Indeed I don't deserve it. Believe me, you can't be more offended at his behaviour than I am, and I am sure it cannot make you half so miserable.

Miss S. Make me miserable! You are mightily deceived, madam; it gives me no sort of uneasiness, I assure you. A base fellow! As for you, miss, the pretended softness of your disposition, your artful good-nature, never imposed upon me. I always knew you to be sly, envious, and deceitful.

Fan. Indeed you wrong me.

Miss S. Oh, you are all goodness, to be sure! Did not I find him on his knees before you? Did not I see him kiss your sweet hand? Did not I hear his protestations? Was not I a witness of your dissembled modesty? No, no, my dear! don't imagine that you can make a fool of your elder sister so easily.

Fan. Sir John, I own, is to blame; but I am above the thoughts of doing you the least injury.

Miss S. We shall try that, madam. I hope, miss, you'll be able to give a better account to my papa and my aunt, for they shall both know of this matter, I promise you.

[Exit.]

Fan. How unhappy I am! My distresses multiply upon me. Mr. Lovewell must now become acquainted with Sir John's behaviour to me, and in a manner that may add to his uneasiness. My father, instead of being disposed by fortunate circumstances to forgive any transgressions, will be previously incensed against me. My sister and my aunt will become irreconcilably my enemies, and rejoice in my disgrace. Yet, at all events, I am determined on a discovery. I dread it, and am resolved to hasten it. It is surrounded with more horrors every instant, as it appears every instant more necessary.

[Exit.]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Hall.

Enter a Servant, conducting in Sergeant FLOWER and Counsellors TRAVERSE and TRUEMAN, all booted.

Serv. This way, if you please, gentlemen. My master is at breakfast with the family at present, but I'll let him know, and he will wait on you immediately.

Flow. Mighty well, young man, mighty well.

Serv. Please to favour me with your names, gentlemen.

Flow. Let Mr. Sterling know, that Mr. Sergeant Flower, and two other gentlemen of the bar, are come to wait on him according to his appointment.

Serv. I will, sir.

[Going.]

Flow. And harkye, young man. *[Servant returns.]* Desire my servant—Mr. Sergeant Flower's servant—to bring in my green and gold saddle-cloth and pistols, and lay them down here in the hall, with my portmanteau.

Serv. I will, sir.

[Exit.]

Flow. Well, gentlemen; the settling these marriage articles falls conveniently enough, almost just on the eve of the circuits. Let me see; the Home, the Midland, and Western; ay, we can all cross the country well enough to our several destinations. Traverse, when do you begin at Hertford?

Trav. The day after to-morrow.

Flow. That is commission-day with us at Warwick, too; but my clerk has retainers for every cause in the paper, so it will be time enough if I am there next morning. Besides I've half a dozen cases that have lain by me ever since the spring assizes, and I must tack opinions to them before I see my country clients again; so I'll take the evening before me, and then *currente calamo*, as I say, eh, Traverse?

Trav. True; and pray, Mr. Sergeant, are you concerned in Jones and Thomas, at Lincoln?

Flow. I am: for the plaintiff.

Trav. And what do you think on't?

Flow. A nonsuit.

Trav. I thought so.

Flow. Oh, no manner of doubt on't—*luce clarius*—we have no right in us. We have but one chance.

Trav. What's that?

Flow. Why, my lord chief does not go the circuit this time, and my brother Puzzle being in the commission, the cause will come on before him.

True. Ay, that may do indeed; if you can but throw dust in the eyes of the defendant's counsel.

Flow. True. Mr. Trueman, I think you are concerned for Lord Ogleby in this affair?

True. I am, sir. I have the honour to be related to his lordship, and hold some courts for him in Somersetshire; go to the Western circuit, and attend the sessions at Exeter, merely because his lordship's interests and property lie in that part of the kingdom.

Flow. Ha! and pray, Mr. Trueman, how long have you been called to the bar?

True. About nine years and three quarters.

Flow. Ha! I don't know that I ever had the pleasure of seeing you before. I wish you success, young gentleman!

Enter STERLING.

Ster. Oh, Mr. Sergeant Flower, I am glad to see

you. Your servant, Mr. Sergeant. Gentlemen, your servant. Well, are all matters concluded? Has that snail-paced conveyancer, old Ferret, of Gray's-inn, settled the articles at last? Do you approve of what he has done? Will his tackle hold tight and strong? Eh, master Serjeant?

Flow. My friend Ferret's slow and sure, sir; but then, *serius aut citius*, as we say, sooner or later, Mr. Sterling, he is sure to put his business out of hand as he should do. My clerk has brought the writings, and all other instruments along with him; and the settlement is, I believe, as good a settlement as any settlement on the face of the earth.

Ster. But that d—n'd mortgage of sixty thousand pounds. There don't appear to be any other incumbrances, I hope?

Trav. I can answer for that, sir; and that will be cleared off immediately on the payment of the first part of Miss Sterling's portion. You agree, on your part, to come down with eighty thousand pounds?

Ster. Down on the nail. Aye, aye, my money is ready to-morrow if he pleases. He shall have it in India bonds, or notes, or how he chooses. Your lords and your dukes, and your people at the court end of the town, stick at payments sometimes. Debts unpaid, no credit lost with them; but no fear of us substantial fellows, eh, Mr. Sergeant?

Flow. Sir John having last term, according to agreement, levied a fine, and suffered a recovery, has hitherto cut off the entail of the Ogleby estate, for the better effecting the purposes of the present intended marriage; on which above-mentioned Ogleby estate, a jointure of two thousand pounds per annum is secured to your eldest daughter, now Elizabeth Sterling, spinster, and the whole estate, after the death of the aforesaid earl, descends to the heirs male of Sir John Melvil, on the body of the aforesaid Elizabeth Sterling lawfully to be begotten.

Trav. Very true; and Sir John is to be put in immediate possession of as much of his lordship's Somersetshire estate, as lies in the manors of Hogmore and Cranford, amounting to between two and three thousand pounds per annum, and at the death of Mr. Sterling, a further sum of seventy thousand—

Enter Sir JOHN MELVIL.

Ster. Ah, Sir John! Here we are, hard at it; paving the road to matrimony. First the lawyers, then comes the doctor. Let us but despatch the long-robe, we shall soon get pudding-sleeves to work, I warrant you.

Sir J. I am sorry to interrupt you, sir; but I hope that both you and these gentlemen will excuse me. Having something very particular for your private ear, I took the liberty of following you, and beg you will oblige me with an audience immediately. *[To STERLING.]*

Ster. Ay, with all my heart! Gentlemen,—Mr. Sergeant,—you'll excuse it; business must be done, you know. The writings will keep cold till to-morrow morning.

Flow. I must be at Warwick, Mr. Sterling, the day after.

Ster. Nay, nay, I sha'n't part with you to-night, gentlemen, I promise you. My house is very full, but I have beds for you all, beds for your servants, and stabling for all your horses. Will you take a turn in the garden, and view some of my improvements before dinner? or will you amuse yourself on the green, with a game at bowls and a cool tankard? My servants shall attend you. Do you choose any

other refreshment? Call for what you please; do as you please; make yourselves quite at home, I beg of you. Here, Thomas! Harry! William! wait on these gentlemen!—*[Follows the Lawyers out, bawling and talking, and then returns to Sir JOHN.]* And now, sir, I am entirely at your service. What are your commands with me, Sir John?

Sir J. After having carried the negotiation between our families to so great a length; after having assented so readily to all your proposals, as well as received so many instances of your cheerful compliance with the demands made on our part, I am extremely concerned, Mr. Sterling, to be the involuntary cause of any uneasiness.

Ster. Uneasiness! what uneasiness? Where business is transacted as it ought to be, and the parties understand one another, there can be no uneasiness. You agree, on such and such conditions, to receive my daughter for a wife; on the same conditions I agree to receive you as a son-in-law; and as to all the rest, it follows of course, you know, as regularly as the payment of a bill after acceptance.

Sir J. Pardon me, sir, more uneasiness has arisen than you are aware of. I am myself, at this instant, in a state of inexpressible embarrassment; Miss Sterling, I know, is extremely disconcerted too; and unless you will oblige me with the assistance of your friendship, I foresee the speedy progress of discontent and animosity through the whole family.

Ster. What the deuce is all this? I don't understand a single syllable.

Sir J. In one word, then, it will be absolutely impossible for me to fulfil my engagements in regard to Miss Sterling.

Ster. How, Sir John? Do you mean to put an affront upon my family? What! refuse to—

Sir J. Be assured, sir, that I neither mean to affront nor forsake your family. My only fear is that you should desert me; for the whole happiness of my life depends on my being connected with your family, by the nearest and tenderest ties in the world.

Ster. Why, did you not tell me, but a moment ago, that it was absolutely impossible for you to marry my daughter?

Sir J. True. But you have another daughter, sir.

Ster. Well!

Sir J. Who has obtained the most absolute dominion over my heart. I have already declared my passion to her; nay, Miss Sterling herself is also apprised of it; and if you will but give a sanction to my present addresses, the uncommon merit of Miss Sterling will no doubt recommend her to a person of equal, if not superior rank to myself, and our families may still be allied by my union with Miss Fanny.

Ster. Mighty fine, truly! Why what the plague do you make of us, Sir John? Do you come to market for my daughters, like servants at a statute-fair? Do you think that I will suffer you, or any man in the world, to come into my house, like the grand seignior, and throw the handkerchief first to one, and then to t'other, just as he pleases? Do you think I drive a kind of African slave-trade with them, and—

Sir J. A moment's patience, sir. Nothing but the excess of my passion for Miss Fanny should have induced me to take any step that had the least appearance of disrespect to any part of your family; and even now I am desirous to atone for my transgression, by making the most adequate compensation that lies in my power.

Ster. Compensation! what compensation can you possibly make in such a case as this, Sir John?

Sir J. Come, come, Mr. Sterling; I know you to be a man of sense, a man of business, a man of the world. I'll deal frankly with you; and you shall see that I don't desire a change of measures for my own gratification, without endeavouring to make it advantageous to you.

Ster. What advantage can your inconstancy be to me, Sir John?

Sir J. I'll tell you, sir. You know that by the articles at present subsisting between us, on the day of my marriage with Miss Sterling, you agree to pay down the gross sum of eighty thousand pounds.

Ster. Well!

Sir J. Now, if you will but consent to my waiving that marriage—

Ster. I agree to your waiving that marriage? Impossible, Sir John!

Sir J. I hope not, sir; as, on my part, I will agree to waive my right to thirty thousand pounds of the fortune I was to receive with her.

Ster. Thirty thousand, d'ye say?

Sir J. Yes, sir; and accept of Miss Fanny with fifty thousand, instead of fourscore.

Ster. Fifty thousand—

[Pausing.]

Sir J. Instead of fourscore.

Ster. Why, why, there may be something in that. Let me see. Fanny with fifty thousand, instead of Betsy with fourscore. But how can this be, Sir John? for you know I am to pay this money into the hands of my Lord Ogleby, who, I believe, between you and me, Sir John, is not overstocked with ready money at present; and threescore thousand of it, you know, is to go to pay off the present encumbrances on the estate, Sir John.

Sir J. That objection is easily obviated. Ten of the twenty thousand, which would remain as a surplus of the fourscore, after paying off the mortgage, was intended by his lordship for my use, that we might set off with some little eclat on our marriage; and the other ten for his own. Ten thousand pounds, therefore, I shall be able to pay you immediately; and for the remaining twenty thousand, you shall have a mortgage on that part of the estate which is to be made over to me, with whatever security you shall require for the regular payment of the interest, till the principal is duly discharged.

Ster. Why, to do you justice, Sir John, there is something fair and open in your proposal; and since I find you do not mean to put an affront upon the family—

Sir J. Nothing was ever further from my thoughts, Mr. Sterling. And after all, the whole affair is nothing extraordinary; such things happen every day; and as the world has only heard generally of a treaty between the families, when this marriage takes place, nobody will be the wiser, if we have but discretion enough to keep our own counsel.

Ster. True, true; and since you only transfer from one girl to the other, it is no more than transferring so much stock, you know.

Sir J. The very thing!

Ster. Odso! I had quite forgot. We are reckoning without our host here. There is another difficulty.

Sir J. You alarm me. What can that be?

Ster. I can't stir a step in this business without consulting my sister Heidelberg. The family has very great expectations from her, and we must not give her any offence.

Sir J. But if you come into this measure, surely she will be so kind as to consent.

Ster. I don't know that; Betsy is her darling, and I can't tell how far she may resent any slight that seems to be offered to her favourite niece. However, I'll do the best I can for you. You shall go and break the matter to her first; and by that time I may suppose that your rhetoric has prevailed on her to listen to reason, I will step in to reinforce your arguments.

Sir J. I'll fly to her immediately. You promise me your assistance?

Ster. I do.

Sir J. Ten thousand thanks for it! And now, success attend me! [Going.]

Ster. Harkye, Sir John! [*Sir J. returns.*] Not a word of the thirty thousand to my sister, Sir John.

Sir J. O, I am dumb, I am dumb, sir. [Going.]

Ster. You'll remember it is thirty thousand?

Sir J. To be sure I do.

Ster. But, Sir John! one thing more. [*Sir J. returns.*] My lord must know nothing of this stroke of friendship between us.

Sir J. Not for the world. Let me alone! let me alone! [Offering to go.]

Ster. [*Holding him.*] And when everything is agreed, we must give each other a bond to be held fast to the bargain.

Sir J. To be sure. A bond, by all means; a bond, or whatever you please. [Exit hastily.]

Ster. I should have thought of more conditions. He's in a humour to give me everything. Why, what mere children are your fellows of quality, that cry for a plaything one minute, and throw it by the next! As changeable as the weather, and as uncertain as the stocks. Special fellows to drive a bargain! and yet they are to take care of the interest of the nation, truly! Here does this whirligig man of fashion offer to give up thirty thousand pounds in hard money, with as much indifference as if it were a China orange. By this mortgage, I shall have a hold on his terra firma; and if he wants more money, as he certainly will, let him have children by my daughter or no, I shall have his whole estate in a net for the benefit of my family. Well, thus it is, that the children of citizens who have acquired fortunes, prove persons of fashion; and thus it is, that persons of fashion, who have ruined their fortunes, reduce the next generation to cits. [Exit.]

SCENE II.—Another Apartment.

Enter Mrs. HEIDELBERG and Miss STERLING.

Miss S. This is your gentle-looking, soft-speaking, sweet-smiling, affable Miss Fanny, for you!

Mrs. H. My Miss Fanny! I disclaim her. With all her arts, she never could insinuate herself into my good graces; and yet she has a way with her, that deceives man, woman, and child, except you and me, niece.

Miss S. O, ay; she wants nothing but a crook in her hand, and a lamb under her arm, to be a perfect picture of innocence and simplicity.

Mrs. H. Just as I was drawn at Amsterdam, when I went over to visit my husband's relations.

Miss S. And then she's so mighty good to servants.—“Pray, John, do this; pray, Thomas, do that: thank you, Jenny;”—and then so humble to her relations.—“To be sure, papa;—as my aunt pleases;—my sister knows best.” But with all her demureness and humility, she has no objection to be Lady Melvil, it seems, nor to any wickedness that can make her so.

Mrs. H. She Lady Melvil! Compose yourself, niece. I'll ladyship her, indeed: a little creppin, cantin—She sha'nt be the better for a farden of my money. But tell me, child, how does this intriguing with Sir John correspond with her partiality to Lovewell? I don't see a concatenation here.

Miss S. There I was deceived, madam. I took all their whisperings and stealings into corners, to be the mere attraction of vulgar minds; but behold! their private meetings were not to contrive their own insipid happiness, but to conspire against mine. But I know whence proceeds Mr. Lovewell's resentment to me. I could not stoop to be familiar with my father's clerk, and so I have lost his interest.

Mrs. H. My spurit to a T. My dear child! [*Kisses her.*] Mr. Heidelberg lost his election for member of parliament, because I would not demean myself to be slabbared about by drunken shoemakers, beastly cheesemongers, and tallow-chandlers. However, niece, I can't help diffuring a little in opinion from you in this matter. My expurience and sagucity makes me still suspect that there is something more between her and that Lovewell, notwithstanding this affair of Sir John. I had my eye upon them the whole time of breakfast. Sir John, I observed, looked a little confounded, indeed, though I knew nothing of what had passed in the garden. You seemed to sit upon thorns too; but Fanny and Mr. Lovewell made quite another-guess sort of a figur! and were as perfect a pictur of two distressed lovers as if it had been drawn by Raphael Angelo. As to Sir John and Fanny, I want a matter-of-fact.

Miss S. Matter-of-fact, madam! Did not I come unexpectedly upon them? Was not Sir John kneeling at her feet, and kissing her hand? Did not he look all love, and she all confusion? Is not that matter-of-fact? And did not Sir John, the moment that papa was called out of the room to the lawyer-men, get up from breakfast, and follow him immediately? And I warrant you that by this time he has made proposals to him to marry my sister. Oh, that some other person, an earl or a duke, would make his addresses to me, that I might be revenged on this monster!

Mrs. H. Be cool, child. You shall be Lady Melvil, in spite of all their caballins, if it costs me ten thousand pounds to turn the scale. Sir John may apply to my brother indeed; but I'll make them all know who governs in this fammally.

Miss S. As I live, madam, yonder comes Sir John. A base man! I can't endure the sight of him. I'll leave the room this instant. [Disordered.]

Mrs. H. Poor thing! Well, retire to your own chamber, child. I'll give it him, I warrant you; and by-and-by I'll come and let you know all that has past between us.

Miss S. Pray do, madam. [Looking back.] A vile wretch! [Exit in a rage.]

Enter Sir JOHN MELVIL.

Sir J. Your most obedient humble servant, madam. [Bowing very respectfully.]

Mrs. H. Your servant, Sir John.

[Dropping a half curtsy and pouting.]

Sir J. Miss Sterling's manner of quitting the room on my approach, and the visible coolness of your behaviour to me, madam, convince me that she has acquainted you with what passed this morning.

Mrs. H. I am very sorry, Sir John, to be made acquainted with anything that should induce me to

change the opinion which I would always wish to entertain of a person of quality.

[*Pouting.*]

Sir J. It has always been my ambition to merit the best opinion from Mrs. Heidelberg; and when she comes to weigh circumstances, I flatter myself—

Mrs. H. You do flatter yourself, if you imagine that I can approve of your behaviour to my niece, Sir John. And give me leave to tell you, Sir John, that you have been drawn into an action much beneath you, Sir John; and that I look upon every injury offered to Miss Betty Sterling, as an affront to myself, Sir John.

[*Warmly.*]

Sir J. I would not offend you for the world, madam; but when I am influenced by a partiality for another, however ill-founded, I hope your discernment and good sense will think it rather a point of honour to renounce engagements which I could not fulfil so strictly as I ought; and that you will excuse the change in my inclinations, since the new object, as well as the first, has the honour of being your niece, madam.

Mrs. H. I disclaim her as a niece, Sir John; Miss Sterling disclaims her as a sister; and the whole family must disclaim her, for her monstrous baseness and treachery.

Sir J. Indeed she has been guilty of none, madam. Her hand and her heart are, I am sure, entirely at the disposal of yourself and Mr. Sterling. And if you should not oppose my inclinations, I am sure of Mr. Sterling's consent, madam.

Mrs. H. Indeed?

Sir J. Quite certain, madam.

Enter STERLING unperceived.

Ster. [*Behind.*] So! they seem to be coming to terms already. I may venture to make my appearance.

[*Sterling advances by degrees.*]

Mrs. H. To marry Fanny?

Sir J. Yes, madam.

Mrs. H. My brother has given his consent, you say?

Sir J. In the most ample manner, with no other restriction than the failure of your concurrence, madam. [*Sees Sterling.*] Oh, here's Mr. Sterling, who will confirm what I have told you.

Mrs. H. What, have you consented to give up your eldest daughter in this manner, brother?

Ster. Give her up? heaven forbid! No, not give her up, sister; only in case that you—Zounds! I am afraid you have said too much, Sir John.

[*Apart to Sir J.*]

Mrs. H. Yes, yes; I see now that it is true enough what my niece told me. You are all plotting and caballing against her. Pray, does Lord Ogleby know of this affair?

Sir J. I have not yet made him acquainted with it, madam.

Mrs. H. No, I warrant you. I thought so. And so his lordship and myself, truly, are not to be consulted till the last!

Ster. What! did not you consult my lord? Oh, fie for shame, Sir John!

Sir J. Nay, but Mr. Sterling—

Mrs. H. We, who are the persons of most consequence and experience in the two families, are to know nothing of the matter, till the whole is as good as concluded upon. But his lordship, I am sure, will have more generosity than to countenance such a proceeding. And I could not have expected such behaviour from a person of your quality, Sir John. And as for you, brother—

Ster. Nay, nay, but hear me, sister.

Mrs. H. I am perfectly ashamed of you. Have you no spurrit? no more concern for the honour of our family than to consent—

Ster. Consent! I consent! As I hope for mercy, I never gave my consent. Did I consent, Sir John?

Sir J. Not absolutely, without Mrs. Heidelberg's concurrence. But in case of her approbation—

Ster. Ay, in case, I grant you; that is, if my sister approved. But that's quite another thing, you know.

[*To Mrs. H.*]

Mrs. H. Your sister approve, indeed! I thought you knew her better, brother Sterling. What! approve of having your eldest daughter returned upon your hands, and exchanged for the younger? I am surprised how you could listen to such a scandalous proposal.

Ster. I tell you, I never did listen to it. Did not I say that I would be entirely governed by my sister, Sir John? And unless she agreed to your marrying Fanny—

Mrs. H. I agree to his marrying Fanny!—abominable! The man is absolutely out of his senses. Can't that wise head of your's foresee the consequence of all this, brother Sterling? Will Sir John take Fanny without a fortune? No! After you have settled the largest part of your property on your youngest daughter, can there be an equal portion left for the eldest? No! Does not this overturn the whole system of the family? Yes, yes, yes!

Ster. Do you see now what you've done? Don't betray, me, Sir John.

[*Apart to Sir J.*]

Mrs. H. You know I was always for my niece Betsy's marrying a person of the very first quality. That was my maxum; and, therefore, much the largest settlement was of course to be made upon her. As for Fanny, if she could, with a fortune of twenty or thirty thousand pounds, get a knight, or a member of parliament, or a rich common councilman, for a husband, I thought it might do very well.

Sir J. But if a better match should offer itself, why should it not be accepted, madam?

Mrs. H. What! at the expense of her elder sister? O fie, Sir John! How could you bear to hear such an indignity, brother Sterling?

Ster. I! Nay, I sha'n't hear of it, I promise you. I can't hear of it, indeed, Sir John.

Mrs. H. But you have heard of it, brother Sterling; you know you have, and sent Sir John to propose it to me. But if you can give up your daughter, I sha'n't forsake my niece, I assure you. Ah! if my poor dear Mr. Heidelberg, and our sweet babes had been alive, he would not have behaved so.

Ster. Did I, Sir John? Nay, speak! Bring me off, or we are ruined.

[*Apart to Sir J.*]

Sir J. Why, to be sure, to speak the truth—

Mrs. H. To speak the truth!—To speak the truth, I'm ashamed of you both. But have a care what you are about, brother! have a care, I say. The counsellors are in the house, I hear; and if everything is not settled to my liking, I'll have nothing more to say to you, if I live these hundred years. I'll go over to Holland, and settle with Mr. Vanderspraken, my poor husband's first cousin, and my own family shall never be the better for a farden of my money, I promise you.

[*Exit.*]

Ster. I thought so. I knew she would never agree to it.

Sir J. 'Sdeath, how unfortunate! What can we do, Mr. Sterling?

Ster. Nothing.

Sir J. What, must our agreement break off the moment it is made, then?

Ster. It can't be helped, Sir John. The family, as I told you before, have great expectations from my sister; and if this matter proceeds, you hear yourself, that she threatens to leave us. My brother Heidelberg was a warm man—a very warm man, and died worth a plum at least. A plum! ay, I warrant you, he died worth a plum and a half.

Sir J. Well; but if I—

Ster. And then, my sister has three or four very good mortgages, a deal of money in the three percents., and old South Sea annuities, besides large concerns in the Dutch and French funds. The greatest part of all this she means to leave to our family.

Sir J. I can only say, sir—

Ster. Why, your offer of the difference of thirty thousand was very fair and handsome, to be sure, Sir John.

Sir J. Nay, but I am willing to—

Ster. Ay, but if I was to accept it against her will, I might lose above a hundred thousand; so you see the balance is against you, Sir John.

Sir J. Suppose I was to prevail on Lord Ogleby to apply to her, do you think that would have any influence over her?

Ster. I think he would be more likely to persuade her to it than any other person in the family. She has a great respect for Lord Ogleby. She loves a lord.

Sir J. I'll apply to him this very day. And if he should prevail on Mrs. Heidelberg, I may depend on your friendship, Mr. Sterling?

Ster. Ay, ay, I shall be glad to oblige you, when it is in my power; but as the account stands now, you see it is not upon the figures. And so your servant, Sir John. [Exit.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Room.

Enter MR. STERLING, MRS. HEIDELBERG, and MISS STERLING.

Ster. What, will you send Fanny to town, sister?

Mrs. H. To-morrow morning: I've given orders about it already.

Ster. Indeed!

Mrs. H. Positively.

Ster. But consider, sister, at such a time as this, what an odd appearance it will have.

Mrs. H. Not half so odd as her behaviour, brother. This time was intended for happiness, and I'll keep no incendiaries here to destroy it. I insist on her going off to-morrow morning.

Ster. I'm afraid this is all your doing, Betsy?

Miss S. No, indeed, papa. My aunt knows that it is not. For all Fanny's baseness to me, I am sure I would not do or say anything to hurt her with you or my aunt, for the world.

Mrs. H. Hold your tongue, Betsy; I will have my way. When she is packed off, everything will go on as it should do. Since they are at their intrigues, I'll let them see that we can act with vigour on our part; and the sending her out of the way, shall be the purluminary step to all the rest of my proceedings.

Ster. Well, but sister—

Mrs. H. It does not signify talking, brother Sterling, for I'm resolved to be rid of her, and I will. Come along, child. [To Miss S.] The postshay shall be at the door by six o'clock in the morning; and if Miss Fanny does not get into it, why I will; and so there's an end of the matter. [Bounces out with Miss Sterling, then returns.] One word more, brother Sterling. I expect that you will take your eldest daughter in your hand, and make a formal complaint to Lord Ogleby of Sir John Melvil's behaviour. Do this, brother; show a proper regard for the honour of your fammaly yourself, and I shall throw in my mite to the raising of it. If not—but now you know my mind: so act as you please, and take the consequences. [Exit.

Ster. The devil's in the women for tyranny!—Mothers, wives, mistresses, or sisters, they always will govern us. As to my sister Heidelberg, she knows the strength of her purse, and domineers upon the credit of it.—“I will do this,” and “you shall do that;” and “you shall do t'other, or else the fammaly sha'n't have a farden of it.” [Mimicking.] So absolute with her money! But to say the truth, nothing but money can make us absolute, and so we must e'en make the best of her. [Exit.

SCENE II.—The Garden.

Enter LORD OGLEBY and CANTON.

Lord O. What! Mademoiselle Fanny to be sent away? Why? Wherefore? What's the meaning of all this?

Can. Je ne sçais pas; I know nothing of it.

Lord O. It can't be: it sha'n't be:—I protest against the measure. She's a fine girl, and I had much rather that the rest of the family were annihilated, than that she should leave us. Her vulgar father, that's the very abstract of Change-alley; the aunt, that's always endeavouring to be a fine lady; and the pert sister, for ever shewing that she is one, are horrid company indeed, and without her would be intolerable. Ah, la petite Fanchon! she's the thing: isn't she, Canton?

Can. Dere is very good sympathie entre vous and dat young lady, my lor.

Lord O. I'll not be left among these Goths and Vandals; your Sterlings, your Heidelbergs, and Devilbergs: if she goes, I'll positively go too.

Can. In de same post-chay, my lor? You have no objection to dat, I believe, nor mademoiselle neither too—Ha, ha, ha!

Lord O. Pr'ythee hold thy foolish tongue, Canton. Does thy Swiss stupidity imagine that I can see and talk with a fine girl without desires? My eyes are involuntarily attracted by beautiful objects. I fly as naturally to a fine girl!

Can. As de fine girl to you, mi lor, ha, ha, ha! you always fly togedre, like un pair de pigeons—

Lord O. Like un pair de pigeons. [Mocks him.] Vous êtes un sot, Monsieur Canton. Thou art always dreaming of my intrigues, and never see'st me badiner, but you suspect mischief, you old fool, you.

Can. I am fool, I confess, but not always fool in dat, mi lor; he, he, he!

Lord O. He, he, he! Thou art incorrigible, but thy absurdities amuse one. Thou art like my rappee, here, [takes out his box.] a most ridiculous superfluity; but a pinch of thee now and then is a most delicious treat.

Can. You do me great honneur, mi lor

Lord O. 'Tis fact, upon my soul. Thou art properly my cephalic snuff, and art no bad medicine

against megrims, vertigoes, and profound thinking—ha, ha, ha!

Can. Your flatterie, mi lor, vil make me too prone.

Lord O. The girl has some little partiality for me, to be sure; but pr'ythee, Cant, is not that Miss Fanny yonder?

Can. [*Looks with a glass.*] Ah—la voila! En verité, 'tis she, mi lor—'tis one of de pigeons—de pigeons d'amour.

Lord O. Don't be ridiculous, you old monkey.

Can. I am monkee. I am ole; but I have eye, I have ear, and a little understand, now and den.

Lord O. Taisez vous, bête.

Can. Elle vous attend, my lor.—She vil make a love to you.

Lord O. Will she? Have at her then! A fine girl can't oblige me more. 'Egad, I find myself a little enjoué. Come along, Cant.; she is but in the next walk; but there is such a deal of this d—d crinkum-crankum, as Sterling calls it, that one sees people for half an hour before one can get to them. Allons! Monsieur Canton, allons! donc.

[*Exeunt singing in French.*]

SCENE III.—Another part of the Garden.

Enter LOVEWELL and FANNY.

Love. My dear Fanny, I cannot bear your distress; it overcomes all my resolutions, and I am prepared for the discovery.

Fan. But how can it be effected before my departure?

Love. I'll tell you.—Lord Ogleby seems to entertain a visible partiality for you; and, notwithstanding the peculiarities of his behaviour, I am sure that he is humane at the bottom. He is vain to an excess; but withal extremely good-natured, and would do anything to recommend himself to a lady. Do you open the whole affair of our marriage to him immediately. It will come with more irresistible persuasion from you than from myself; and I doubt not but you'll gain his friendship and protection at once. His influence and authority will put an end to Sir John's solicitations, remove your aunt's and sister's unkindness and suspicions, and, I hope, reconcile your father and the whole family to our marriage.

Fan. Heaven grant it! Where is my lord?

Love. I have heard him and Canton, since dinner, singing French songs under the great walnut-tree, by the parlour-door. If you meet with him in the garden, you may disclose the whole immediately. To-morrow morning is fixed for your departure, and if we lose this opportunity, we may wish in vain for another. He approaches: I must retire. Speak, my dear Fanny, speak, and make us happy! [*Exit.*]

Fan. What shall I do? What shall I say to him? I am all confusion.

Enter Lord OGLEBY and CANTON.

Lord O. To see so much beauty so solitary, madam, is a satire upon mankind; and it is fortunate that one man has broken in upon your reverie for the credit of our sex. I say one, madam; for poor Canton here, from age and infirmities, stands for nothing.

Can. Noting at all, indeed.

Fan. Your lordship does me great honour. I have a favour to request, my lord.

Lord O. A favour, madam? To be honoured with

your commands is an inexpressible favour done to me, madam.

Fan. If your lordship could indulge me with the honour of a moment's—What's the matter with me?

[*Aside.*]

Lord O. The girl's confused—Hey!—here's something in the wind, faith. I'll have a tête-à-tête with her. [*Aside.*] Allez-vous-en.

[*To CANTON.*]

Can. I go.—Ah, pauvre mademoiselle! Mi lor, have pitié upon the poor pigeon.

[*Apart to Lord OGLEBY.*]

Lord O. I'll knock you down, Cant. [*Smiles.*]

Can. Den I go. [*Shuffles along*] You are mosh please, for all dat.

[*Aside.—Exit.*]

Fan. I shall sink with apprehension.

[*Aside.*]

Lord O. What a sweet girl!—she's a civilized being, and atones for the barbarism of the rest of the family.

[*Aside.*]

Fan. My lord, I— [*Courtseys and blushes.*]

Lord O. I look upon it, madam, to be one of the luckiest circumstances of my life, that I have, at this moment, the honour of receiving your commands, and the satisfaction of confirming with my tongue, what my eyes, perhaps, have but too weakly expressed—that I am literally the humblest of your servants.

Fan. I think myself greatly honoured by your lordship's partiality to me; but it distresses me that I am obliged, in my present situation, to apply to it for protection.

Lord O. I am happy in your distress, madam, because it gives me an opportunity to shew my zeal. Beauty, to me, is a religion, in which I was born and bred a bigot, and would die a martyr. I'm in tolerable spirits, faith!

[*Aside.*]

Fan. There is not, perhaps, at this moment, a more distressed creature than myself. Affection, duty, hope, despair, and a thousand different sentiments, are struggling in my bosom; and even the presence of your lordship, to whom I have flown for protection, adds to my perplexity.

Lord O. Does it, madam? Venus forbid!—My old fault; the devil's in me, I think, for perplexing young women. [*Aside, and smiling.*] Take courage, madam! dear Miss Fanny, explain. You have a powerful advocate in my breast, I assure you. My heart, madam—I am attached to you by all the laws of sympathy and delicacy—by my honour, I am.

Fan. Then I will venture to unburthen my mind—Sir John Melvil, my lord, by his most misplaced and mistimed declaration of affection for me, has made me the unhappiest of women.

Lord O. How, madam? Has Sir John made his addresses to you?

Fan. He has, my lord, in the strongest terms. But I hope it is needless to say that my duty to my father, love to my sister, and regard to the whole family, as well as the great respect I entertain for your lordship,—[*Courtseys.*]—made me shudder at his addresses.

Lord O. Charming girl! Proceed, my dear Miss Fanny, proceed.

Fan. In a moment—give me leave, my lord:—But if what I have to disclose should be received with anger or displeasure—

Lord O. Impossible! by all the tender powers! Speak, I beseech you, or I shall divine the cause before you utter it.

Fan. Then, my lord, Sir John's addresses are not only shocking to me in themselves, but are more particularly disagreeable to me at this time—as—

[*Hesitates.*]

Lord O. As what, madam?

Fan. As—pardon my confusion—I am entirely devoted to another.

Lord O. If this is not plain, the devil's in it!—*[Aside.]* But tell me, my dear Miss Fanny, for I must know; tell me the how, the when, and the where. Tell me—

Re-enter CANTON, hastily.

Can. Mi lor, mi lor, mi lor!

Lord O. D—n your Swiss impertinence! how durst you interrupt me in the most critical, melting moment that ever love and beauty honoured me with?

Can. I demand pardon, mi lor; Sir John Melvil, mi lor, sent me to beg you do him de honneur to speak a little to you, mi lor.

Lord O. I'm not at leisure; I am busy. Get away, you stupid old dog, you Swiss rascal, or I'll—

Can. Fort bien, mi lor.

[Goes out on tiptoe.]

Lord O. By the laws of gallantry, madam, this interruption should be death; but as no punishment ought to disturb the triumph of the softer passions, the criminal is pardoned and dismissed. Let us return, madam, to the highest luxury of exalted minds—a declaration of love from the lips of beauty.

Fan. The entrance of a third person has a little relieved me, but I cannot go through with it; and yet I must open my heart with a discovery, or it will break with its burthen.

[Aside.]

Lord O. What passion in her eyes! I am alarmed to agitation: *[Aside.]* I presumed, madam, (and as you have flattered me, by making me a party concerned, I hope you'll excuse the presumption) that—

Fan. Do you excuse my making you a party concerned, my lord, and let me interest your heart in my behalf, as my future happiness or misery in a great measure depend—

Lord O. Upon me, madam?

Fan. Upon you, my lord.

[Sighs.]

Lord O. There's no standing this: I have caught the infection; her tenderness dissolves me.

[Sighs.]

Fan. And should you too severely judge of a rash action which passion prompted, and modesty has long concealed—

Lord O. *[Takes her hand.]* Thou amiable creature! command my heart, for it is vanquished. Speak but thy virtuous wishes, and enjoy them.

Fan. I cannot, my lord; indeed, I cannot. Mr. Lovewell must tell you my distresses; and when you know them, pity and protect me.

[Exit in tears.]

Lord O. How the devil could I bring her to this? It is too much—too much; I can't bear it: I must give way to this amiable weakness. *[Wipes his eyes.]* My heart overflows with sympathy, and I feel every tenderness I have inspired. *[Stifles a tear.]* Can I be a man and withstand it? No; I'll sacrifice the whole sex to her. But here comes the father, quite apropos. I'll open the matter immediately, settle the business with him, and take the sweet girl down to Ogleby-house to-morrow morning. But what the devil! Miss Sterling too!—What mischief's in the wind now? no conquest there: no, no, that would be too much desolation in the family.

Enter STERLING and Miss STERLING.

Ster. My lord, your servant: I am attending my daughter here upon rather a disagreeable affair. Speak to his lordship, Betsy.

Lord O. Your eyes, Miss Sterling, for I always read the eyes of a young lady, betray some little emotion. What are your commands, madam?

Miss S. I have but too much cause for my emotion, my lord.

Lord O. I cannot commend my kinsman's behaviour, madam. He has behaved like a false knight, I must confess. I have heard of his apostasy.—Miss Fanny has informed me of it.

Miss S. Miss Fanny's baseness has been the cause of Sir John's inconstancy.

Lord O. Nay now, my dear Miss Sterling, your passion transports you too far. Sir John may have entertained a passion for Miss Fanny; but believe me, my dear Miss Sterling, believe me, Miss Fanny has no passion for Sir John. She has a passion, indeed, a most tender passion. She has opened her whole soul to me, and I know where her affections are placed.

[Conceitedly.]

Miss S. Not upon Mr. Lovewell, my lord.

Lord O. Lovewell! no, poor lad! she does not think of him. *[Smiles.]* I know better: however, a little time will solve all mysteries.

Miss S. Have a care, my lord, that both the families are not made the dupes of Sir John's artifice, and my sister's dissimulation. You don't know her; indeed, my lord, you don't know her; a base, insinuating, perfidious—It is too much! She has been before-hand with me, I perceive, endeavouring to prejudice your lordship in her favour; and I am to be laughed at by everybody. Such unnatural behaviour to me! But since I see I can have no redress, I am resolved that, some way or other, I will have revenge.

[Exit.]

Ster. This is foolish work, my lord.

Lord O. I have too much sensibility to bear the tears of beauty.

Ster. It is touching indeed, my lord; and very moving for a father.

Lord O. To be sure, sir: you, with your exquisite feelings, must be distressed beyond measure. Wherefore, to divert your too exquisite feeling, suppose we change the subject, and proceed to business.

Ster. With all my heart, my lord.

Lord O. You see, Mr. Sterling, we can make no union in our families by the proposed marriage.

Ster. And I am very sorry to see it, my lord.

Lord O. Have you set your heart upon being allied to our house, Mr. Sterling?

Ster. 'Tis my only wish, at present, my omnium, as I may call it.

Lord O. Your wishes shall be fulfilled.

Ster. Shall they, my lord? but how—how?

Lord O. I'll marry in your family.

Ster. What! my sister Heidelberg?

Lord O. You throw me into a cold sweat, Mr. Sterling. No; not your sister, but your daughter.

Ster. My daughter!

Lord O. Fanny: now the murder's out.

Ster. What! you, my lord?

Lord O. Yes; I, I, Mr. Sterling.

Ster. No, no, my lord; that's too much. *[Smiles.]*

Lord O. Too much! I don't comprehend you.

Ster. What you, my lord, marry my Fanny! Bless me! what will the folks say?

Lord O. Why, what will they say?

Ster. That you are a bold man, my lord; that's all. Lord O. Mr. Sterling, this may be city wit, for aught I know. Do you court my alliance?

Ster. To be sure, my lord.

Lord O. Then I'll explain. My nephew won't marry your eldest daughter, nor I neither. Your youngest daughter won't marry him: I will marry your youngest daughter.

Ster. What! with a youngest daughter's fortune, my lord?

Lord O. With any fortune, or no fortune at all, sir. Love is the idol of my heart, and the demon, interest, sinks before him. So, sir, as I said before, I will marry your youngest daughter; your youngest daughter will marry me.

Ster. Who told you so, my lord?

Lord O. Her own sweet self, sir.

Ster. Indeed!

Lord O. Yes, sir; our affection is mutual—your advantage double and treble: your daughter will be a countess directly, I shall be the happiest of beings, and you'll be father to an earl instead of a baronet.

Ster. But what will my sister say? and my daughter?

Lord O. I'll manage that matter; nay, if they won't consent, I'll run away with your daughter in spite of you.

Ster. Well said, my lord! your spirit's good; I wish you had my constitution; but if you'll venture, I have no objection, if my sister has none.

Lord O. I'll answer for your sister, sir. Apropos—the lawyers are in the house; I'll have articles drawn, and the whole affair concluded to-morrow morning.

Ster. Very well; and I'll despatch Lovewell to London immediately for some fresh papers I shall want: you must excuse me, my lord, but I can't help laughing at the match.—He, he, he! what will the folks say? *[Exit.]*

Lord O. What a fellow am I going to make a father of! He has no more feeling than the post in his warehouse. But Fanny's virtues tune me to rapture again, and I won't think of the rest of the family.

Re-enter LOVEWELL, hastily.

Love. I beg your lordship's pardon; are you alone, my lord?

Lord O. No, my lord, I am not alone; I am in company—the best company.

Love. My lord!

Lord O. I never was in such exquisite, enchanting company, since my heart first conceived, or my senses tasted pleasure.

Love. Where are they, my lord? *[Looks about.]*

Lord O. "In my mind's eye, Horatio."

Love. What company have you there, my lord?

Lord O. My own ideas, sir, which so crowd upon my imagination, and kindle in it such a delirium of ecstasy, that wit, wine, music, poetry, all combined, and each in perfection, are but mere mortal shadows of my felicity.

Love. I see that your lordship is happy, and I rejoice at it.

Lord O. You shall rejoice at it, sir: my felicity shall not selfishly be confined, but shall spread its influence to the whole circle of my friends. I need not say, Lovewell, that you shall have your share of it.

Love. Shall I, my lord? then I understand you;—you have heard;—Miss Fanny has informed you—

Lord O. She has; I have heard, and she shall be happy: 'tis determined.

Love. Then I have reached the summit of my wishes. And will your lordship pardon the folly?

Lord O. O yes: poor creature, how could she help it? 'Twas unavoidable—fate and necessity.

Love. It was indeed, my lord. Your kindness distracts me.

Lord O. And so it did the poor girl, faith!

ACT. DRAMA.—NOS. 89 & 90.

Love. She trembled to disclose the secret, and declare her affections?

Lord O. The world, I believe, will not think her affections ill placed.

Love. *[Bows.]* You are too good, my lord.—And do you really excuse the rashness of the action?

Lord O. From my very soul, Lovewell.

Love. *[Bows.]* I was afraid of her meeting with a cold reception.

Lord O. More fool you then—

*Who pleads her cause with never-failing beauty,
Here finds a full redress.* *[Strikes his breast.]*

She's a fine girl, Lovewell.

Love. Her beauty, my lord, is the least merit. She has an understanding—

Lord O. Her choice convinces me of that.

Love. *[Bows.]* That's your lordship's goodness. Her choice was a disinterested one.

Lord O. No, no, not altogether; it began with interest, and ended in passion.

Love. Indeed, my lord, if you were acquainted with her goodness of heart, and generosity of mind, as well as you are with the inferior beauties of her face and person—

Lord O. I am so perfectly convinced of their existence, and so totally of your mind, touching every amiable particular of that sweet girl, that, were it not for the cold, unfeeling impediments of the law, I would marry her to-morrow morning.

Love. My lord!

Lord O. I would, by all that's honourable in man, and amiable in woman!

Love. Marry her! Who do you mean, my lord?

Lord O. Miss Fanny Sterling, that is; the Countess of Ogleby, that shall be.

Love. I am astonished!

Lord O. Why, could you expect less from me?

Love. I did not expect this, my lord.

Lord O. Trade and accounts have destroyed your feeling.

Love. No, indeed, my lord. *[Sighs.]*

Lord O. The moment that love and pity entered my breast, I was resolved to plunge into matrimony, and shorten the girl's tortures. I never do anything by halves, do I, Lovewell?

Love. No, indeed, my lord. *[Sighs.]* What an accident!

Lord O. What's the matter, Lovewell? thou seem'st to have lost thy faculties. Why don't you wish me joy, man?

Love. O, I do, my lord. *[Sighs.]*

Lord O. She said that you would explain what she had not power to utter; but I wanted no interpreter for the language of love.

Love. But has your lordship considered the consequences of your resolution?

Lord O. No, sir, I am above consideration, when my desires are kindled.

Love. But consider the consequences, my lord, to your nephew, Sir John.

Lord O. Sir John has considered no consequences himself, Mr. Lovewell.

Love. Mr. Sterling, my lord, will certainly refuse his daughter to Sir John.

Lord O. Sir John has already refused Mr. Sterling's daughter.

Love. But what will become of Miss Sterling, my lord?

Lord O. What's that to you? You may have her, if you will. I depend upon Mr. Sterling's city philosophy to be reconciled to Lord Ogleby's being his

son-in-law, instead of Sir John Melvil, baronet. Don't you think that your master may be brought so that, without having recourse to his calculations, eh, Lovewell?

Love. But my lord, that is not the question.

Lord O. Whatever is the question, I'll tell you my answer. I am in love with a fine girl, whom I resolve to marry.

Enter Sir JOHN MELVIL.

What news with you, Sir John? You look all hurry and impatience, like a messenger after a battle.

Sir J. After a battle indeed, my lord. I have this day had a severe engagement; and, wanting your lordship as an auxiliary, I have at last mustered up resolution to declare, what my duty to you and to myself have demanded from me some time.

Lord O. To the business then, and be as concise as possible, for I am upon the wing; eh, Lovewell?

[*Smiles, and LOVEWELL bows.*]

Sir J. I find 'tis in vain, my lord, to struggle against the force of inclination.

Lord O. Very true, nephew; I am your witness, and will second the motion—sha'n't I, Lovewell?

[*Smiles, and LOVEWELL bows.*]

Sir J. Your lordship's generosity encourages me to tell you that I cannot marry Miss Sterling.

Lord O. I am not at all surprised at it; she's a bitter potion, that's the truth of it; but, as you were to swallow it and not I, it was your business, not mine.—Anything more?

Sir J. But this, my lord; that I may be permitted to make my addresses to the other sister.

Lord O. O yes, by all means; have you any hopes there, nephew? Do you think he'll succeed, Lovewell?

[*Smiles, and winks at LOVEWELL.*]

Love. I think not, my lord. [*Gravely.*]

Lord O. I think so too; but let the fool try.

Sir J. Will your lordship favour me with your good offices to remove the chief obstacle to the match, the repugnance of Mrs. Heidelberg?

Lord O. Mrs. Heidelberg? Had not you better begin with the young lady first? It will save you a great deal of trouble; won't it, Lovewell? [*Smiles.*] But do what you please, it will be the same thing to me—won't it, Lovewell? [*Conceitedly.*] Why don't you laugh at him?

Love. I do, my lord. [*Forces a smile.*]

Sir J. And your lordship will endeavour to prevail on Mrs. Heidelberg to consent to my marriage with Miss Fanny?

Lord O. I'll speak to Mrs. Heidelberg about the adorable Fanny as soon as possible.

Sir J. Your generosity transports me.

Lord O. Poor fellow, what a dupe! he little thinks who's in possession of the town? [*Aside.*]

Sir J. And your lordship is not in the least offended at this seeming inconstancy?

Lord O. Not in the least. Miss Fanny's charms will even excuse infidelity. I look upon women as the *fera natura*, lawful game, and every man who is qualified, has a natural right to pursue them—Lovewell as well as you, and you as well as he, and I as well as either of you. Every man shall do his best, without offence to any—what say you, kinsmen?

Sir J. You have made me happy, my lord.

Love. And me, I assure you, my lord.

Lord O. And I am superlatively so—allons donc! To horse and away, boys!—you to your affairs, and I to mine—*suivons l'amour.* [*Sings.—Eccunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—Fanny's Apartment.

Enter LOVEWELL and FANNY, followed by BETTY.

Fan. Why did you come so soon, Mr. Lovewell? the family is not yet in bed, and Betty certainly heard somebody listening near the chamber-door.

Bet. My mistress is right, sir; evil spirits are abroad; and I am sure you are both too good, not to expect mischief from them.

Love. But who can be so curious, or so wicked?

Bet. I think we have wickedness and curiosity enough in this family, sir, to expect the worst.

Fan. I do expect the worst. Pr'ythee, Betty, return to the outward door, and listen if you hear anybody in the gallery, and let us know directly.

Bet. I warrant you, madam; the lord bless you both. [*Exit.*]

Fan. What did my father want with you this evening?

Love. He gave me the key of his closet, with orders to bring from London some papers relating to Lord Ogleby.

Fan. And why did you not obey him?

Love. Because I am certain that his lordship has opened his heart to him about you, and those papers are wanted merely on that account. But, as we shall discover all to-morrow, there will be no occasion for them, and it would be idle in me to go.

Fan. Hark!—hark! bless me, how I tremble! I feel the terrors of guilt. Indeed, Mr. Lovewell, this is too much for me; this situation may have very unhappy consequences. [*Weeps.*]

Love. But it sha'n't. I would rather tell our story this moment to all the house, and run the risk of maintaining you by the hardest labour, than suffer you to remain in this dangerous perplexity. What! shall I sacrifice all my best hopes and affections, in your dear health and safety, for the mean (and in such case the meanest) consideration, of our fortune? Were we to be abandoned by all our relations, we have that in our hearts and minds will weigh against the most affluent circumstances. I should not have proposed the secrecy of our marriage, but for your sake; and with hopes that the most generous sacrifice, you have made to love and me, might be less injurious to you, by waiting a lucky moment of reconciliation.

Fan. Hush, hush! for heaven's sake, my dear Lovewell, don't be so warm! your generosity gets the better of your prudence: you will be heard, and we shall be discovered. I am satisfied, indeed I am. Excuse this weakness, this delicacy, this what you will. My mind's at peace, indeed it is; think no more of it, if you love me.

Love. That one word has charmed me, as it always does, to the most implicit obedience: it would be the worst of ingratitude in me to distress you a moment. [*Kisses her.*]

Re-enter BETTY.

Bet. [*In a low voice.*] I'm sorry to disturb you.

Fan. Ha! what's the matter?

Love. Have you heard anybody?

Bet. Yes, yes, I have; and they have heard you too, or I'm mistaken; if they had seen you too, we should have been in a fine quandary.

Fan. Pr'ythee don't prate now, Betty.

Love. What did you hear?

Bet. I was preparing myself, as usual, to take me a little nap—

Love. A nap!

Bet. Yes, sir, a nap; for I watch much better so than wide awake; and when I had wrapped this handkerchief round my head, for fear of the earache from the key-hole, I thought I heard a kind of a sort of buzzing, which I first took for a gnat, and shook my head two or three times, and went so with my hand.

Fan. Well, well; and so—

Bet. And so, madam, when I heard Mr. Lovewell a little loud, I heard the buzzing louder too; and, pulling off my handkerchief softly, I could hear this sort of noise.—

[*Makes an indistinct noise, like speaking.*]

Fan. Well, and what did they say?

Bet. Oh! I could not understand a word of what was said.

Love. The outward door is locked?

Bet. Yes; and I bolted it too, for fear of the worst.

Fan. Why did you? they must have heard you, if they were near.

Bet. And I did it on purpose, madam, and coughed a little too, that they might not hear Mr. Lovewell's voice: when I was silent, they were silent, and so I came to tell you.

Fan. What shall we do?

Love. Fear nothing; we know the worst; it will only bring on our catastrophe a little too soon.—But Betty might fancy this noise; she's in the conspiracy, and can make a man a mouse at any time.

Bet. I can distinguish a man from a mouse as well as my betters: I am sorry you think so ill of me, sir.

Fan. He compliments you—don't be a fool.—Now you have set her tongue a running, she'll mutter for an hour. [*To LOVEWELL.*] I'll go and hearken myself. [*Exit.*]

Bet. I'll turn my back upon no girl for sincerity and service. [*Half aside, muttering.*]

Love. Thou art the first in the world for both; and I will reward you soon, for one and the other.

Bet. I am not mercenary neither: I can live on a little, with a good carter.

Re-enter FANNY.

Fan. All seems quiet. Suppose, my dear, you go to your own room; I shall be much easier then, and to-morrow we will be prepared for the discovery.

Bet. You may discover, if you please; but for my part, I shall still be secret. [*Half aside.*]

Love. Should I leave you now, if they still are on the watch, we shall lose the advantage of our delay. Besides, we should consult upon to-morrow's business. Let Betty go to her own room, and lock the outward door after her; we can fasten this; and, when she thinks all safe, she may return and let me out as usual.

Bet. Shall I, madam?

Fan. Do let me have my way to-night, and you shall command me ever after.

Love. I live only to oblige you, my sweet Fanny! I'll be gone this moment. [*Going.*]

Fan. Betty shall go first, and if they lay hold of her—

Bet. They'll have the wrong sow by the ear, I can tell them that. [*Going hastily.*]

Fan. Softly, softly, Betty; don't venture out, if you hear a noise. Softly, I beg of you. See, Mr. Lovewell, the effects of indiscretion!

Love. But love, Fanny, makes amends for all.

[*Ereunt softly.*]

SCENE II.—*A Gallery, which leads to several bed-chambers. The stage dark.*

Enter Miss STERLING, leading Mrs. HEIDELBERG, in a night-cap.

Miss S. This way, dear madam, and then I'll tell you all.

Mrs. H. Nay but, niece, consider a little—don't drag me out this figure; let me put on my fly-cap. If any of my lord's famnaly, or the counsellors at law should be stirring, I should be prodigus disconcerted.

Miss S. But, my dear madam, a moment is an age, in my situation. I am sure my sister has been plotting my disgrace and ruin in that chamber!—O! she's all craft and wickedness.

Mrs. H. Well, but softly, Betsy; you are all in emotion; your mind is too much flustrated; you can neither eat, nor drink, nor take your natara rest. Compose yourself, child; for, if we are not as warisome as they are wicked, we shall disgrace ourselves and the whole famnaly.

Miss S. We are disgraced already, madam. Sir John Melvil has forsaken me; my lord cares for nobody but himself; or if anybody, it is my sister: my father, for the sake of a better bargain, would marry me to a 'Change broker: so that if you, madam, don't continue my friend—if you forsake me—if I am to lose my best hopes and consolation—in your tenderness—and affections—I had better—at once—give up the matter—and let my sister enjoy—the fruits of her treachery—trample with scorn upon the rights of her elder sister—the will of the best of aunts—and the weakness of a too interested father.

[*She pretends to be bursting into tears during this speech.*]

Mrs. H. Don't, Betsy—keep up your spurit: I hate whimpering—I am your friend; depend upon me in every partiklar. But be composed, and tell me what new mischief you have discovered.

Miss S. I had no desire to sleep, and would not undress myself, knowing that my Machiavel sister would not rest till she had broke my heart: I was so uneasy that I could not stay in my room, but when I thought that all the house was quiet, I sent my maid to discover what was going forward; she immediately came back and told me, that they were in high consultation; that she heard only, for it was in the dark, my sister's maid conducting Sir John Melvil to her mistress, and then lock the door.

Mrs. H. And how did you conduct yourself in this dilemma?

Miss S. I returned with her, and could hear a mau's voice, though nothing that they said distinctly; and you may depend upon it, that Sir John is now in that room, that they have settled the matter, and will run away together before the morning, if we don't prevent them.

Mrs. H. Why, the brazen slut! she has got her sister's husband, (that is to be,) lock'd up in her chamber! at night too! I tremble at the thoughts!

Miss S. Hush, madam! I hear something.

Mrs. H. You frighten me:—let me put on my fly-cap—I would not be seen in this figur for the world.

Miss S. 'Tis dark, madam; you can't be seen.

Mrs. H. I protest, there's a candle coming, and a man too!

Miss S. Nothing but servants; let us retire a moment. [*They retire.*]

Enter BRUSH, half drunk, laying hold of the Chambermaid, who has a candle in her hand.

Cham. Be quiet, Mr. Brush; I shall drop down with terror.

Brush. But my sweet, and most amiable chambermaid, if you have no love, you may hearken to a little reason; that cannot possibly do your virtue any harm.

Cham. But you may do me harm, Mr. Brush, and a great deal of harm too; pray let me go; I am ruined if they hear you! I tremble like an asp.

Brush. But they sha'n't hear us; and if you have a mind to be ruined, it shall be the making of your fortune, you little slut, you! therefore, I say it again, if you have no love, hear a little reason!

Cham. I wonder at your impudence, Mr. Brush, to use me in this manner; this is not the way to keep me company, I assure you. You are a town-rake, I see, and now you are a little in liquor, you fear nothing.

Brush. Nothing, by heavens! but your frowns, most amiable chambermaid; I am a little electrified, that's the truth on't; I am not used to drink port, and your master's is so heady, that a pint of it over-sets a claret-drinker. Come, now, my dear little spider-brusher!

Cham. Don't be rude! bless me! I shall be ruined—what will become of me?

Brush. I'll take care of you, by all that's honourable!

Cham. You are a base man to use me so—I'll cry out if you don't let me go. That is Miss Sterling's chamber, that Miss Fanny's, and that Madam Heidelberg's.

Brush. We know all that. And that Lord Ogleby's, and that my Lady What-d'ye-call-'em's: I don't mind such folks when I'm sober, much less when I am whimsical—rather above that, too.

Cham. More shame for you, Mr. Brush! you terrify me; you have no modesty.

Brush. O, but I have, my sweet spider-brusher: for instance, I reverence Miss Fanny; she's a most delicious morsel, and fit for a prince. With all my horrors of matrimony, I could marry her myself:—but for her sister—

Miss S. [*Within*.] There, there, madam, all in a story!

Cham. Bless me, Mr. Brush!—I heard something.

Brush. Rats, I suppose, that are gnawing the old timbers of this execrable old dungeon; if it was mine, I would pull it down, and fill your fine canal up with the rubbish; and then I should get rid of two d—n'd things at once.

Cham. La! la! how you blaspheme! we shall have the house upon our heads for it.

Brush. No, no, it will last our time;—but as I was saying, the eldest sister, Miss Jezebel—

Cham. Is a fine young lady, for all your evil tongue.

Brush. No; we have smoked her already; and, unless she marries our old Swiss, she can have none of us.—No, no, she won't do—we are a little too nice.

Cham. You're a monstrous rake, Mr. Brush, and don't care what you say.

Brush. Why, for that matter, my dear, I am a little inclined to mischief; and if you don't have pity upon me, I will break open that door, and ravish Mrs. Heidelberg.

Mrs. H. [*Coming forward*.] There's no bearing this—you profligate monster!

Cham. Ha! I am undone!

Brush. Zounds! here she is, by all that's monstrous.

Miss S. A fine discourse you have had with that fellow.

Mrs. H. And a fine time of night it is to be here with that drunken monster!

Miss S. What have you to say for yourself?

Cham. I can say nothing—I'm so frightened, and so ashamed.—But, indeed, I am virtuous—I am virtuous, indeed.

Mrs. H. Well, well—don't tremble so; but tell us what you know of this horrible plot here.

Miss S. We'll forgive you if you'll discover all.

Cham. Why, madam, don't let me betray my fellow-servants; I sha'n't sleep in my bed, if I do.

Mrs. H. Then you shall sleep somewhere else to-morrow night.

Cham. O dear! what shall I do?

Mrs. H. Tell us this moment, or I'll turn you out of doors directly.

Cham. Why, our butler has been treating us below in his pantry; Mr. Brush forced us to make a kind of holiday night of it.

Miss S. Holiday! for what?

Cham. Nay, I only made one.

Miss S. Well, well! but upon what account?

Cham. Because as how, madam, there was a change in the family, they said—that his honour, Sir John, was to marry Miss Fanny instead of your ladyship.

Miss S. And so you make a holiday for that.—Very fine!

Cham. I did not make it, ma'am.

Mrs. H. But do you know nothing of Sir John's being to run away with Miss Fanny to-night?

Cham. No, indeed, ma'am.

Miss S. Nor of his being now locked up in my sister's chamber?

Cham. No, as I hope for mercy, ma'am.

Mrs. H. Well, I'll put an end to all this directly; do you run to my brother Sterling—

Cham. Now, ma'am? 'Tis so very late, ma'am—

Mrs. H. I don't care how late it is. Tell him there are thieves in the house—that the house is on fire—tell him to come here immediately. Go, I say.

Cham. I will, I will, though I'm frighten'd out of my wits.

Mrs. H. Do you watch here, my dear; and I'll put myself in order to face them. We'll plot 'em, and counterplot 'em too.

Miss S. I have as much pleasure in this revenge, as in being made a countess. Ha! they are unlocking the door. Now for it!

Fanny's door is unlocked, and BETTY comes out,
Miss STERLING approaches.

Bet. [*Calling within*.] Sir! sir! now's your time—all's clear. [*Seeing Miss STERLING*.]—Stay, stay—not yet—we are watch'd.

Miss S. And so you are, Madam Betty.

[Miss STERLING lays hold of her, while BETTY locks the door, and puts the key into her pocket.

Bet. [*Turning round*.] What's the matter, madam?

Miss S. Nay, that you shall tell my father and aunt, madam.

Bet. I am no tell-tale, madam, and no thief; they'll get nothing from me.

Miss S. You have a great deal of courage, Betty, and, considering the secrets you have to keep, you have occasion for it.

Bet. My mistress shall never repent her good opinion of me, ma'am.

Enter STERLING.

Ster. What's all this? What's the matter? Why am I disturb'd in this manner?

Miss S. This creature, and my distresses, sir, will explain this matter.

Re-enter Mrs. HEIDELBERG, with another head-dress.

Mrs. H. Now I'm prepared for the rancounter.—Well, brother, have you heard of this scene of wickedness?

Ster. Not I—but what is it? speak. I was got into my little closet, all the lawyers were in bed, and I had almost lost my senses in the confusion of Lord Ogleby's mortgages, when I was alarmed with a foolish girl, who could hardly speak; and whether it's fire, or thieves, or murder, or a rape, I'm quite in the dark.

Mrs. H. No, no; there's no rape, brother. All parties are willing, I believe.

Miss S. Who's in that chamber?

[*Detaining BETTY, who seemed to be stealing away.*

Bet. My mistress.

Miss S. And who's with your mistress?

Bet. Why, who should there be?

Miss S. Open the door, then, and let us see.

Bet. The door is open, madam. [*Miss STERLING goes to the door.*] I'll sooner die than peach. [*Exit hastily.*

Miss S. The door is locked; and she has got the key in her pocket.

Mrs. H. There's impudence, brother! piping hot from your daughter Fanny's school!

Ster. But, zounds! what is all this about? You tell me of a sum total, and you don't produce the particulars.

Mrs. H. Sir John Melvil is locked up in your daughter's bed-chamber—There is the particular.

Ster. The devil he is!—That's bad.

Miss S. And he has been there some time, too.

Ster. Ditto!

Mrs. H. Ditto! worse and worse, I say. I'll raise the whole house, and expose him to my lord, and the whole fammaly.

Ster. By no means! we shall expose ourselves, sister. The best way is to insure privately:—let me alone! I'll make him marry her to-morrow morning.

Miss S. Make him marry her! this is beyond all patience!—You have thrown away all your affection, and I shall do as much by my obedience; unnatural fathers make unnatural children. My revenge is in my own power, and I'll indulge it. Had they made their escape, I should have been exposed to the derision of the world: but the deriders shall be derided; and so—Help, help, there!—Thieves! thieves!

Mrs. H. Tit-for-tat, Betsy! you are right, my girl.

Ster. Zounds! you'll spoil all—you'll raise the whole family—the devil's in the girl.

Mrs. H. No, no; the devil's in you, brother: I am ashamed of your principles. What! would you connive at your daughter's being locked up with her sister's husband? Help! Thieves! thieves! I say.

Ster. Sister, I beg of you! daughter, I command you!—If you have no regard for me, consider yourselves! We shall lose this opportunity of ennobling our blood, and getting above twenty per cent. for our money.

Miss S. What, by my disgrace and my sister's triumph? I have a spirit above such mean considerations: and to shew you that it is not a low-bred, vulgar, Change-alley spirit.—Help! help! Thieves! thieves! I say.

Ster. Ay, ay, you may save your lungs: the house is in an uproar.

Enter CANTON, in a night-gown and slippers.

Can. Eh, diable! vat is de raison of dis great noise, dis tintamarre?

Ster. Ask those ladies, sir; 'tis of their making.

Lord O. [*Calls within.*] Brush!—Brush!—Canton!—Where are you?—What's the matter?—[*Rings a bell.*] Where are you?

Ster. 'Tis my lord calls, Mr. Canton.

Can. I com, mi lor! [*Lord O. still rings.*—*Exit.*

Flow. [*Calls within.*] A light! a light here!—Where are the servants? Bring a light for me and my brothers.

Ster. Lights here! lights for the gentlemen!

[*Exit.*

Mrs. H. My brother feels, I see:—your sister's turn will come next.

Miss S. Ay, ay, let it go round, madam, it is the only comfort I have left.

Re-enter STERLING with lights, before SERGEANT FLOWER, with a boot and a slipper, and TRAVERSE.

Ster. This way, sir; this way, gentlemen.

Flow. Well, but Mr. Sterling, no danger, I hope? Have they made a burglarious entry? Are you prepared to repulse them? I am very much alarmed about thieves at circuit time. They would be particularly severe with us gentlemen of the bar.

Trav. No danger, Mr. Sterling;—no trespass, I hope?

Ster. None, gentlemen, but of those ladies' making.

Mrs. H. You'll be ashamed to know, gentlemen, that all your labours and studies about this young lady, are thrown away—Sir John Melvil is at this moment locked up with this lady's younger sister.

Flow. The thing is a little extraordinary, to be sure; but, why were we to be frightened out of our beds for this? Could not we have tried this cause to-morrow morning?

Miss S. But, sir, by to-morrow morning, perhaps, even your assistance would not have been of any service:—the birds now in that cage would have flown away.

Enter Lord OGLEBY, in his robe-de-chambre, night-cap, &c. leaning on CANTON.

Lord O. I had rather lose a limb than my night's rest. What's the matter with you all?

Ster. Ay, ay, 'tis all over!—Here's my lord, too. *Lord O.* What's all this shrieking and screaming? Where's my angelic Fanny? She's safe, I hope.

Mrs. H. Your angelic Fanny, my lord, is locked up with your angelic nephew in that chamber.

Lord O. My nephew! Then I will be excommunicated.

Mrs. H. Your nephew, my lord, has been plotting to run away with Miss Fanny, and Miss Fanny has been plotting to run away with your nephew: and if we had not watched them, and called up the fammaly, they had been upon the scamper to Scotland by this time.

Lord O. Look ye, ladies! I know that Sir John has conceived a violent passion for Miss Fanny; and I know too, that Miss Fanny has conceived a

violent passion for another person; and I am so well convinced of the rectitude of her affections, that I will support them with my fortune, my honour, and my life.—Eh, sha'n't I, Mr. Sterling? [*Smiling.*] What say you?

Ster. [*Sulkily.*] To be sure, my lord. These bawling women have been the ruin of everything.

[*Aside.*]

Lord O. But, come, I'll end this business in a trice.—If you, ladies, will compose yourselves, and Mr. Sterling will ensure Miss Fanny from violence, I will engage to draw her from her pillow with a whisper through the key-hole.

Mrs. H. The horrid creatures!—I say, my lord, break the door open.

Lord O. Let me beg of your delicacy not to be too precipitate! Now to our experiment!

[*Advancing towards the door.*]

Miss S. Now, what will they do? My heart will beat through my bosom.

Re-enter BETTY with the key.

Bet. There's no occasion for breaking open doors, my lord; we have done nothing that we ought to be ashamed of, and my mistress shall face her enemies. [*Going to unlock the door.*]

Mrs. H. There's impudence!

Lord O. The mystery thickens. Lady of the bedchamber, [*To Betty.*] open the door, and entreat Sir John Melvil (for the ladies will have it that he is there) to appear, and answer to high crimes and misdemeanors. Call Sir John Melvil into court!

Enter Sir JOHN MELVIL.

Sir J. I am here, my lord.

Mrs. H. Hey-day!

Sir J. What's all this alarm and confusion? There is nothing but hurry in this house? What is the reason of it?

Lord O. Because you have been in that chamber;—have been! nay, you are there at this moment, as these ladies have protested, so don't deny it—

Trav. This is the clearest alibi I ever knew, Mr. Sergeant.

Flaw. Luce clarius.

Lord O. Upon my word, ladies, if you have often these frolics, it would be really entertaining to pass a whole summer with you. But, come, [*To Betty.*] open the door and entreat your amiable mistress to come forth, and dispel all our doubts with her smiles.

Bet. [*Opening the door.*] Madam, you are wanted in this room. [*Pertly.*]

Enter FANNY, in great confusion.

Miss S. You see she's ready dressed—and what confusion she's in.

Mrs. H. Ready to pack off, bag and baggage! Her guilt confounds her!

Flaw. Silence in the court, ladies.

Lord O. I am confounded indeed, madam.

Lord O. Don't droop, my beautiful lily! but with your own peculiar modesty declare your state of mind. Pour conviction into their ears, and rapture into mine. [*Smiling.*]

Fan. I am, at this moment, the most unhappy—most distressed—the tumult is too much for my heart—and I want the power to reveal a secret, which, to conceal, has been the misfortune and misery of my— [*Faints away.*]

LOVEWELL rushes out of the chamber.

Love. My Fanny in danger! I can contain no longer. Prudence were now a crime; all other cares

were lost in this. Speak, speak, speak to me, my dearest Fanny! let me but hear thy voice: open your eyes, and bless me with the smallest sign of life.

Miss S. Lovewell!—I am easy.

Mrs. H. I am thunderstruck!

Lord O. I am petrified!

Sir J. And I undone.

Fan. [*Recovering.*] O, Lovewell! even supported by thee, I dare not look my father nor his lordship in the face.

Ster. What now, did not I send you to London, sir?

Lord O. Eh! What? How's this? By what right and title have you been half the night in that lady's bed-chamber?

Love. By that right which makes me the happiest of men; and by a title which I would not forego for any the best of kings could give.

Bet. I could cry my eyes out to hear his magnanimity.

Lord O. I am annihilated!

Ster. I have been choked with rage and wonder; but now I can speak.—Lovewell, you are a villain;—you have broken your word with me.

Fan. Indeed, sir, he has not: you forbade him to think of me, when it was out of his power to obey you—we have been married these four months.

Ster. And he sha'n't stay in my house four hours. What baseness and treachery! As for you, you shall repent this step as long as you live, madam!

Fan. Indeed, sir, it is impossible to conceive the tortures I have already endured in consequence of my disobedience. My heart has continually upbraided me for it; and though I was too weak to struggle with affection, I feel that I must be miserable for ever without your forgiveness.

Ster. Lovewell, you shall leave my house directly; and you shall follow him, madam!

Lord O. And if they do, I will receive them into mine. Lookye, Mr. Sterling, there have been some mistakes, which we had all better forget for our own sakes; and the best way to forget them, is to forgive the cause of them, which I do from my soul. Poor girl! I swore to support her affection with my life and fortune; it is a debt of honour, and must be paid. You swore as much too, Mr. Sterling; but your laws in the city will excuse you, I suppose; for you never strike a balance without—errors excepted.

Ster. I am a father, my lord; but for the sake of other fathers, I think I ought not to forgive her, for fear of encouraging other silly girls, like herself, to throw themselves away without the consent of their parents.

Love. I hope there will be no danger of that, sir. Young ladies, with minds like my Fanny's, would startle at the very shadow of vice; and when they know to what uneasiness only an indiscretion has exposed her, her example, instead of encouraging, will rather serve to deter them.

Mrs. H. Indiscretion, quotha! a mighty pretty delicate word to express disobedience!

Lord O. For my part, I indulge my own passions too much to tyrannize over those of other people. Poor souls! I pity them. And you must forgive them, too. Come, come, melt a little of your flat, Mr. Sterling.

Ster. Why, why as to that, my lord—to be sure, he is a relation of your's, my lord—What say you, sister Heidelberg?

Mrs. H. The girl's ruined, and I forgive her.

Ster. Well! so do I then. Nay, no thanks. [*To LOVE. and FAN. who seem preparing to speak.*] There's an end of the matter. [*Exit FLOW. TRAV. and BET.*]

Lord O. But, Lovewell, what makes you dumb all this while?

Love. Your kindness, my lord. I can scarcely believe my own senses—they are all in a tumult of fear, joy, love, expectation, and gratitude. I ever was, and am now more bound in duty to your lordship.—For you, Mr. Sterling, if every moment of my life, spent gratefully in your service, will, in some measure, compensate the want of fortune, you, perhaps, will not repent your goodness to me. And you, ladies, I flatter myself, will not, for the future, suspect me of artifice and intrigue—I shall be happy to oblige and serve you. As for you, Sir John—

Sir J. No apologies to me, Lovewell; I do not

deserve any. All I have to offer in excuse for what has happened, is my total ignorance of your situation. Had you dealt a little more openly with me, you would have saved me, yourself, and that lady, (who I hope will pardon my behaviour) a great deal of uneasiness. Give me leave, however, to assure you, that light and capricious as I may have appeared, now my infatuation is over, I have sensibility enough to be ashamed of the part I have acted, and honour enough to rejoice at your happiness.

Love. And now, my dearest Fanny, though we are, seemingly, the happiest of beings, yet all our joys would be damped, if his lordship's generosity and Mr. Sterling's forgiveness should not be succeeded by the indulgence, approbation, and consent of these our best benefactors. [*To the audience.*]

C Y M O N .

A DRAMATIC ROMANCE, IN THREE ACTS

BY DAVID GARRICK.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MERLIN
CYMON
DORUS
LINCO
DAMON
DORILAS
HYMEN
CUPID
Knights
Shepherds.

URGANDA
SYLVIA
FATIMA
DORCAS
Shepherdesses.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—Urganda's Palace

Enter MERLIN and URGANDA.

Urg. But hear me, Merlin; I beseech you, hear me.

Mer. Hear you! I have heard you; for years have heard your vows, your protestations. Have you not allured my affections by every female art? and when I thought that my unalterable passion was to be rewarded for its constancy, what have you done? Why, like mere mortal woman, in the true spirit of frailty, have given up me and my hopes—for what? a boy! an idiot!

Urg. Even this I can bear from Merlin.

Mer. You have injured me, and must bear more.

Urg. I'll repair that injury.

Mer. Then send back your favourite Cymon to his disconsolate friends.

Urg. How can you imagine that such a poor, ignorant object as Cymon is, can have any charms for me?

Mer. Ignorance, no more than profligacy, is excluded from female favour; of this the success of rakes and fools is proof sufficient.

Urg. You mistake me, Merlin; pity for Cymon's state of mind, and friendship for his father, have induced me to endeavour at his cure.

Mer. False, prevaricating Urganda! love was your inducement. Have you not stolen the prince from his royal father, and detained him here by your power, while a hundred knights are in search after him? Does not everything about you prove the consequence of your want of honour and faith to me? You were placed on this happy spot, to be

the guardian of its peace and innocence; but now, at last, by your example, the once happy lives of the Arcadians are embittered with envy, passion, vanity, selfishness, and inconstancy: and whom are they to curse for this change? URGANDA! the lost URGANDA.

Urg. I beseech you, Merlin, spare me.

Mer. Yes; I'll converse with you no more, because I will be no more deceived. I cannot hate you, though I shun you; yet, in my misery, I have this consolation, that the pangs of my jealousy are at least equalled by the torments of your fruitless passion.

Still wish and sigh, and wish again;
Love is dethron'd; revenge shall reign!
Still shall my pow'r your vile arts confound,
And Cymon's cure shall be URGANDA's wound.

[Exit.

Urg. "And Cymon's cure shall be URGANDA's wound!" What mystery is couched in these words? What can he mean?

Enter FATIMA, looking after MERLIN.

Fat. I'll tell you, madam, when he is out of hearing. He means mischief, and terrible mischief, too; no less, I believe, than ravishing you, and cutting my tongue out. I wish we were out of his clutches.

Urg. Don't fear, Fatima.

Fat. I can't help it; he has great power, and is mischievously angry.

Urg. Here is your protection. [Shews her wand.] My power is at least equal to his. [Muses.] "And Cymon's cure shall be URGANDA's wound!"

Fat. Don't trouble your head with these odd ends of verses, which were spoken in a passion; or, perhaps, for the rhyme's sake. Think a little to clear us from this old mischief-making conjurer. What will you do, madam?

Urg. What can I do, Fatima?

Fat. You might very easily settle matters with him, if you could as easily settle them with yourself.

Urg. Tell me how?

Fat. Marry Merlin, and send away the young fellow. [URGANDA shakes her head.] I thought so: but before matters grow worse, give me leave to reason a little with you, madam.

Urg. I am in love, Fatima.

[Sighs.

Fat. And poor reason may stay at home: me exactly! Ay, ay, we are all alike; but with this difference, madam, your passion is surely a strange one; you have stolen away this young man, who, bating his youth and figure, has not one circumstance to create affection about him. He is half an idiot, madam, which is no great compliment to your wisdom, your beauty, or your power.

Urg. I despise them all; for they can neither relieve my passion, nor awaken his.

Fat. Cymon is incapable of being touched with anything; nothing gives him pleasure, but twirling his cap, and hunting butterflies: he'll make a sad lover, indeed, madam.

Urg. I can wait with patience for the recovery of his understanding; it begins to dawn already.

Fat. Where, pray?

Urg. In his eyes.

Fat. Eyes! Ha, ha, ha! Love has none, madam; the heart only sees, on these occasions. Cymon was born a fool, and his eyes will never look as you would have them, take my word for it.

Urg. Don't make me despair, Fatima.

Fat. Don't lose your time, then; 'tis the business

of beauty to make fools, and not cure them. Even I, poor I, could have made twenty fools of wise men, in half the time that you have been endeavouring to make your fool sensible. Oh! 'tis a sad way of spending one's time.

Urg. Silence, Fatima! my passion is too serious to be jested with.

Fat. Far gone, indeed, madam; and yonder goes the precious object of it.

Urg. He seems melancholy: what's the matter with him?

Fat. He's a fool, or he might make himself very merry among us. I'll leave you to make the most of him. [Going.

Urg. Stay, Fatima, and help me to divert him.

Fat. A sad time, when a lady must call in help to divert her gallant! but I'm at your service.

Enter CYMON, melancholy.

Cymon. Heigho!

[Sighs.

Fat. What's the matter, young gentleman?

Cymon. Heigho!

Urg. Are you not well, Cymon?

Cymon. Yes, I am very well.

Urg. Why do you sigh, then?

Cymon. Eh!

[Looks foolish.

Fat. Do you see it in his eyes now, madam?

Urg. Pr'ythee, be quiet. What is it you want? tell me, Cymon; tell me your wishes, and you shall have them.

Cymon. Shall I?

Urg. Yes, indeed, Cymon.

Fat. Now for it.

Cymon. I wish—heigho!

Urg. These sighs must mean something.

[Aside to FATIMA.

Fat. I wish you joy, then; find it out, madam.

[Apart.

Urg. What do you sigh for?

[To CYMON.

Cymon. I want—

[Sighs.

Urg. What, what, my sweet creature?

[Eagerly.

Cymon. To go away.

Fat. Oh, la! the meaning's out.

Urg. Where would you go?

Cymon. Anywhere.

Urg. Had you rather go anywhere, than stay with me?

Cymon. I had rather go anywhere than stay with anybody.

Urg. Will you love me if I let you go?

Cymon. Anything, if you'll let me go; pray, let me go.

Fat. I'm out of all patience! what the deuce would you have, young gentleman? Had you one grain of understanding, or a spark of sensibility in you, you would know and feel yourself to be the happiest of mortals.

Cymon. I had rather go, for all that.

Fat. The picture of the whole sex! Oh! madam, fondness will never do: a little coquetry is the thing: I bait my hook with nothing else; and I always catch fish.

[Aside to URGANDA.

Urg. I will shew him my power, and captivate his heart through his senses.

Fat. You'll throw away your powder and shot.

INCANTATION.—URGANDA.

Hither, spirits, that aid me, hither!

Whither stays my love? ah! whither?

Alas! this heart must faithful prove,

Though still he flies URGANDA's love.

[URGANDA waves her wand, and the scene

changes to a magnificent garden. Cupid and the Loves descend. Ballet by Loves and Zephyrs. During the dance, CYMON stares vacantly, grows inattentive, and at last, falls asleep.

Urg. Look, Fatima, nothing can affect his insensibility; and yet, what a beautiful simplicity!

Fat. Turn him out among the sheep, madam, and think of him no more; 'tis all labour in vain, as the song says, I assure you.

Urg. Cymon, Cymon! what, are you dead to these entertainments?

Cymon. Dead! I hope not.

[Starts.

Urg. How can you be so unmoved?

Cymon. They tired me so, that I wished them a good night, and went to sleep. But where are they?

Urg. They are gone, Cymon.

Cymon. Then let me go too.

[Gets up.

Fat. The old story!

Urg. Whither would you go? Tell me, and I'll go with you, my sweet youth.

Cymon. No, I'll go by myself.

Urg. And so you shall; but where?

Cymon. Into the fields.

Urg. But is not this garden pleasanter than the fields, my palace than cottages, and my company more agreeable to you than the shepherds?

Cymon. Why, how can I tell till I try? you won't let me choose.

AIR.—CYMON.

*You gave me, last week, a young linnet,
Shut up in a fine golden cage;
Yet how sad the poor thing was within it,
Oh! how it did flutter and rage!
Then he mop'd, and he pin'd,
That his wings were confin'd,
Till I open'd the door of his den;
Then so merry was he,
And because he was free,
He came to his cage back again.*

And so should I too, if you would let me go.

Urg. And would you return to me again?

Cymon. Yes, I would; I've no where else to go to.

Fat. Let him have his humour; when he is not confined, and is seemingly disregarded, you may have him, and mould him as you please. 'Tis a receipt for the whole sex.

Urg. I'll follow your advice. [Exit FATIMA.] Well, Cymon, you shall go wherever you please, and for as long as you please.

Cymon. And shall I let my linnet out, too?

Urg. And take this, Cymon, wear it for my sake, and don't forget me. [Gives him a nosegay.] Go, Cymon, take your companion, and be happier than I can make you.

AIR.—URGANDA.

*One adieu before you leave me,
One sigh, although that sigh deceive me;
Oh! let me think you true!
Cruel! thus Urganda flying;
Cruel! this fond heart denying;
One sigh, one last adieu.
Though my ardent vows be slighted,
Though my love be unrequited,
Oh! hide it from my view!
Let me feel not I'm forsaken;
Rather let me die mistaken,
Than breathe one last adieu.*

[Ereunt.

SCENE II.—A rural prospect.

Enter PHÆBE and DAPHNE.

Phæbe. What, to be left and forsaken! and see the false fellow make the same vows to another, almost before my face! I can't bear it, and I won't. Oh! that I had the power of our enchantress yonder. —I would play the devil with them all.

Daph. And yet, to do justice to Sylvia, who makes all this disturbance among you, she does not in the least encourage the shepherds, and she can't help their falling in love with her.

Phæbe. May be so; nor can I help hating and detesting her, because they do fall in love with her.

Linco. [Singing without.] "*Care flies from the lad that is merry.*"

Daph. Here comes the merry Linco, who never knew care, or felt sorrow. If you can bear his laughing at your griefs, or singing away his own, you may get some information from him.

Enter LINCO, singing.

Linco. What, my girls of ten thousand! I was this moment defying love and all his mischief, and you are sent in the nick by him, to try my courage; but I'm above temptation, or below it; I duck down, and all his arrows fly over me.

AIR.—LINCO.

*Care flies from the lad that is merry,
Whose heart is as sound,
And cheeks are as round,
As round and as red as a cherry.*

Phæbe. What, are you always thus?

Linco. Ay, or heaven help me! What, would you have me do as you do? walking with your arms across, thus—heighoing by the brook-side among the willows. Oh! fie for shame, lasses! young and handsome, and sighing after one fellow a-piece, when you should have a hundred in a drove, following you like—like—you shall have the simile another time.

Daph. No; pr'ythee, Linco, give it us now.

Linco. You shall have it; or what's better, I'll tell you what you are not like—you are not like our shepherdess Sylvia; she's so cold, and so coy, that she flies from her lovers, but is never without a score of them; you are always running after the fellows, and yet are always alone; a very great difference, let me tell you: frost and fire, that's all.

Daph. Don't imagine that I am in the pining condition my poor sister is. I am as happy as she is miserable.

Linco. Good luck! I'm sorry for it.

Daph. What, sorry that I am happy?

Linco. Oh! no, prodigious glad.

Phæbe. That I am miserable!

Linco. No, no; prodigious sorry for that, and prodigious glad of the other.

Phæbe. Pr'ythee, be serious a little.

Linco. No; heaven forbid! If I am serious, 'tis all over with me. I must laugh at something; shall I be merry with you?

Daph. The happy shepherdess can bear to be laughed at.

Linco. Then Sylvia might take your shepherd without a sigh.

Daph. My shepherd! what does the fool mean?

Phæbe. Her shepherd! Pray, tell us, Linco.

[Eagerly.

Linco. 'Tis no secret, I suppose. I only met her Damon and Sylvia together just now, walking to—

Daph. What, my Damon?

Linco. Your Damon that was, and that would be Sylvia's Damon, if she would put up with him.

Daph. Her Damon! I'll make her to know—a wicked slut! a vile fellow! Come, sister, I'm ready to go with you—we'll be revenged. If our old governor continues to cast a sheep's eye at me, I'll have her turned out of Arcadia, I warrant you; a base, mischievous—
[*Exit.*]

Phæbe. This is some comfort, however—ha, ha, ha! in seeing one's sister as miserable as one's self.

[*Exit.*]

Linco. Ha, ha, ha! Oh! how the pretty, sweet-tempered creatures are ruffled.

AIR.—LINCO.

*This love puts 'em all in commotion;
For preach what you will,
They cannot be still,*

No more than the wind or the ocean. [*Exit.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A rural prospect.

SYLVIA discovered lying upon a bank.—Enter MERLIN.

Mer. My art succeeds, which hither has convey'd,
To catch the eye of Cymon, this sweet maid.
Her charms shall clear the mists which cloud his mind,

And make him warm, and sensible, and kind;
Her yet cold heart, with passion's sighs shall move,
Melt as he melts, and give him love for love.
This magic touch shall to these flowers impart

[*Touches a nosegay in her hand.*]

A power when beauty gains, to fix the heart. [*Exit.*]

Enter CYMON, with his bird.

Cymon. Away, prisoner, and make yourself merry. [*Bird flies.*] Ay, ay, I knew how it would be with you; much good may it do you, Bob. What a sweet place this is! Hills and greens, and rocks, and trees, and water, and sun, and birds! Dear me! 'tis just as if I had never seen it before. [*Whistles about till he sees SYLVIA, then stops and sinks his whistling by degrees, with a look and attitude of astonishment.*] Oh, la! what's here? 'Tis something dropped from the heavens, sure; and yet, 'tis like a woman, too! Bless me! is it alive? [*Sighs.*] It can't be dead, for its cheek is as red as a rose, and it moves about the heart of it. I don't know what's the matter with me. I wish it would wake, that I might see its eyes. If it should look gentle, and smile upon me, I should be glad to play with it. Ay, ay, there's something now in my breast that they told me of. It feels oddly to me; and yet I don't dislike it.

AIR.—CYMON.

All amaze!

Wonder, praise!

Here for ever could I gaze!

A little nearer to—

What is't I do?

*Fie, for shame! I am possess'd;
Something creeping in my breast
Will not let me stay or go.
Shall I wake it? No, no, no!*

I am glad I came abroad! I have not been so pleased ever since I can remember. But, perhaps, it may be angry with me. I can't help it, if it is. I had rather see her angry with me than Urganda smile upon me. Stay, stay! [*SYLVIA stirs.*] La! what a pretty foot it has!

[*Retires.* SYLVIA raises herself from the bank.

AIR.—SYLVIA.

Yet awhile, sweet sleep, deceive me,

Fold me in thy downy arms,

Let not cure awake to grieve me,

Lull it with thy potent charms.

I, a turtle, doom'd to stray,

Quitting young the parent's nest,

Find each bird a bird of prey;

Sorrow knows not where to rest.

[*SYLVIA sees CYMON with emotion, while he gazes strongly on her, and retires, pulling off his cap.*]

Syl. Who's that? [*Speaks gently and confused.*]

Cymon. 'Tis I. [*Bows and hesitates.*]

Syl. What's your name?

Cymon. Cymon.

Syl. What do you want, young man?

Cymon. Nothing, young woman.

Syl. What are you doing there?

Cymon. Looking at you there. What eyes it has!

[*Aside.*]

Syl. You don't intend me any harm?

Cymon. Not I, indeed! I wish you don't do me some. Art thou a fairy, pray?

Syl. No; I am a poor harmless shepherdess.

Cymon. I don't know that: you have bewitched me, I believe. I wish you'd speak to me, and look at me, as Urganda does.

Syl. What, the enchantress? Do you belong to her.

Cymon. I had rather belong to you; I would not desire to go abroad, if I did.

Syl. Does Urganda love you?

Cymon. So she says. If I were to stay here always, I should not be called the simple Cymon.

Syl. Nor I the hard-hearted Sylvia.

Cymon. Sylvia, Sylvia! what a sweet name! I could sound it for ever!

Syl. I shall never see you again. I wish I had not seen you now.

Cymon. If you did but wish as I do, all the enchantresses in the world could not hinder us from seeing one another. [*Kneels and kisses her hand.*]

Syl. We shall be seen, and separated for ever. I must go.

Cymon. When shall I see you again? In half an hour?

Syl. Half an hour! that will be too soon. No, no; it must be three quarters of an hour.

Cymon. And where, my sweet Sylvia?

Syl. Anywhere, my sweet Cymon!

Cymon. In the grove, by the river there.

Syl. And you shall take this to remember it. [*Gives him the nosegay enchanted by MERLIN.*] I wish it were a kingdom, I would give it you, and a queen along with it.

Cymon. And here is one for you, too; which is of no value to me, unless you will receive it; take it, my sweet Sylvia!

[*Gives her URGANDA'S nosegay.*]

DUET.—SYLVIA and CYMON.

Syl. Take this nosegay, gentle youth!

Cymon. And you, sweet maid, take mine.

Syl. *Unlike these flowers be thy fair truth ;*

Cymon. *Unlike these flowers be thine.*

These changing soon,

Will soon decay,

Be sweet till noon,

Then pass away.

Fair, for a time, their transient charms appear ;

But truth, unchang'd, shall bloom for ever here.

[*Each pressing their hearts.—Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*Before Urganda's Palace.*

Enter URGANDA.

Urg. With what anxiety I watch his return ! And how mean is that anxiety for an object so insensible ! Oh, love ! is it not enough to make thy votaries despicable in others' eyes ! Must we also despise ourselves ?

Enter FATIMA.

Well, Fatima, is he returned ?

Fat. He has no feelings but those of hunger ; when that pinches him he'll return to be fed, like other animals.

Urg. Indeed, Fatima, his insensibility and ingratitude astonish and distract me. Yet am I only a greater slave to my weakness, and more incapable of relief.

Fat. Why, then, I may as well hold my tongue ; but before I would waste all the prime of my womanhood in playing such a losing game, I would—but I see you don't mind me, madam ; and, therefore, I'll say no more. I know the consequence, and must submit.

Urg. What can I do in my situation ? But see where Cymon approaches ! he seems transported. Look, look, Fatima ! he is kissing and embracing my nosegay ; it has had the desired effect, and I am happy : we'll be invisible, that I may observe his transports.

[*Waves her wand, and retires with FATIMA.*]

Enter CYMON, hugging a nosegay.

Cymon. Oh ! my dear, sweet, charming nosegay ! To see thee, to smell thee, and to taste thee, [*kisses it*] will make Urganda and her garden delightful to me. [*Kisses it.*]

Fat. What does he say ?

[*Apart.*]

Urg. Hush, hush ! all transport, and about me. What a change is this !

[*Apart.*]

Cymon. With this I can want for nothing. I possess everything with this. Oh ! the dear, dear nosegay ! and the dear, dear giver of it !

Urg. The dear, dear giver ! Mind that, Fatima ! What heavenly eloquence ! Here's a change of heart and mind ! Heigho !

[*Apart.*]

Fat. I'm all amazement ! in a dream ! But is that your nosegay ?

[*Apart.*]

Urg. Mine ! How can you doubt it ?

[*Apart.*]

Fat. Nay, I'm near-sighted.

[*Apart.*]

Cymon. She has not a beauty that is not brought to mind by these flowers. Oh ! I shall lose my wits with pleasure !

Fat. 'Tis pity to lose them the moment you have found them.

[*Apart.*]

Urg. Oh ! Fatima, I never was proud of my power till this transporting moment !

[*Apart.*]

Cymon. Where shall I put it ? Where shall I conceal it from everybody ? I'll keep it in my bosom, next my heart, all the day ; and at night, I will put it upon my pillow, and talk to it, and sigh to it, and swear to it, and sleep by it, and kiss it for ever and ever.

AIR.—CYMON.

What exquisite pleasure !

This sweet treasure,

From me they shall never

Sever.

In thee, in thee,

My charmer I see ;

I'll sigh, and caress thee,

I'll kiss thee, and press thee,

Thus, thus, to my bosom for ever and ever.

[*URGANDA and FATIMA come forward. CYMON puts the nosegay in his bosom, and looks confused and astonished.*]

Urg. Pray, what is that you would kiss and press to your bosom for ever and ever ?

[*Smiles.*]

Cymon. Nothing but—but—nothing.

Urg. What were you talking to ?

Cymon. Myself, to be sure ; I had nothing else to talk to.

Urg. Yes, but you have, Cymon. There is something in your bosom, next your heart.

Cymon. Yes, so there is.

Urg. What is it, Cymon ?

[*Smiles.*]

Fat. Now his modesty is giving way ; we shall have it at last.

[*Aside.*]

Cymon. Nothing but a nosegay.

Urg. That which I gave you ? Let me see it.

Cymon. What, give a thing, and take it away again ?

Urg. I would not take it away for the world.

Cymon. Nor would I give it you for a hundred worlds.

Fat. See it, by all means, madam. I have my reasons.

[*Aside to URGANDA.*]

Urg. I must see it, Cymon ; and, therefore, no delay. I will see it, or shut you up for ever.

Cymon. What a stir is here about nothing ! Now are you satisfied ?

[*Holds the nosegay at a distance. URGANDA and FATIMA look at one another with surprise.*]

Fat. I was right.

Urg. And I am miserable !

Cymon. Have you seen it enough ?

Urg. That is not mine, Cymon.

Cymon. No ; 'tis mine.

Urg. Who gave it you ?

Cymon. A person.

Urg. What person—male or female ?

Cymon. La ! how can I tell ?

Fat. Finely improved, indeed ! a genius !

[*Aside.*]

Urg. I must dissemble. [*Aside.*] Lookye ! Cymon, I did but sport with you ; the nosegay was your own, and you had a right to give it away, or throw it away.

Cymon. Indeed, 'but I did not, I only gave it for this ; which, as it is so much finer and sweeter, I thought would not vex you.

Urg. Heigho !

[*Aside.*]

Fat. Vex her ! Oh ! not in the least. But you should not have given away her present to a vulgar creature.

Cymon. How dare you talk to me so ? I would have you to know she is neither ugly nor vulgar. No, she is—

Fat. Oh ! she ! your humble servant, young Simplicity ! La ! how can you tell whether it is male or female ?

[*CYMON appears confused.*]

Urg. Don't mind her impertinence, Cymon : I give you leave to follow your own inclinations. I'll have him watched ; this office be your's, my faithful Fatima.

[*Apart to FATIMA.—Exit FATIMA.*]

Cymon. Then I am happy, indeed.

Urg. Cymon, I would that you could love with constancy like mine; but this you never can.

Cymon. Oh! yes, I can love. [Exit.]

SCENE III.—Dorcas's Cottage.

SYLVIA at the door, with *CYMON*'s nosegay in her hand.

Syl. The more I look upon this nosegay, the more I feel Cymon in my heart and mind. Ever since I have seen him, I wander without knowing where, I speak without knowing to whom, and I look without knowing at what. Now I dread to lose him, and now again I think him mine for ever!

AIR.—SYLVIA.

*Oh! why should we sorrow, who never knew sin?
Let smiles of content shew our rapture within:
This love has so rais'd me, I now tread in air!
He's sure sent from heav'n to lighten my care!
Each shepherdess views me with scorn and disdain;
Each shepherd pursues me, but all is in vain:
No more will I sorrow, no longer despair,
He's sure sent from heav'n to lighten my care!*

[*LINCO* is seen listening.]

Enter LINCO.

Linco. If you were as wicked, shepherdess, as you are innocent, that voice of your's would corrupt justice herself, unless she were deaf, as well as blind.

Syl. I hope you did not overhear me, Linco?

Linco. Oh! but I did though; and, notwithstanding I come as the deputy of a deputy-governor, to bring you before my principal, for some complaints made against you by a certain shepherdess, I will stand your friend, though I lose my place for it: there are not many such friends, shepherdess.

Syl. What have I done to the shepherdesses, that they persecute me so?

Linco. You are much too handsome, which is a crime the best of 'em can't forgive you.

Syl. I'll trust myself with you, and face my enemies.

[*As they are going, DORCAS calls from the cottage.*

Dor. Where are you going, child? Who is that with you, Sylvia?

Linco. Now shall we be stopped by this good old woman, who will know all, and can scarce hear anything.

Dor. I'll see who you have with you.

Enter DORCAS, from the house.

Linco. 'Tis I, dame; your kinsman Linco.

[*Speaks loud in her ear.*

Dor. Oh! is it you, honest Linco? [*Takes his hand.*] Well, what's to do now?

Linco. The governor desires to speak with Sylvia; a friendly inquiry, that's all. [*Loud.*

Dor. For what? for what? Tell me that. I have nothing to do with his desires, nor she neither. He is grown very inquisitive of late about shepherdesses. Fine doings, indeed! No such doings when I was young. If he wants to examine anybody, why don't he examine me! I'll give him an answer, for him to be as inquisitive as he pleases.

Linco. But I am your kinsman, dame; and you dare trust me, sure. [*Speaks loud in her ear.*

Dor. Thou art the best of 'em, that I'll say for thee; but the best of you are bad when a young woman is in the case. I have gone through great difficulties myself, I can assure you, in better times than these. Why must not I go too?

Linco. We shall return to you again—before you can get there. [*Loud.*

Syl. You may trust us, mother: my own innocence, and Linco's goodness, will be guard enough for me.

Dor. Eh! what?

Linco. She says you may trust me with her innocence. [*Loud.*

Dor. Well, well, I will then. Thou art a sweet creature, and I love thee better than even I did my own child. [*Kisses SYLVIA.*] When thou art fetched away by him that brought thee, 'twill be a woeful day for me. Well, well, go thy ways with Linco. I dare trust thee anywhere. I'll prepare thy dinner at thy return; and bring my honest kinsman along with you.

Linco. We will be with you before you can make the pot boil.

Dor. Before what?

Linco. We will be with you before you can make the pot boil.

[*Speaks very loud, and goes off with SYLVIA.*

Dor. Heaven shield thee, for the sweetest, best creature that ever blessed old age! What a comfort she is to me! All I have to wish for in this world, is to know who thou art, who brought thee to me, and then to see thee as happy as thou hast made poor Dorcas. What can the governor want with her? I wish I had gone too. I'd have talked to him, and to the purpose. We had no such doings when I was a young woman; they never made such a fuss with me.

AIR.—DORCAS.

*When I were young, though now I'm old,
The men were kind and true;
But now they're grown up so false and bold
What can a woman do?
Now what can a woman do?
For men are truly
So unruly,
I tremble at seventy-two!*

*When I were fair, though now so so,
No hearts were given to rove;
Our pulses beat not fast nor slow,
But all was faith and love.
Now what can a woman do?*

*For men are truly
So unruly,*

I tremble at seventy-two.

[*Exit.*

SCENE IV.—The Magistrate's House.

Enter DORUS and DAPHNE.

Dorus. This way, this way, damsel. Now we are alone, I can hear your grievances; and will redress them, that I will. You have my good liking, damsel, and favour follows of course.

Daph. I want words, your honour and worship, to thank you fitly.

Dorus. Smile upon me, damsel; smile and command me. Your hand is whiter than ever, I protest. You must indulge me with a chaste salute.

[*Kisses her hand.*

Daph. La! your honour.

[*Courtsies.*

Dorus. You have charmed me, damsel, and I can deny you nothing. Another chaste salute; 'tis a perfect cordial. [*Kisses her hand.*] Well, what shall I do with this Sylvia, this stranger, this baggage, that has affronted thee? I'll send her where she shall never vex thee again—an impudent wicked—

[*Kisses her hand.*] I'll send her packing this very day; this hand, this lily hand, has signed her fate.
[*Kisses it.*]

Enter LINCO.

Linco. No bribery and corruption, I beg of your honour.

Dorus. You are too bold, *Linco.* Do your duty, and know your distance. Where is this vagrant, this *Sylvia*?

Linco. In the justice-chamber, waiting for your honour's commands.

Dorus. Why did not you tell me so?

Linco. I thought your honour better engaged, and that it was too much for you to try two female causes at one time.

Dorus. You thought! I won't have you think, but obey. Deputies must not think for their superiors.

Linco. Must not they? What will become of our poor country! [*Going.*]

Dorus. No more impertinence, but bring the culprit hither.

Linco. In the twinkling of your honour's eye.

[*Erit.*]
Daph. I leave my griefs in your worship's hands.
Dorus. You leave 'em in my heart, damsel; they soon shall be changed into pleasures. Wait for me in the next room. Smile, damsel, smile upon me and edge the sword of justice.

Re-enter LINCO, with SYLVIA.

Daph. Here she comes. See how like an innocent she looks—But I'll begone. I trust in your worship. I hate the sight of her; I could tear her eyes out.

[*Aside, and exit.*]
Dorus. [*Gazes at SYLVIA.*] Hem, hem! I am told, young woman—hem, hem! that—She does not look so mischievous as I expected.

[*Aside, and turning from her.*]
Linco. Bear up, sweet shepherdess! your beauty and innocence will put injustice out of countenance.

[*Apart to SYLVIA.*]
Syl. The shame of being suspected confounds me, and I can't speak.

[*Apart.*]
Dorus. Where is the old woman, *Dorcas*, they told me of? Did not I order you to bring her before me?

Linco. The good old woman is so deaf, and your reverence a little thick of hearing, I thought the business would be sooner and better done by the young woman.

Dorus. What, at your thinking again! Young shepherdess, I hear—I hear—hem! Her modesty pleases me. [*Aside.*] What is the reason, I say—hem! that—that I hear—She has very fine features. I protest she disarms my anger.

[*Aside, and turning from her.*]
Linco. Now is your time; speak to his reverence.

[*Apart to SYLVIA.*]
Dorus. Don't whisper the prisoner.

Syl. Prisoner! Am I a prisoner, then?

Dorus. No, not absolutely a prisoner; but you are charged, damsel—hem, hem! charged, damsel—I don't know what to say to her.

[*Aside.*]
Syl. With what, your honour?

Linco. If he begins to damsel us, we have him sure.

[*Aside.*]
Syl. What is my crime?

Linco. A little too handsome, that's all.

Dorus. Hold your peace. Why don't you look up in my face, if you are innocent? [*SYLVIA looks at DORUS with great modesty.*] I can't stand it; she

has turned my anger, my justice, and my whole scheme, topsy-turvy. [*Aside.*] Reach me a chair, *Linco.*

Linco. One sweet song, *Sylvia*, before his reverence gives sentence. [*Reaches a chair for DORUS.*]

AIR.—*SYLVIA.*

*From duty if the shepherd stray
And leave his flocks to feed,
The wolf will seize the harmless prey,
And innocence will bleed.* [*Kneels.*]

Dorus. I'll guard thee, and fold thee too, my lambkin; and they sha'n't hurt thee. This is a melting ditty, indeed! Rise, rise, my *Sylvia*.

[*Embraces her.*]

Re-enter DAPHNE.—DORUS and DAPHNE start at seeing each other.

Daph. Is your reverence taking leave of her before you drive her out of the country?

Dorus. How now! What presumption is this, to break in upon us so, and interrupt the course of justice?

Daph. May I be permitted—

Dorus. No, you may not be permitted. I'll come to you presently.

Daph. I knew the wheedling slut would spoil all.

[*Aside, and exit.*]

Dorus. I'm glad she's gone. *Linco*, you must send her away; I won't see her now.

Linco. And shall I take *Sylvia* to prison?

Dorus. No, no, no; to prison! mercy forbid! What a sin should I have committed to please that envious, jealous-pated shepherdess! *Linco*, comfort the damsel. Dry your eyes, *Sylvia*. I will call upon you myself, and examine *Dorcas* myself, and protect you myself, and do everything myself. I profess she has bewitched me—I am all agitation. [*Aside.*] I'll call upon you to-morrow, perhaps to-night, perhaps in half-an-hour. Take care of her, *Linco*. She has bewitched me; and I shall lose my wits, if I look on her any longer. Oh! the sweet, lovely, delightful creature! [*Aside, and exit.*]

Linco. Don't whimper now, my sweet *Sylvia*. Justice has taken up the sword and scales again, and your rivals shall cry their eyes out. The day's our own, so come along.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Another part of the country.*

Enter FATIMA.

Fat. Truly, a very pretty mischievous errand I am sent upon. I am to follow this foolish young fellow all about to find out his haunts: not so foolish neither, for he is so much improved of late, we shrewdly suspect that he must have some female to sharpen his intellects; for love, among many other strange things, can make fools of wits, and wits of fools. I saw our young partridge run before me, and take cover hereabouts; I must make no noise, for fear of alarming him; besides, I hate to disturb the poor things in pairing time.

[*Looks through the bushes.*]

Enter MERLIN, unperceived.

Mer. I shall spoil your peeping, thou evil counsellor of a faithless mistress. I must torment her a little for her good. [*Aside.*]

Fat. There they are; our fool has made no bad choice. Upon my word, a very pretty couple, and will make my poor lady's heart ache.

Mer. I shall twinge your's a little before we part. *[Aside.]*

Fat. Well said, Cymon! upon your knees to her! Now for my pocket-book, that I may exactly describe this rival of ours; she is much too handsome to live long; she will be either burnt alive, thrown to wild beasts, or shut up in the black tower; the greatest mercy she can have will be to let her take her choice. *[Takes out a pocket-book.]*

Mer. May be so; but we will prevent the prophecy if we can. *[Aside.]*

Fat. *[Writes.]* "She is of a good height, about my size, a fine shape, delicate features, charming hair, heavenly eyes, not unlike my own; with such a sweet smile!" She must be burnt alive! yes, yes, she must be burnt alive. *[MERLIN taps her upon the shoulder with his wand.]* Who's there? Bless me! nobody. I protest it startled me. I must finish my picture. *[Writes, and MERLIN waves his wand over her hand.]* Now let me see what I have written. Bless me, what's here? all the letters are as red as blood—my eyes fail me! sure I am bewitched. *[Reads and trembles.]* "Urganda has a shameful passion for Cymon; Cymon a most virtuous one for Sylvia; as for Fatima, wild beasts, the black tower, and burning alive, are too good for her." *[Drops the book.]* I have not power to stir a step. I knew what would come of affronting that devil, Merlin.

[MERLIN becomes visible to her.]

Mer. True, Fatima, and I am here at your call.

Fat. Oh, most magnanimous Merlin! don't set your wit to a poor, foolish, weak woman.

Mer. Why then will a foolish weak woman set her wit to me? but we will be better friends for the future. Mark me, Fatima— *[Holds up his wand.]*

Fat. No conjuration, I beseech your worship, and you shall do anything with me.

Mer. I want nothing of you but to hold your tongue.

Fat. Will nothing else content your fury?

Mer. Silence, babler!

Fat. *[Finds great difficulty in speaking at first.]* I am your own for ever, most merciful Merlin! I am your own for ever. Oh! my poor tongue, I thought I never should have wagged thee again. What a dreadful thing it would be to be dumb.

Mer. You see it is not in the power of Urganda to protect you, or to injure Cymon and Sylvia. I will be their protector against all her arts, though she has leagued herself with the demons of revenge; we have no power but what results from our virtue.

Fat. I had rather lose anything than my speech.

Mer. As you profess yourself my friend (for, with all my art, I cannot see into a woman's mind,) I will shew my gratitude, and my power, by giving your tongue an additional accomplishment.

Fat. What, shall I talk more than ever?

Mer. *[Smiles.]* That would be no accomplishment, Fatima: no, I mean that you should talk less. When you return to Urganda, she will be very inquisitive, and you very ready to tell her all you know.

Fat. And may I, without offence to your worship?

Mer. Silence, and mark me well—observe me truly and punctually. Every answer you give to Urganda's questions must be confined to two words, yes and no. I have done you a great favour, and you don't perceive it.

Fat. Not very clearly indeed. *[Aside.]*

Mer. Beware of encroaching a single monosyllable upon my injunction; the moment another word escapes you, you are dumb for ever.

Fat. Heaven preserve me! what will become of me?

Mer. Remember what I say: as you obey or neglect me, you will be punished or rewarded. Farewell. *[Bows.]* Remember me, Fatima. *[Exit.]*

Fat. What a polite devil it is; and what a woe!ful plight am I in! this confining my tongue to two words is much worse than being quite dumb; I had rather be stunted in anything than in my speech. Heigho! there never sure was a tax upon the tongue before. *[Exit.]*

SCENE II.

Enter CYMON.

Cymon. Shall I rejoice or grieve at the change my heart feels? thou hast given me eyes, ears, and understanding; and till they forsake me, I must be Sylvia's. Are the new pains, or the strange delights that agitate me, the greater? Oh! love, it is thy work.

Enter SYLVIA.

She is here; but pensive! Oh! my Sylvia, why this drooping mien? Has not Merlin discovered all that was unknown to us? Has he not promised us his protection? What can Sylvia want, when Cymon is completely blessed?

Syl. Thy wishes are fulfilled then; take my hand, and with it a heart which, till you had touched, never knew, nor could even imagine, what was love.

Cymon. Transporting maid! *[Kisses her hand.]*

AIR.—SYLVIA.

*This cold flinty heart it is you who have warm'd;
You waken'd my passions, my senses have charm'd;
In vain against merit and Cymon I strove;
What's life without passion—sweet passion of love?*

*The spring should be warm, the young season be gay,
Her birds and her flowrets make blithesome sweet May;
Love blesses the cottage, and sings through the grove
What's life without passion—sweet passion of love?*

Cymon. Thus then I seize my treasure, will protect it with my life, and will never resign it but to heaven, who gave it to me. *[Embraces her.]*

Enter DAMON and DORILAS on one side, and DORUS and his followers on the other, who start at seeing CYMON and SYLVIA.

Damon. Here they are!

Syl. Ha! bless me!

[Starts.]

Dorus. Fine doings, indeed!

[CYMON and SYLVIA stand amazed and ashamed.]
Doril. Your humble servant, modest madam Sylvia!

Damon. You are much improved by your new tutor!

Dorus. But I'll send her and her tutor where they shall learn better. I am confounded at their assurance! Why don't you speak, culprits?

Cymon. We may be ashamed without guilt; ashamed for those who have watched and surprised us.

Dorus. Did you ever hear or see such an impudent varlet?

Damon. Shall we seize them, your worship, and drag 'em to Urganda?

Dorus. Let me first speak with that damsel.

[As he approaches, CYMON puts her behind him.]

Cymon. That damsel is not to be spoken with.

Dorus. Here's impudence in perfection! Do you know who I am, stripling?

Cymon. I know you to be one stationed by the laws to cherish innocence; but having passions that disgrace both your age and place, you neither observe the one, nor protect the other.

Dorus. I am astonished! What, are you the foolish young fellow I have heard so much of?

Cymon. As sure as you are the wicked old fellow I have heard so much of.

Dorus. Seize them both this instant.

Cymon. That is sooner said than done, governor.

[*As they approach on both sides to separate them, he snatches a staff from one of the Shepherds, and beats them back.*]

Dorus. Fall on him, but don't kill him; for I must make an example of him.

Cymon. In this cause I am myself an army; see how the wretches stare, and cannot stir.

AIR.—CYMON.

Come on, come on,

A thousand to one;

I dare you to come on

Though unpractis'd and young,

Love has made me stout and strong,

Has given me a charm,

Will not suffer me to fall;

Has steel'd my heart, and nerv'd my arm,

To guard my precious all.

[*Looks at SYLVIA.*]

Come on, come on, &c.

[*CYMON drives off the party of Shepherds on one side. DORUS and his party surround SYLVIA.*]

Dorus. Away with her, away with her!

Syl. Protect me, Merlin! Cymon! Cymon! where art thou, Cymon?

Dorus. Your fool Cymon is too fond of fighting to mind his mistress; away with her to Urganda, away with her.

[*They hurry her off.*]

Enter Shepherds, running across, disordered and beaten by CYMON.

Damon. 'Tis the devil of a fellow: how he has laid about him!

[*Looking back.—Exit.*]

Doril. There is no way but this to avoid him.

[*Exit.*]

Re-enter CYMON, in confusion and out of breath.

Cymon. I have conquered, my Sylvia! Where art thou? my life, my love, my valour, my all? What, gone? torn from me? then I am conquered, indeed!

[*He runs off, and returns several times during the symphony of the following song.*]

AIR.—CYMON.

Torn from me, torn from me: which way did they take her?

To death they shall bear me,

To pieces shall tear me,

Before I'll forsake her!

Though fast bound in a spell,

By Urganda and hell,

I'll burst through their charms,

Seize my fair in my arms;

Then my valour shall prove,

No magic like virtue, like virtue and love!

SCENE III.—A Palace.

Enter URGANDA and FATIMA.

Urg. Yes! No! Forbear this mockery. What

can it mean? I will not bear this trifling with my passion! Why don't you speak? [*FATIMA shakes her head.*] Won't you speak?

Fat. Yes.

Urg. Go on then.

Fat. No.

Urg. Will you say nothing but no?

Fat. Yes.

Urg. Distracting, treacherous Fatima! Have you seen my rival?

Fat. Yes.

Urg. Thanks, dear Fatima! Well, now go on.

Fat. No.

Urg. This is not to be borne. Was Cymon with her?

Fat. Yes.

Urg. Are they in love with each other?

Fat. Yes.

[*Sighs.*]

Urg. Where did you see my rival? [*FATIMA shakes her head.*] Are you afraid of anybody?

Fat. Yes.

Urg. Are you not afraid of me too?

Fat. No.

Urg. Insolence! Is my rival handsome? Tell me that.

Fat. Yes.

Urg. Very handsome?

Fat. Yes, yes.

Urg. How handsome? handsomer than I, or you?

Fat. Yes—No—

[*Hesitating.*]

Urg. I shall go distracted! Leave me.

Fat. Yes.

[*Courtsies, and exit.*]

Urg. She has a spell upon her, or she could not do thus. Merlin's power has prevailed—he has enchanted her, and my love and my revenge are equally disappointed. This is the completion of my misery! Bravura, Urganda! Despair and shame confound me.

Enter DORUS.

Dorus. May I presume to intrude upon my sovereign's contemplations?

Urg. Dare not to approach my misery, or thou shalt share it.

Dorus. I am gone: and Sylvia shall go too.

[*Going.*]

Urg. Sylvia, said you? where is she? where is she? Speak, speak; and give me life or death.

Dorus. She is without, and attends your mighty will.

Urg. Then I am a queen again! Forgive me, Dorus, I knew not what I said; but now I am raised again! Sylvia is safe?

Dorus. Yes, and I am safe too; which is no small comfort to me, considering where I have been.

Urg. And Cymon—has he escaped?

Dorus. Yes, he has escaped from us; and, what is better, we have escaped from him.

Urg. Where is he?

Dorus. Breaking the bones of every shepherd he meets.

Urg. Well, no matter; I am in possession of the present object of my passion, and I will indulge it to the height of luxury. Let 'em prepare my victim instantly for death.

Dorus. For death! Is not that going too far?

Urg. Nothing is too far; she makes me suffer ten thousand deaths, and nothing but hers can appease me. [*Dorus going.*] Stay, Dorus—I have a richer revenge: she shall be shut up in the black tower till her beauties are destroyed, and then I will present her to this ungrateful Cymon. Let her be

brought before me, and I will feast my eyes, and ease my heart, with this devoted Sylvia. No reply; but obey.

Dorus. It is done. This is going too far.

[*Aside.—Exit, shrugging up his shoulders.*]

Re-enter DORUS, with SYLVIA.

Urg. Are you the wretch, the unhappy maid, who has dared to be the rival of Urganda?

Syl. I am the happy maid who possess the affections of Cymon.

Urg. Thou vain rash creature! I will make thee fear my power, and hope for my mercy.

[*Waves her wand, and the scene changes to the Black Rocks.*]

Syl. I am still unmoved. [*Smiles.*]

Urg. Thou art on the very brink of perdition, and in a moment will be closed in a tower, where thou shalt never see Cymon, or any human being more.

Syl. While I have Cymon in my heart, I bear a charm about me, to scorn your power, or, what is more, your cruelty.

[*Music.* *URGANDA waves her wand, and the Black Tower appears.*]

Urg. Open the gates, and enclose her insolence for ever.

Enter Furies, who seize SYLVIA, and put her in the Tower.

Now let Merlin release you if he can.

[*It thunders; the Tower sinks, and MERLIN appears in the place where the Tower sunk. All shriek, and run off, except URGANDA, who is struck with terror.*]

Mer. "Still shall my power your arts confound, And Cymon's cure shall be Urganda's wound."

[*URGANDA waves her wand.*]

Wretched Urganda! your power is gone.

Urg. In vain I wave this wand, I feel my power is gone. Thus I destroy the small remains of my sovereignty.

*Forgive my errors, and forget my name;
Oh! drive me hence with penitence and shame;
From Merlin, Cymon, Sylvia, let me fly,
Beholding them, my shame can never die.*

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—A splendid Amphitheatre.

A grand entrée of the Knights of the different orders of chivalry.

CHORUS.

*Happy Arcadia still shall be,
Ever happy, while virtuous and free.*

[*Exeunt.*]

B O N T O N ;

OR, HIGH LIFE ABOVE STAIRS.

A FARCE, IN TWO ACTS ;

BY DAVID GARRICK.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LORD MINIKIN
SIR JOHN TROTIEY
COLONEL TIVY
JESSAMY
DAVY
MIGNON.

LADY MINIKIN
MISS TITTUP
GYMP.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—An apartment at Lord Minikin's.

Enter Lady MINIKIN and Miss TITTUP.

Lady M. It is not, my dear, that I have the least regard for my lord; I had no love for him before I married him, and you know, matrimony is no breeder of affection; but it hurts my pride, that he should neglect me, and run after other women.

Miss T. But pray, have you made any new discoveries of my lord's gallantry?

Lady M. New discoveries! why, I saw him myself yesterday morning in a hackney-coach, with a mixux in a pink cardinal; you shall absolutely burn your's, Tittup, for I shall never bear to see one of that colour again.

Miss T. Sure she does not suspect me. [*Aside.*] And where was your ladyship, pray, when you saw him?

Lady M. Taking the air with Colonel Tivy in his carriage.

Miss T. But, my dear Lady Minikin, how can you be so angry that my lord was hurting your pride, as you call it, in the hackney-coach, when you had him so much in your power, in the Colonel's carriage?

Lady M. What, with my lord's friend, and my friend's lover! [*Takes her by the hand.*] Oh, fie, Tittup!

Miss T. Pooh, pooh! love and friendship are very fine names, to be sure, but they are mere visiting acquaintances: we know their names, indeed; talk of 'em sometimes, and let 'em knock at our doors; but we never let 'em in, you know.

Lady M. I vow, Tittup, you are extremely polite.

Miss T. I am extremely indifferent in these affairs, thanks to my education. We must marry, you know, because other people of fashion marry; but I should think very meanly of myself, if after I were married, I should feel the least concern at all about my husband.

Lady M. I hate to praise myself, and yet I may with truth aver, that no woman of quality ever had, can have, or will have, so consummate a contempt for her lord, as I have for my most honourable and puissant Earl of Minikin, Viscount Perriwinkle, and Baron Titmouse. Ha, ha, ha!

Miss T. But, is it not strange, Lady Minikin, that merely his being your husband should create such indifference? for certainly, in every other eye, his lordship has great accomplishments.

Lady M. Accomplishments! thy head is certainly turned: if you know any of 'em, pray let's have 'em; they are a novelty, and will amuse me.

Miss T. Imprimis, he is a man of quality.

Lady M. Which, to be sure, includes all the cardinal virtues. Poor girl! go on!

Miss T. He is a very handsome man.

Lady M. He has a very bad constitution.

Miss T. He has wit.

Lady M. He is a lord, and a little goes a great way.

Miss T. He has great good nature.

Lady M. No wonder—he's a fool.

Miss T. And then his fortune, you'll allow—

Lady M. Was a great one—but he games, and, if fairly, he's undone; if not, he deserves to be hanged; and so, exit my Lord Minikin. And now, let your wise uncle, and my good cousin Sir John Trotley, baronet, enter; where is he, pray?

Miss T. In his own room, I suppose, reading pamphlets and newspapers against the enormities of the times; if he stays here a week longer, notwithstanding my expectations from him, I shall certainly affront him.

Lady M. I am a great favourite; but it is impossible much longer to act up to his very righteous idea of things. Is it not pleasant to hear him abuse everybody, and everything, and yet always finishing with a "You'll excuse me, cousin!" Ha, ha, ha!

Miss T. What do you think the Goth said to me yesterday? One of the knots of his tie hanging down his left shoulder, and his fringed cravat nicely twisted down his breast, and thrust through his gold button-hole, which looked exactly like my little Barbet's head in his gold collar:—"Niece Tittup," cries he, drawing himself up, "I protest against this manner of conducting yourself both at home and abroad."—"What are your objections, Sir John?" answered I, a little pertly.—"Various and manifold," replied he; "I have no time to enumerate particulars now, but I will venture to prophesy, if you keep whirling round the vortex of pantheons, operas, festinos, coteries, masquerades, and all the devilades in this town, your head will be giddy, down you will fall, lose the name of Lucretia, and be called nothing but Tittup ever after. You'll excuse me, cousin!" and so he left me.

Lady M. Oh, the barbarian!

Enter GYMP.

Gymp. A card, your ladyship, from Mrs. Pewitt.

Lady M. Poor Pewitt! If she can but be seen at public places, with a woman of quality, she's the happiest of plebeians. [*Reads the card.*] "*Mrs. Pewitt's respects to Lady Minikin, and Miss Tittup; hopes to have the pleasure of attending them to Lady Filligree's ball this evening. Lady Daisey seeks masks.*" We'll certainly attend her. *Gymp*, put some message-cards upon my toilet, I'll send her an answer immediately; and tell one of my footmen, that he must make some visits for me to-day, again, and send me a list of those he made yesterday: he must be sure to call at Lady Pettitoes, and if she should unluckily be at home, he must say that he came to inquire after her sprained ancle. [*Erit GYMP.*]

Miss T. Ay, ay, give our compliments to her sprained ancle.

Lady M. That woman's so fat, she'll never get well of it; and I am resolved not to call at her door myself, till I am sure of not finding her at home. I am horribly low-spirited to-day. Do send your Colonel to play at chess with me: since he belonged to you, Titty, I have taken a kind of liking to him; I like everything that loves my Titty.

Miss T. I know you do, my dear lady.

Lady M. That sneer I don't like; if she suspects, I shall hate her. [*Aside.*] Well, dear Titty, I'll go and write my cards, and dress for the masquerade, and if that won't raise my spirits, you must assist me to plague my lord a little. [*Erit.*]

Miss T. Yes, and I'll plague my lady a little, or I am much mistaken. My lord shall know every tittle that has passed. What a poor, blind, half-witted, self-conceited creature this dear friend and relation of mine is! and what a fine, spirited, gallant soldier my Colonel is! My Lady Minikin likes him, he likes my fortune; my lord likes me, and I like my lord; however, not so much as he imagines, or to play the fool so rashly as he may expect. What a great revolution in this family, in the space of fifteen months! We went out of England, a very awkward, regular, good English family; but half a year in France, and a winter passed in the warmer climate of Italy, have ripened our minds to every refinement of ease, dissipation, and pleasure.

Enter Colonel TIVY.

Col. T. May I hope, madam, that your humble servant had some share in your last reverie?

Miss T. How is it possible to have the least knowledge of Colonel Tivy, and not make him the principal object of one's reflections?

Col. T. That man must have very little feeling and taste, who is not proud of a place in the thoughts of the finest woman in Europe.

Miss T. Oh fie, Colonel!

Col. T. By my honour, madam, I mean what I say.

Miss T. By your honour, Colonel! Why will you pass off your counters to me? Don't I know that you fine gentlemen regard no honour but that which is given at the gaming-table? and which indeed ought to be the only honour you should make free with.

Col. T. How can you, miss, treat me so cruelly? Have I not absolutely foresworn dice, mistress, everything, since I dared to offer myself to you?

Miss T. Yes, Colonel: and when I dare to receive you, you may return to everything again, and not violate the laws of the present happy matrimonial establishment.

Col. T. Give me but your consent, madam, and your life to come—

Miss T. Do you get my consent, Colonel, and I'll take care of my life to come.

Col. T. How shall I get your consent?

Miss T. By getting me in the humour.

Col. T. But how to get you in the humour?

Miss T. Oh! there are several ways; I am very good-natured.

Col. T. Are you in the humour now?

Miss T. Try me.

Col. T. How shall I?

Miss T. How shall I?—you a soldier, and not know the art military? How shall I?—I'll tell you how: when you have a subtle, treacherous, polite enemy to deal with, never stand shilly-shally, and lose your time in treaties and parlies, but cock your hat, draw your sword; march, beat drum,—dub, dub, a-dub—present, fire, puff puff,—'tis done! they fly, they yield—Victoria! Victoria!

[*Running off.*]

Col. T. Stay, stay, my dear, dear angel!

[*Bringing her back.*]

Miss T. No, no, no; I have no time to be killed now: besides, Lady Minikin is in the vapours, and wants you at chess, and my lord is low-spirited, and wants me at picquet; my uncle is in an ill-humour, and wants me to discard you, and go with him into the country.

Col. T. And will you, miss?

Miss T. Will I!—no, I never do as I am bid: but you ought; so go to my lady.

Col. T. Nay, but, miss—

Miss T. Nay, but, Colonel, if you won't obey your commanding officer, you should be broke, and then my maid won't accept of you; so march, Colonel!—lookye, sir! I will command before marriage, and do what I please afterwards, or I have been well educated to very little purpose. [*Exit.*]

Col. T. What a mad devil it is! Now, if I had the least affection for the girl, I should be d—ly vexed at this! But she has a fine fortune, and I must have her if I can. Tol, lol, lol, &c. [*Exit.*]

Enter Sir JOHN TROTLEY and DAVY.

Sir J. Hold your tongue, Davy; you talk like a fool.

Davy. It is a fine place, your honour, and I would live here for ever.

Sir J. More shame for you. Live here for ever! What, among thieves and pickpockets? What a revolution since my time! the more I see, the more I've cause for lamentation! what a dreadful change has time brought about in twenty years! I should

not have known the place again, nor the people. All the signs, that made so noble an appearance, are all taken down; not a bob or a tie-wig to be seen; all the degrees, from the Parade in St. James's Park, to the stool and brush at the corner of every street, have their hair tied up—and that's the reason so many heads are tied up every month.

Davy. I shall have my head tied up to-morrow; Mr. Wisp will do it for me: your honour and I look like Philistines among them.

Sir J. And I shall break your head if it is tied up; I hate innovations; all confusion, and no distinction! The streets now are as smooth as a turnpike-road! no rattling and exercise in the hackney-coaches; those who ride in them are all fast asleep; and they have strings in their hands, that the coachman must pull to wake them when they are to be set down: what luxury and abomination!

Davy. Is it so, your honour; 'feckins, I like it hugely.

Sir J. But you must hate and detest London.

Davy. How can I manage that, your honour, when there is everything to delight my eye, and cherish my heart?

Sir J. 'Tis all deceit and delusion.

Davy. Such crowding, coaching, carting, and squeezing; such a power of fine sights; fine shops full of fine things; and then such fine illuminations all of a row! and such fine dainty ladies in the streets, so civil and so graceless: they talk of country girls; these here look more healthy and rosy by half.

Sir J. Sirrah! they are prostitutes: and are civil to delude and destroy you.

Davy. Bless us, bless us! How does your honour know all this? Were they as bad in your time?

Sir J. Not by half, Davy: in my time, there was a sort of decency in the worst of women; but the harlots now watch like tigers for their prey; and drag you to their dens of infamy.—See, Davy, how they have torn my neckcloth. [*Shows his neckcloth.*]

Davy. If you had gone civilly, your honour, they would not have hurt you.

Sir J. Well, we'll get away as fast as we can.

Davy. Not this month, I hope; for I have not had half my bellyful yet.

Sir J. I'll knock you down, Davy, if you grow profligate; you sha'n't go out again to-night, and to-morrow keep in my room, and stay till I can look over my things, and see they don't cheat you.

Davy. Your honour then won't keep your word with me?

Sir J. Why, what did I promise you?

Davy. That I should take sixteenp'orth at one of the theatres to-night, and a shilling place at the other to-morrow.

Sir J. Well, well, so I did. Is it a moral piece, Davy?

Davy. Oh! yes, and written by a clergyman; it is called the "Rival Cannanites; or the Tragedy of Braggadocia."

Sir J. Be a good lad, and I won't be worse than my word; there's money for you. [*Gives him money.*] But come straight home, for I shall want to go to bed.

Davy. To be sure, your honour—as I am to go so soon, I'll make a night of it. [*Aside, and exit.*]

Sir J. This fellow would turn rake and macaroni if he were to stay here a week longer. Bless me, what dangers are in this town at every step! My niece, Lucretia, is so be-fashioned and be-devilled, that nothing, I fear, can save her; however, to ease

my conscience, I must try; but what can be expected from the young women of these times, but sallow looks, wild schemes, saucy words, and loose morals! They lie a-bed all day, sit up all night; if they are silent, they are gaming, and if they talk, 'tis either scandal or infidelity; and that they may look what they are, their heads are all feather, and round their necks are twisted rattle-snake tippets. *O tempora, O mores!* [Exit.]

SCENE II.—Lord Minikin's Dressing-room.

Lord MINIKIN *discovered in his dressing-gown, with JESSAMY and MIGNON.*

Lord M. Pr'ythee, Mignon, don't plague me any more; dost think that a nobleman's head has nothing to do but be tortured all day under thy infernal fingers? Give me my clothes.

Mignon. Ven you lose your money, my lor, you no good humour; the devil may dress your cheveu for me! [Exit.]

Lord M. That fellow's an impudent rascal; but he's a genius, so I must bear with him. Oh, my head!—a chair, Jessamy! I must absolutely change my wine-merchant; I can't taste his champagne without disordering myself for a week. Heigho!

Enter Miss TITTUP.

Miss T. What makes you sigh, my lord?

Lord M. Because you were so near me, child.

Miss T. Indeed! I should rather have thought my lady had been with you. By your looks, my lord, I am afraid Fortune jilted you last night.

Lord M. No, faith! our champagne was not good yesterday, and I am vapoured like our English November; but one glance of my Tittup can dispel vapours like—like—

Miss T. Like something very fine, to be sure: but pray keep your simile for the next time; and harkye! a little prudence will not be amiss; Mr. Jessamy will think you mad, and me worse.

[Half aside.]

Jes. Oh! pray don't mind me, madam.

Lord M. Gadso! Jessamy, look out my domino, and I'll ring the bell when I want you.

Jes. I shall, my lord. Miss thinks that everybody is blind in the house but herself. [Aside, and exit.]

Miss T. Upon my word, my lord, you must be a little more prudent, or we shall become the town-talk.

Lord M. And so I will, my dear; and therefore, to prevent surprise, I'll lock the door.

Miss T. What do you mean, my lord?

Lord M. Prudence, child, prudence; I keep all my jewels under lock and key.

Miss T. You are not in possession yet, my lord. I cannot stay two minutes; I only came to tell you that Lady Minikin saw us yesterday, in the hackney-coach: she did not know me, I believe; she pretends to be greatly uneasy at your neglect of her; she certainly has some mischief in her head.

Lord M. No intention, I hope, of being fond of me?

Miss T. No, no, make yourself easy; she hates you most unalterably.

Lord M. You have given me spirits again.

Miss T. Her pride is alarmed, that you should prefer any of the sex to her.

Lord M. Her pride, then, has been alarmed ever since I had the honour of knowing her.

Miss T. But, dear my lord, let us be merry and wise; should she ever be convinced that we have a

tendre for each other, she certainly would proclaim it, and then—

Lord M. We should be envied, and she would be laughed at, my sweet cousin.

Miss T. Nay, I would have her mortified too; for though I love her ladyship sincerely, I cannot say but I love a little mischief as sincerely; but, then, if my uncle Trotley should know of our affairs, he is so old-fashioned, prudish, and out-of-the-way, he would either strike me out of his will, or insist upon my quitting the house.

Lord M. My good cousin is a queer mortal, that's certain; I wish we could get him handsomely into the country again. He has a fine fortune to leave behind him.

Miss T. But then he lives so regularly, and never makes use of a physician, that he may live these twenty years.

Lord M. What can we do with the barbarian?

Miss T. I don't know what's the matter with me, but I am really in fear of him; I suppose, reading his formal books when I was in the country with him, and going so constantly to church, with my elbows stuck to my hips, and my toes turned in, have given me these foolish prejudices.

Lord M. Then you must affront him, or you'll never get the better of him.

Sir J. [Knocking without.] My lord, my lord, are you busy?

Miss T. Heavens! 'tis that detestable brute, my uncle!

Lord M. That horrid dog, my cousin!

Miss T. What shall we do, my lord?

Sir J. Nay, my lord, my lord, I heard you; pray let me speak with you.

Lord M. Oh! Sir John, is it you? I beg your pardon, I'll put up my papers, and open the door.

Miss T. Stay, stay, my lord; I would not meet him now for the world; if he sees me here alone with you, he'll rave like a madman: put me up the chimney; anywhere.

Lord M. [Aloud.] I'm coming, Sir John! Here, here! get behind my great chair; he sha'n't see you, and you may see all; I'll be short and pleasant with him.

[Puts her behind the chair, and opens the door.]

Enter Sir JOHN.—[During this scene Lord MINIKIN turns the chair, as Sir JOHN moves, to conceal Miss T.]

Sir J. You'll excuse me, my lord, that I have broken in upon you: I heard you talking pretty loud. What have you nobody with you? what were you about, cousin? [Looking about.]

Lord M. A particular affair, Sir John: I always lock myself up to study my speeches, and speak them aloud for the sake of the tone and action.

Sir J. [Sits down.] Ay, ay, 'tis the best way. I am sorry I disturbed you; you'll excuse me, cousin!

Lord M. I am rather obliged to you, Sir John; intense application to these things ruins my health; but one must do it for the sake of the nation.

Sir J. May be so: I hope the nation will be the better for't—you'll excuse me!

Lord M. Excuse me, Sir John: I love your frankness. But why won't you be franker still? we have always something for dinner, and you will never dine at home.

Sir J. You must know, my lord, that I love to know what I eat;—I hate to travel, where I don't know my way: and since you have brought in foreign fashions and figaries, everything and everybody are in masquerade: your men and manners,

too, are as much frittered and fricased, as your beef and mutton; I love a plain dish, my lord. But to the point; I came, my lord, to open my mind to you about my niece Tittup; shall I do it freely?

Lord M. The freer the better; Tittup's a fine girl, cousin, and deserves all the kindness you can shew her.

[*Lord M. and Miss T. make signs at each other.*]

Sir J. She must deserve it, though, before she shall have it; and I would have her begin with lengthening her petticoats, covering her shoulders, and wearing a cap upon her head.

Lord M. Don't you think a taper leg, falling shoulders, and fine hair, delightful objects, Sir John?

Sir J. And therefore ought to be concealed; 'tis their interest to conceal them; when you take from the men the pleasure of imagination, there will be a scarcity of husbands; and then taper legs, falling shoulders, and fine hair, may be had for nothing.

Lord M. Well said, Sir John. Ha, ha!—your niece shall wear a horseman's coat and jack-boots to please you. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir J. You may sneer, my lord; but for all that, I think my niece in a bad way; she must leave me and the country, forsooth, to travel and see good company and fashions; I have seen them too, and wish from my heart that she is not much the worse for the journey—you'll excuse me.

Lord M. But why in a passion, Sir John? Don't you think that my lady and I shall be able and willing to put her into the road?

Sir J. Zounds! my lord, you are out of it yourself. This comes of your travelling; all the town know how you and my lady live together; and I must tell you—you'll excuse me,—that my niece suffers by the bargain; prudence, my lord, is a very fine thing.

Lord M. So is a long neckcloth nicely twisted into a button-hole; but I don't choose to wear one—you'll excuse me!

Sir J. I wish that he who first changed long neckcloths for such things as you wear, had the wearing of a twisted neckcloth that I would give him.

[*Rises.*]

Lord M. Pr'ythee, baronet, don't be so horribly out-of-the-way; prudence is a very vulgar virtue, and so incompatible with our present ease and refinement, that a prudent man of fashion is now as great a miracle as a pale woman of quality; we got rid of our *mauvaise honte*, at the same time that we imported our neighbour's rouge and their morals.

Sir J. Did you ever hear the like! I am not surprised, my lord, that you think so lightly, and talk so vainly, who are so polite a husband: your lady, my cousin, is a fine woman, and brought you a fine fortune, and deserves better usage.

Lord M. Will you have her, Sir John? she is much at your service.

Sir J. Profligate! What did you marry her for, my lord?

Lord M. Convenience. Marriage is not, nowadays, an affair of inclination, but convenience; and they who marry for love, and such old-fashioned stuff, are to me as ridiculous as those that advertise for an agreeable companion in a post-chaise.

Sir J. I have done, my lord; Miss Tittup shall either return with me into the country, or not a penny shall she have from Sir John Trotley, baronet. [*Whistles and walks about.*] Pray, my lord, what husband is this you have provided for her?

Lord M. A friend of mine; a man of wit, and a fine gentleman.

Sir J. May be so, and yet make a d—d bad husband for all that. You'll excuse me! What estate has he, pray?

Lord M. He's a colonel; his elder brother, Sir Tan Tivy, will certainly break his neck, and then my friend will be a happy man.

Sir J. Here's morals! a happy man when his brother has broken his neck! A happy man! Mercy on me!

Lord M. Why, he'll have six thousand a-year, Sir John—

Sir J. I don't care what he'll have, nor I don't care what he is, nor who my niece marries; she is a fine lady, and let her have a fine gentleman; I sha'n't hinder her. I'll away into the country to-morrow, and leave you to your fine doings; I have no relish for them, not I; I can't live among you, nor game with you; I hate cards and dice; I will neither rob nor be robbed; I am contented with what I have, and am very happy, my lord, though my brother has not broken his neck—you'll excuse me! [*Exit.*]

Lord M. Ha, ha, ha! Come, fox, come out of your hole! Ha, ha, ha!

Miss T. Indeed, my lord, you have undone me; not a foot shall I have of Trotley Manor, that's positive! But no matter, there's no danger of his breaking his neck, so I'll e'en make myself happy with what I have, and behave to him for the future, as if he were a poor relation.

Lord M. [*Kneeling and kissing her hand.*] I must kneel and adore you for your spirit, my sweet, heavenly Lucretia!

Re-enter Sir JOHN.

Sir J. [*Starts.*] One thing I had forgot—

Miss T. Ha! he's here again!

Sir J. Why, what the devil!—Heigho! my niece Lucretia, and my virtuous lord, studying speeches for the good of the nation. Yes, yes, you have been making fine speeches, indeed, my lord; and your arguments have prevailed, I see. I beg your pardon, I did not mean to interrupt your studies—you'll excuse me, my lord!

Lord M. [*Smiling and mocking him.*] You'll excuse me, Sir John!

Sir J. Oh! yes, my lord; but I'm afraid the devil won't excuse you at the proper time. Miss Lucretia, how do you, child? You are to be married soon: I wish the gentleman joy, Miss Lucretia; he is a happy man to be sure, and will want nothing but the breaking of his brother's neck to be completely so.

Miss T. Upon my word, uncle, you are always putting bad constructions upon things; my lord has been soliciting me to marry his friend—and having that moment—extorted a consent from me—he was thanking—and—and—wishing me joy—in his foolish manner. [*Hesitating.*]

Sir J. Is that all! But how came you here, child? Did you fly down from the chimney, or in at the window? for I don't remember seeing you when I was here before.

Miss T. How can you talk so, Sir John? You really confound me with your suspicions; and then you ask so many questions, and I have so many things to do, that—that—upon my word, if I don't make haste, I sha'n't get my dress ready for the ball, so I must run. You'll excuse me, uncle!

[*Exit running.*]

Sir J. A fine hopeful young lady that, my lord.

Lord M. She's well bred, and has wit.

Sir J. She has wit and breeding enough to laugh at her relations, and bestow favours on your lordship; but I must tell you plainly, my lord, you'll excuse me, that your marrying your lady, my cousin, to use her ill, and sending for my niece, your cousin, to debauch her—

Lord M. You're warm, Sir John, and don't know the world; and I never contend with ignorance and passion. Live with me some time, and you'll be satisfied of my honour and good intentions to you and your family; in the meantime, command my house. I must away immediately to Lady Filligree's; and I am sorry you won't make one with us. Here, Jessamy, give me my domino, and call a chair; and don't let my uncle wait for anything. You'll excuse me, Sir John. Tol, lol, de rol, &c.

[*Exit, singing.*]

Sir J. The world's at an end! Here's fine work! here are precious doings! This lord is a pillar of the state, too! no wonder that the building is in danger with such rotten supporters. Heigho! And then, my poor Lady Minikin, what a friend and husband she is blessed with! Let me consider—should I tell the good woman of these pranks, I may only make more mischief, and, mayhap, go near to kill her, for she's as tender as she's virtuous. Poor lady! I'll e'en go and comfort her directly, and endeavour to draw her from the wickedness of this town into the country, where she shall have reading, fowling, and fishing, to keep up her spirits; and when I die, I will leave her that part of my fortune with which I intended to reward the virtues of Miss Lucretia Tittup, with a plague to her! [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—Lady Minikin's Apartment.

Lady MINIKIN and Colonel TIVY discovered.

Lady M. Don't urge it, Colonel; I can't think of coming home from the masquerade this evening; though I should pass for my niece, it would make an uproar among the servants; and, perhaps, from the mistake, break off your match with Tittup.

Col. T. My dear Lady Minikin, you know my marriage with your niece is only a secondary consideration; my first and principal object is you—you, madam: therefore, my dear lady, give me your promise to leave the ball with me. You must, Lady Minikin; a bold young fellow and a soldier, as I am, ought not to be kept from plunder when the town has capitulated.

Lady M. But it has not capitulated, and, perhaps, never will: however, Colonel, since you are so furious, I must come to terms, I think. Keep your eyes upon me at the ball; I think I may expect that; and when I drop my handkerchief, 'tis your signal for pursuing. I shall get home as fast as I can, you may follow me as fast as you can: Gymp will let us in the back way—No, no! my heart misgives me!

Col. T. Then I am miserable!

Lady M. Nay, rather than you should be miserable, Colonel, I will indulge your martial spirit: meet me in the field; there's my gauntlet.

[*Throws down her glove.*]

Col. T. [*Seizing her.*] Thus I accept your sweet challenge; and, if I fail you, may I hereafter, both in love and war, be branded with the name of coward.

[*Kneels and kisses her hand.*]

Enter Sir JOHN TROTLEY.

Sir J. May I presume, cousin—

Lady M. Ha!

[*Squalls.*]

Sir J. Mercy upon us! what are we at now?

Lady M. How can you be so rude, Sir John, to come into a lady's room without first knocking at the door? You have frightened me out of my wits.

Sir J. I am sure you have frightened me out of mine.

Col. T. Such rudeness deserves death.

Sir J. Death, indeed! for I never shall recover myself again. All pigs of the same styel! all studs for the good of the nation!

[*Aside.*]

Lady M. We must soothe him, and not provoke him.

[*Apart to the Colonel.*]

Col. T. I would cut his throat, if you'd permit me.

[*Apart to Lady M.*]

Sir J. The devil has got his hoof in the house, and has corrupted the whole family; I'll get out of it as fast as I can, lest he should lay hold of me, too.

[*Going.*]

Lady M. Sir John, I must insist upon your not going away in a mistake.

Sir J. No mistake, my lady; I am thoroughly convinced. Mercy on me!

Lady M. I must beg you, Sir John, not to make any wrong constructions upon this accident. You must know, that the moment you was at the door, I had promised the Colonel no longer to be his enemy in his designs upon Miss Tittup; this threw him into such a rapture, that upon my promising my interest with you, and wishing him joy, he fell upon his knees, and—and—[*laughing*—]ha, ha, ha!

Col. T. Ha, ha, ha! Yes, yes, I fell upon my knees, and—and—

Sir J. Ay, ay; fell upon your knees, and—and—ha, ha! A very good joke, faith! and the best of it is, that they are wishing joy all over the house upon the same occasion: and my lord is wishing joy; and I wish him joy, and you, with all my heart.

Lady M. Upon my word, Sir John, your cruel suspicions affect me strongly; and though my resentment is curbed by my regard, my tears cannot be restrained; 'tis the only resource my innocence has left.

[*Exit.*]

Col. T. I reverence you, sir, as a relation to that lady; but, as her slanderer, I detest you. Her tears must be dried, and my honour satisfied: you know what I mean; take your choice—time, place, sword, or pistol; consider it calmly, and determine as you please. I am a soldier, Sir John.

[*Exit.*]

Sir J. Very fine, truly! and so, between the crocodile and the bully, my throat is to be cut: they are guilty of all sorts of iniquity, and when they are discovered, no humility, no repentance! The ladies have recourse to their tongues or their tears, and the gallants to their swords. That I may not be drawn in by the one, or drawn upon by the other, I'll hurry into the country while I retain my senses, and can sleep in a whole skin.

[*Exit.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—An Apartment at Lord Minikin's.

Enter Sir JOHN TROTLEY and JESSAMY.

Sir J. There is no bearing this! what a land are we in! Upon my word, Mr. Jessamy, you should look well to the house; there are certainly rogues about it: for I did but cross the way just now to the pamphlet-shop, to buy a Touch at the Times,

and they had a pluck at my watch; but I heard of their tricks, and had it sewed to my pocket.

Jes. Don't be alarmed, Sir John, 'tis a very common thing; and if you walk the streets without convoy, you will be picked up by privateers of all kinds. Ha, ha!

Sir J. Not be alarmed when I am robbed! Why, they might have cut my throat. I sha'n't sleep a wink all night; so, pray, lend me some weapon of defence; for I am sure, if they attack me in the open street, they'll be with me at night again.

Jes. I'll lend you my duelling-pistols, Sir John. Be assured there's no danger; there's robbing and murder cried every night under my window; but it no more disturbs me, than the ticking of my watch at my bed's head.

Sir J. Well, well; be that as it will, I must be upon guard. What a dreadful place this is! but 'tis all owing to the corruption of the times; the great folks game, and the poor folks rob; no wonder that murder ensues. Sad, sad, sad! Well, let me but get over to-night, and I'll leave this den of thieves to-morrow. How long will your lord and lady stay at this masking and mummery before they come home?

Jes. 'Tis impossible to say the time, sir; that merely depends upon the spirits of the company, and the nature of the entertainment; for my own part, I generally make it myself till four or five in the morning.

Sir J. Why, what the devil, do you make one at these masqueradings?

Jes. I seldom miss, sir; I may venture to say that nobody knows the trim and small talk of the place better than I do: I was always reckoned an incomparable mask.

Sir J. Thou art an incomparable coxcomb, I am sure. [*Aside.*]

Jes. An odd, ridiculous accident happened to me at a masquerade three years ago; I was in tip-top spirits, and had drunk a little too freely of the champagne, I believe—

Sir J. You'll be hanged, I believe. [*Aside.*]

Jes. Wit flew about—in short, I was in spirits: at last, from drinking and rattling, to vary the pleasure, we went to dancing; and who do you think I danced a minuet with? He, he, he! Pray, guess, Sir John.

Sir J. Danced a minuet with! [*Aside.*]

Jes. My own lady, that's all. The eyes of the whole assembly were upon us; my lady dances well, and I believe I am pretty tolerable: after the dance I was running into a little coquetry and small talk with her.

Sir J. With your lady? Chaos is come again! [*Aside.*]

Jes. With my lady. But, upon my turning my hand thus, [*conceitedly*] egad! she caught me; whispered me who I was. I would fain have laughed her out of it, but it would not do: "No, no, Jessamy," says she, "I am not to be deceived: pray, wear gloves for the future; for you may as well go barefaced, as shew that hand and diamond ring."

Sir J. What a sink of iniquity! Prostitution on all sides, from the lord to the pickpocket. [*Aside.*] Pray, Mr. Jessamy, among your other virtues, I suppose you game a little, eh! Mr. Jessamy?

Jes. A little whist or so: but I am tied up from the dice; I must never touch a box again.

Sir J. I wish you were tied up somewhere else. [*Aside.*] I shall go to my room: and let my lord

and lady, and my niece Tittup know, that I beg they will excuse ceremony; that I must be up and gone before they go to bed; that I have a most profound respect and love for them, and—that I hope we shall never see one another again as long as we live.

Jes. I shall certainly obey your commands. What poor ignorant wretches these country gentlemen are! [*Aside, and exit.*]

Sir J. If I stay in this place another day, it would throw me into a fever. Oh! I wish it were morning! This comes of visiting my relations! [*Enter DAVY, drunk.*] So, you wicked wretch, you! where have you been, and what have you been doing?

Davy. Merry-making, your honour. London for ever.

Sir J. And did I not order you not to make a jackanapes of yourself and tie your hair up like a monkey?

Davy. And, therefore, I did it: no pleasing the ladies without this. My lord's servants call you an old out-of-fashioned codger, and have taught me what's what.

Sir J. Here's an imp of the devil! He is undone, and will poison the whole country. Sirrah! get everything ready; I'll be going directly.

Davy. To bed, sir? I want to go to bed myself, sir.

Sir J. Why, how now! you are drunk, too, sirrah!

Davy. I am a little, your honour; because I have been drinking.

Sir J. That is not all; but you have been in bad company, sirrah!

Davy. Indeed, your honour's mistaken; I never kept such good company in all my life.

Sir J. The fellow does not understand me. Where have you been, you drunkard?

Davy. Drinking, to be sure, if I am a drunkard; and if you had been drinking, too, as I have been, you would not be in such a passion with a body; it makes one so good-natured.

Sir J. There is another addition to my misfortunes! I shall have this fellow carry into the country as many vices as will corrupt the whole parish.

Davy. I'll take what I can, to be sure, your worship.

Sir J. Get away, you beast, you! and sleep off the debauchery you have contracted this fortnight, or I shall leave you behind, as a proper person to make one of his lordship's family.

Davy. So much the better: give me more wages, less work, and the key of the ale-cellar, and I am your servant; if not, provide yourself with another.

[*Struts about.*]

Sir J. Here's a reprobate! This is the completion of my misery! But, harkye, villain! go to bed, and sleep off your iniquity, and then pack up the things, or I'll pack you off to Newgate, and transport you for life, you rascal, you! [*Exit.*]

Davy. That for you, old codger! [*Snapping his fingers.*] I know the law better than to be frightened with moonshine. I wish that I were to live here all my days. This is life, indeed! a servant lives up to his eyes in clover; they have wages and board wages, and nothing to do but to grow fat and saucy: they are as happy as their master; they play for ever at cards, swear like emperors, drink like fishes, and go a-wenching with as much ease and tranquillity, as if they were going to a sermon. Oh! 'tis a fine life! [*Exit, reeling.*]

SCENE II.—*A Chamber in Lord Minikin's house.*

Enter Lord MINIKIN and Miss TITTUP, in masquerade dresses, lighted by JESSAMY.

Lord M. Set down the candles, Jessamy; and should your lady come home, let me know. Be sure you are not out of the way.

Jes. I have lived too long with your lordship to need the caution. Who the devil have we got now? but that's my lord's business, and not mine. [*Exit.*]

Miss T. [*Putting off her mask.*] Upon my word, my lord, this coming home so soon from the masquerade is very imprudent, and will certainly be observed. I am most inconceivably frightened, I can assure you. My uncle Trotley has a light in his room; the accident this morning will certainly keep him upon the watch. Pray, my lord, let us defer our meetings till he goes into the country. I find that my English heart, though it has ventured so far, grows fearful, and awkward to practise the freedoms of warmer climes. [*Lord M. takes her by the hand.*] If you will not desist, my lord, we are separated for ever. The sight of the precipice turns my head; I have been giddy with it too long, and must turn from it while I can. Pray, be quiet, my lord, I will meet you to-morrow.

Lord M. To-morrow! 'tis an age in my situation. Let the weak, bashful, coyish winner be intimidated with these faint alarms; but let the bold experienced lover kindle at the danger, and, like the eagle in the midst of storms, thus pounce upon his prey. [*Takes hold of her.*]

Miss T. Dear Mr. Eagle, be merciful; pray, let the poor pigeon fly for this once.

Lord M. If I do, my dove, may I be cursed to have my wife as fond of me, as I am now of thee.

[*Offers to kiss her.*]

Jes. [*Without, knocking.*] My lord, my lord!

Miss T. [*Screams.*] Ah!

Lord M. Who's there?

Jes. [*Peeping.*] 'Tis I, my lord; may I come in?

Lord M. D—n the fellow! What's the matter?

Jes. Nay, not much, my lord; only my lady's come home.

Miss T. Then I'm undone! What shall I do? I'll run into my own room.

Lord M. Then she may meet you.

Jes. There's a dark deep closet, my lord. Miss may hide herself there.

Miss T. For heaven's sake! put me into it; and when her ladyship's safe, let me know, my lord. What an escape have I had! [*Goes into the closet.*]

Lord M. The moment her evil spirit is laid, I'll let my angel out. Lock the door on the inside. Come softly to my room, Jessamy.

Jes. If a board creaks, your lordship shall never be liberal to me again. [*Exeunt on tiptoe.*]

Enter GYMP, lighting in Lady MINIKIN and Colonel TIVY, in masquerade dresses.

Gymp. Pray, my lady, go no further with the Colonel; I know you mean nothing but innocence; but I'm sure there will be bloodshed, for my lord is certainly in the house. I'll take my affidavit that I heard—

Col. T. It can't be, I tell you; we left him this moment at the masquerade: I spoke to him before I came out.

Lady M. He's too busy, and too well employed to think of home. But don't tremble so, Gymp. There is no harm, I assure you. The Colonel is to marry

my niece, and it is proper to settle some matters relating to it—they are left to us.

Gymp. Yes, yes, madam, to be sure, it is proper that you talk together. I know you mean nothing but innocence; but, indeed, there will be bloodshed.

Col. T. The girl's a fool. I have no sword by my side.

Gymp. But my lord has, and you may kill one another with that. I know you mean nothing but innocence; but I certainly heard him go up the back-stairs into his own room, talking with Jessamy.

Lady M. 'Tis impossible but the girl must have fancied this. Can't you ask Whisp, or Mignon, if their master is come in?

Gymp. Lud! my lady, they are always drunk before this, and asleep in the kitchen.

Lady M. This frightened fool has made me as ridiculous as herself. Hark! Colonel, I'll swear there is something upon the stairs. Now I am in the field I find I am a coward.

Gymp. There will certainly be bloodshed.

Col. T. I'll slip down with Gymp this back way, then. [*Going.*]

Gymp. Oh, dear! my lady, there is something coming up there, too.

Col. T. Zounds! I've got between two fires!

Lady M. Run into the closet.

Col. T. [*Runs to the closet.*] There's no retreat; the door is locked.

Lady M. Behind the chimney-board, Gymp.

Col. T. I shall certainly be taken prisoner. [*Gets behind the chimney-board.*] You'll let me know when the enemy's decamped.

Lady M. Leave that to me. Do you, Gymp, go down the back-stairs, and leave me to face my lord; I think I can match him at hypocrisy.

[*Sits down.*]

Enter Lord MINIKIN.

Lord M. What, is your ladyship so soon returned from Lady Fillagree's?

Lady M. I am sure, my lord, I ought to be more surprised at your being here so soon, when I saw you so well entertained in a tête-à-tête with a lady in crimson: such sights, my lord, will always drive me from my most favourite amusements.

Lord M. [*Seated.*] You find, at least, that the lady, whoever she was, could not engage me to stay, when I found your ladyship had left the ball.

Lady M. Your lordship's sneering upon my unhappy temper may be a proof of your wit, but it is none of your humanity; and this behaviour is as great an insult upon me, as even your falsehood itself. [*Pretends to weep.*]

Lord M. Nay, my dear Lady Minikin, if you are resolved to play tragedy, I shall roar away too, and pull out my cambric handkerchief.

Lady M. I think, my lord, we had better retire to our apartments; my weakness and your brutality will only expose us to the servants. Where is Tittup, pray?

Lord M. I left her with the Colonel; a masquerade to young folks upon the point of matrimony, is as delightful as it is disgusting to those who are happily married, and are wise enough to love home, and the company of their wives.

[*Takes hold of her hand.*]

Lady M. False man! I had as lieve a toad touched me. [*Aside.*]

Lord M. She gives me the frisoone. I must propose to stay, or I shall never get rid of her. [*Aside.*] I am aguish to-night. He, he! Do, my dear, let us

make a little fire here, and have a family tête-à-tête, by way of novelty. [Rings.]

Enter JESSAMY.

Let them take away that chimney-board, and light a fire here immediately.

Lady M. What shall I do? [Aside, and greatly alarmed.] Here, Jessamy, there is no occasion; I am going to my own chamber, and my lord won't stay here by himself. [Exit JESSAMY.]

Lord M. How cruel it is, Lady Minikin, to deprive me of the pleasure of a domestic duetto. A good escape, faith! [Aside.]

Lady M. I have too much regard for Lord Minikin to agree to anything that would afford him so little pleasure. I shall retire to my own apartment.

Lord M. Well, if your ladyship will be cruel, I must still, like the miser, starve and sigh, though possessed of the greatest treasure. [Bows.] I wish your ladyship a good night. [He takes one candle, and Lady MINIKIN the other.] May I presume—

[Salutes her.]

Lady M. Your lordship is too obliging. Nasty man! [Aside.]

Lord M. Disagreeable woman!

[Aside.—They wipe their lips, and exeunt.]

Miss T. [Peeping out of the closet.] All's silent now, and quite dark; what has been doing here, I cannot guess: I long to be relieved; I wish my lord were come—but I hear a noise. [Shuts the door.]

Col. T. [Peeping over the chimney-board.] I wonder my lady does not come. I would not have Miss Tittup know of this; 'twould be ten thousand pounds out of my way, and I can't afford to give so much for a little gallantry.

Miss T. [Comes forward.] What would my Colonel say, to find his bride that is to be, in this critical situation?

Enter Lord MINIKIN, in the dark.

Lord M. Now to release my prisoner.

[Comes forward.]

Enter Lady MINIKIN.

Lady M. My poor Colonel will be as miserable as if he were bedridden in garrison: I must release him. [Going towards the chimney.]

Lord M. Hist, hist!

Miss T.

Lord M. { Here, here!

Cok T.

Lord M. This way.

Lady M. Softly.

[Lord M. lays hold of Lady M. and the Colonel of Miss T.]

Sir J. [Without.] Lights this way, I say; get a blunderbuss.

Enter Sir JOHN TROTLEY, in his night-cap, and sword drawn, with JESSAMY.

Jes. Indeed, you dreamt it, there is nobody but the family. [All stand and stare.]

Sir J. Give me the candle, I'll ferret them out, I warrant. Bring a blunderbuss, I say: they have been skipping about that gallery in the dark this half-hour; there must be mischief. I have watched them into this room. Ho, ho! are you there? If you stir, you are dead men; [they retire] and [seeing the ladies] women, too! Egad—eh! What's this? the same party again! and two couple they are of as choice mortals as ever were hatched in this righteous town! you'll excuse me, cousins.

Lord M. In the name of wonder, how comes all this about?

Sir J. Well, but, harkye! my dear cousins, have you not got wrong partners? Here has been some mistake in the dark; I am mightily glad that I have brought you a candle to set all to rights again: you'll excuse me, gentlemen and ladies.

Enter GYMP, with a light.

Gymp. What in the name of mercy is the matter?

Sir J. Why the old matter, and the old game, Mrs. Gymp; and I'll match my cousins here at it against all the world, and I say done first.

Lord M. What is the meaning, Sir John, of all this tumult and consternation? May not Lady Minikin and I, and the Colonel and your niece, be seen in my house together without your raising the family, and making this uproar and confusion?

Sir J. Come, come, good folks, I see you are all confounded; I'll settle this matter in a moment. As for you, Colonel, though you have not deserved plain dealing from me, I will now be serious: you imagine this young lady has an independent fortune, besides expectations from me: 'tis a mistake, she has no expectations from me, if she marry you; and if I don't consent to her marriage, she will have no fortune at all.

Col. T. Plain dealing is a jewel; and to shew you, Sir John, that I can pay you in kind, I am most sincerely obliged to you for your intelligence: and I am, ladies, your most obedient, humble servant. I shall see you, my lord, at the club to-morrow. [Exit.]

Lord M. Sans doute, mon cher Colonel! I'll meet you there without fail.

Sir J. My lord, you'll have something else to do.

Lord M. Indeed! what is that, good Sir John?

Sir J. You must meet your lawyers and creditors to-morrow, and be told what you have always turned a deaf ear to—that the dissipation of your fortune and morals must be followed by years of parsimony and repentance; as you are fond of going abroad, you may indulge that inclination without having it in your power to indulge any other.

Lord M. The bumpkin is no fool, and is d—d satirical. [Aside.]

Sir J. You are silent, ladies. If repentance has subdued your tongues, I shall have hopes of you. A little country air might, perhaps, do as well: as you are distressed, I am at your service. What say you, my lady?

Lady M. However appearances have condemned me, give me leave to disavow the substance of those appearances. My mind has been tainted, but not profligate; your kindness and example may restore me to my former natural English constitution.

Sir J. Will you resign your lady to me, my lord, for a time?

Lord M. For ever, dear Sir John, without a murmur.

Sir J. Well, miss, and what say you?

Miss T. Guilty, uncle. [Curtseying.]

Sir J. Guilty! the devil you are? of what?

Miss T. Of consenting to marry one whom my heart does not approve, and coquetting with another, which friendship, duty, honour, morals, and everything but fashion, ought to have forbidden.

Sir J. Thus, then, with the wife of one under this arm, and the mistress of another under this, I sally forth a knight-errant, to rescue distressed damsels from those monsters, foreign vices and *bon ton*, as they call it; and I trust that every English hand and heart here will assist me in so desperate an undertaking. You'll excuse me, sirs! [Exeunt.]

THE WEST INDIAN;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS;

BY RICHARD CUMBERLAND.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

STOCKWELL
BELCOUR
MAJOR O'FLAHERTY
CAPTAIN DUDLEY
CHARLES DUDLEY
VARLAND
STUKELY
FULMER
Servants
Sailors.

LADY RUSPORT
CHARLOTTE RUSPORT
LOUISA DUDLEY
MRS. FULMER
LUCY
Housekeeper.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Merchant's Counting-house.*

Several Clerks are employed at their desks; STOCKWELL is discovered reading a letter; STUKELY comes out of the back room.

Stuke. He seems disordered: something in that letter; and, I'm afraid, of an unpleasant sort. He has many ventures of great account at sea; a ship richly freighted for Barcelona; another for Lisbon; and others expected from Cadiz, of still greater value. Besides these, I know he has many deep concerns in foreign bottoms, and underwritings to a vast amount. I'll accost him: sir—Mr. Stockwell.

Stock. Stukely! Well, have you shipped the cloths?

Stuke. I have, sir; here's the bill of lading, and copy of the invoice! the assortments are all compared: Mr. Traffic will give you the policy upon 'Change.

Stock. 'Tis very well: lay these papers by; and no more business for a while. Shut the door, Stukely; I have had long proof of your friendship and fidelity to me; a matter of most intimate concern lies on my mind, and 'twill be a sensible relief

to unbosom myself to you; I have just now been informed of the arrival of the young West Indian I have so long been expecting; you know who I mean?

Stuke. Yes, sir; Mr. Belcour, the young gentleman, who inherited old Belcour's great estates in Jamaica.

Stock. Hush! not so loud; come a little nearer this way. This Belcour is now in London; part of his baggage is already arrived, and I expect him every minute. Is it to be wondered at, if his coming throws me into some agitation, when I tell you, Stukely, he is my son?

Stuke. Your son?

Stock. Yes, sir, my only son. Early in life I accompanied his grandfather to Jamaica as his clerk; he had an only daughter, somewhat older than myself; the mother of this gentleman: it was my chance (call it good or ill) to engage her affections; and, as the inferiority of my condition made it hopeless to expect her father's consent, her fondness provided an expedient, and we were privately married: the issue of that concealed engagement is, as I have told you, this Belcour.

Stuke. That event surely discovered your connexion.

Stock. You shall hear. Not many days after our marriage, old Belcour set out for England; and, during his abode here, my wife was, with great secrecy, delivered of this son. Fruitful in expedients to disguise her situation without parting from her infant, she contrived to have it laid and received at her door as a foundling. After some time, her father returned, having left me here; in one of those favourable moments that decide the fortunes of prosperous men, this child was introduced: from that instant he treated him as his own, gave him his name, and brought him up in his family. Old Belcour is dead, and has bequeathed his whole estate to him we are speaking of.

Stuke. Now, then, you are no longer bound to secrecy.

Stock. True; but before I publicly reveal myself, I could wish to make some experiment of my son's disposition: this can only be done by letting his spirit take its course without restraint; by these means, I think I shall discover much more of his real character under the title of his merchant, than I should under that of his father.

Enter a Sailor, ushering in several black Servants, carrying portmanteaus, trunks, &c.

Sail. 'Save your honour! is your name Stockwell?
Stock. It is.

Sail. Part of my master Belcour's baggage, an't please you: there's another cargo not far a-stern of us: and the coxswain has got charge of the dumb creatures.

Stock. Pr'ythee, friend, what dumb creatures do you speak of? Has Mr. Belcour brought over a collection of wild beasts?

Sail. No, lord love him! no, not he. Let me see; there's two green monkeys, a pair of grey parrots, a Jamaica sow and pigs, and a Mangrove dog; that's all.

Stock. Is that all?

Sail. Yes, your honour; yes, that's all: bless his heart, a' might have brought over the whole island if he would; a' didn't leave a dry eye in it.

Stock. Indeed! Stukely, shew them where to bestow their baggage. Follow that gentleman.

Sail. Come, bear a hand, my lads, bear a hand.

[*Ereunt STUKELY and Servants.*]

Stock. If the principal tallies with his purveyors, he must be a singular spectacle in this place: he has a friend, however, in this sea-faring fellow; 'tis no bad prognostic of a man's heart, when his ship-mates give him a good word. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—A Drawing-room.

Enter Housekeeper and Servant.

Housek. Why, what a fuss does our good master put himself in about this West Indian! See what a bill of fare I've been forced to draw out; seven and nine, I'll assure you, and only a family dinner, as he calls it: why, if my lord mayor was expected, there couldn't be a greater to do about him.

Serv. I wish to my heart you had but seen the loads of trunks, boxes, and portmanteaus, he has sent hither. An ambassador's baggage, with all the smuggled goods of his family, does not exceed it.

Housek. A fine pickle he'll put the house into: had he been master's own son, and a Christian Englishman, there could not be more rout than there is about this Creolian, as they call 'em.

Serv. No matter for that; he's very rich, and that's sufficient. They say, he has run and sugar enough belonging to him, to make all the water in the Thames into punch. But I see my master's coming. [*Exit Housekeeper.*]

Enter STOCKWELL.

* *Stock.* Where is Mr. Belcour? Who brought this note from him?

Serv. A waiter from the London Tavern, sir; he says the young gentleman is just dressed, and will be with you directly.

Stock. Show him in when he arrives.

Serv. I shall, sir; I'll have a peep at him first, however; I've a great mind to see this outlandish spark. The sailor fellow says, he'll make rare doings among us. [*Aside.*]

Stock. You need not wait; leave me. [*Exit Serv.*]
Let me see. [*Reads.*] "Sir,—I write to you under the hands of the hair-dresser; as soon as I have made myself decent, and slipped on some fresh clothes, I will have the honour of paying you my devoirs. Yours, BELCOUR."

He writes at his ease; for he's unconscious to whom his letter is addressed; but what a palpitation does it throw my heart into; a father's heart! All the

reports I ever received give me favourable impressions of his character; wild, perhaps, as the manner of his country is, but, I trust, not frantic or unprincipled.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir, the foreign gentleman is come. [*Erit.*]
Enter BELCOUR.

Stock. Mr. Belcour, I am rejoiced to see you: you are welcome to England!

Bel. I thank you heartily, good Mr. Stockwell; you and I have long conversed at a distance; now we are met; and the pleasure this meeting gives me, amply compensates for the perils I have run through in accomplishing it.

Stock. What perils, Mr. Belcour? I could not have thought you would have made a bad passage at this time of year.

Bel. Nor did we: courier like, we came posting to your shores, upon the pinions of the swiftest gales that ever blew; 'tis upon English ground all my difficulties have arisen; 'tis the passage from the river side I complain of.

Stock. Ay, indeed! What obstruction can you have met between this and the river side?

Bel. Innumerable! Your town is as full of defiles as the island of Corsica, and I believe they are as obstinately defended; so much hurry, bustle, and confusion on your quays: so many sugar-casks, porter-butts, and common-council men in your streets, that unless a man marched with artillery in his front, 'tis more than the labour of Hercules can effect, to make any tolerable way through your town.

Stock. I am sorry you have been so incommoded.
Bel. Why, 'faith, 'twas all my own fault; accustomed to a land of slaves, and out of patience with the whole tribe of custom-house extortioners, boatmen, tide-waiters and water-bailiffs, that beset me on all sides, worse than a swarm of musquitoes, I proceeded a little too roughly to brush them away with my rattan; the sturdy rogues took this in dudgeon, and beginning to rebel, the mob chose different sides, and a furious scuffle ensued; in the course of which, my person and apparel suffered so much, that I was obliged to step into the first tavern to refit before I could make my approaches in any decent trim.

Stock. All without is as I wish; dear nature, add the rest, I am happy. [*Aside.*] Well, Mr. Belcour, 'tis a rough sample you have had of my countrymen's spirit; but, I trust, you'll not think the worse of them for it.

Bel. Not all, not at all; I like them the better. Was I only a visitor, I might, perhaps, wish them a little more tractable; but as a fellow-subject, and a sharer in their freedom, I applaud their spirit, though I feel the effects of it in every bone in my skin.

Stock. That's well; I like that well. How gladly I could fall upon his neck, and own myself his father. [*Aside.*]

Bel. Weil, Mr. Stockwell, for the first time in my life, here am I in England; at the fountain head of pleasure, in the land of beauty, of arts, and elegancies. My happy stars have given me a good estate, and the conspiring winds have blown me hither to spend it.

Stock. To use it, not to waste it, I should hope; to treat it, Mr. Belcour, not as a vassal, over whom you have a wanton and a despotic power; but as a subject, which you are bound to govern, with a temperate and restrained authority.

Bel. True, sir, most truly said; mine's a commission, not a right; I am the offspring of distress, and every child of sorrow is my brother; while I have hands to hold, therefore, I will hold them open to mankind; but, sir, my passions are my masters: they take me where they will; and, oftentimes, they leave to reason and to virtue nothing but my wishes and my sighs.

Stock. Come, come, the man who can accuse, corrects himself.

Bel. Ah! that's an office I am weary of; I wish a friend would take it up; I would to heaven you had leisure for the employment; but, did you drive a trade to the four corners of the world, you would not find the task so toilsome as to keep me free from faults.

Stock. Well, I am not discouraged; this candour tells me I should not have the fault of self-conceit to combat; that, at least, is not amongst the number.

Bel. No; if I knew that man on earth who thought more humbly of me than I do of myself, I would take up his opinion, and forego my own.

Stock. And were I to choose a pupil, it should be one of your complexion; so, if you'll come along with me, we'll agree upon your admission, and enter on a course of lectures directly.

Bel. With all my heart.

[*Ereunt.*]

SCENE III.—A Room in Lady Rusport's House.

Enter Lady RUSPORT and Miss RUSPORT.

Lady R. Miss Rusport, I desire to hear no more of Captain Dudley and his destitute family; not a shilling of mine shall ever cross the hands of any of them; because my sister chose to marry a beggar, am I bound to support him and his posterity?

Miss R. I think you are.

Lady R. You think I am! and pray where do you find the law that tells you so?

Miss R. I am not proficient enough to quote chapter and verse; but I take charity to be a main clause in the great statute of christianity.

Lady R. I say charity, indeed! I am apt to think the distresses of old Dudley, and of his daughter into the bargain, would never break your heart, if there was not a certain young fellow of two-and-twenty in the case; who, by the happy recommendation of a good person, and the brilliant appointment of an ensigncy, will, if I am not mistaken, cozen you out of a fortune of twice twenty thousand pounds, as soon as ever you are of age to bestow it upon him.

Miss R. A nephew of your ladyship's can never want any other recommendation with me: and if my partiality for Charles Dudley is acquitted by the rest of the world, I hope Lady Rusport will not condemn me for it.

Lady R. I condemn you! I thank heaven, Miss Rusport, I am no ways responsible for your conduct; nor is it any concern of mine how you dispose of yourself: you are not my daughter, and when I married your father, poor Sir Stephen Rusport, I found you a forward spoiled miss of fourteen, far above being instructed by me.

Miss R. Perhaps your ladyship calls this instruction.

Lady R. You are strangely pert; but 'tis no wonder: your mother, I'm told, was a fine lady; and according to the modern style of education you was brought up. It was not so in my young days; there was then some decorum in the world, some subordination, as the great Locke expresses it. Oh!

'twas an edifying sight, to see the regular deportment observed in our family; no giggling, no gossiping was going on there; my good father, Sir Oliver Roundhead, never was seen to laugh himself, nor ever allowed it in his children.

Miss R. Ay; those were happy times, indeed.

Lady R. But, in this forward age, we have coquettes in the egg-shell, and philosophers in the cradle; girls of fifteen, that lead the fashion in new caps and new opinions; that have their sentiments and their sensations; and the idle fops encourage them in it: 'o my conscience, I wonder what it is the men can see in such babies.

Miss R. True, madam; but all men do not overlook the maturer beauties of your ladyship's age; witness your admired Major Dennis O'Flaherty; there's an example of some discernment; I declare to you, when your ladyship is by, the Major takes no more notice of me than if I was part of the furniture of your chamber.

Lady R. The Major, child, has travelled through various kingdoms and climates, and has more enlarged notions of female merit than fall to the lot of an English home-bred lover; in most other countries, no woman on your side forty would ever be named in a polite circle.

Miss R. Right, madam; I've been told that in Vienna they have coquettes upon crutches, and Venuses in their grand climacteric; a lover there celebrates the wrinkles, not the dimples in his mistress's face. The Major, I think, has served in the imperial army.

Lady R. Are you piqued, my young madam? Had my sister, Louisa, yielded to the addresses of one of Major O'Flaherty's person and appearance, she would have had some excuse; but to run away as she did, at the age of sixteen too, with a man of old Dudley's sort—

Miss R. Was, in my opinion, the most venial trespass that ever girl of sixteen committed; of a noble family, an engaging person, strict honour, and sound understanding, what accomplishment was there wanting in Captain Dudley, but that which the prodigality of his ancestors had deprived him of?

Lady R. They left him as much as he deserves; hasn't the old man captain's half-pay? And is not the son an ensign?

Miss R. An ensign! Alas, poor Charles! Would to heaven he knew what my heart feels and suffers for his sake!

Enter Servant.

Serv. Ensign Dudley, to wait upon your ladyship.

Lady R. Who? Dudley? What can have brought him to town? [Exit.]

Miss R. Dear madam, 'tis Charles Dudley; 'tis your nephew.

Lady R. Nephew! I renounce him as my nephew; Sir Oliver renounced him as his grandson; wasn't he son of the eldest daughter, and only male descendant of Sir Oliver; and didn't he cut him off with a shilling? Didn't the poor dear good old man leave his fortune to me, except a small annuity to my maiden sister, who spoiled her constitution with nursing him? And, depend upon it, not a penny of that fortune shall ever be disposed of otherwise than according to the will of the donor.

Enter CHARLES DUDLEY.

So, young man, whence came you? What brings you to town?

Charles. If there is any offence in my coming to town, your ladyship is in some degree responsible for it, for part of my errand was to pay my duty here.

Lady R. And where is your father, child; and your sister? Are they in town too?

Charles. They are.

Lady R. Ridiculous! I don't know what people do in London, who have no money to spend in it.

Miss R. Dear madam, speak more kindly to your nephew; how can you oppress a youth of his sensibility?

Lady R. Miss Rusport, I insist upon your retiring to your apartment; when I want your advice, I'll send to you. [*Exit Miss R.*] So, you have put on a red coat too, as well as your father; 'tis plain what value you set upon the good advice Sir Oliver used to give you: how often has he cautioned you against the army!

Charles. Had it pleased my grandfather to enable me to have obeyed his caution, I would have done it; but you well know how destitute I am; and 'tis not to be wondered at, if I prefer the service of my king to that of any other master.

Lady R. Well, well, take your own course; 'tis no concern of mine: you never consulted me.

Charles. I frequently wrote to your ladyship, but could obtain no answer; and, since my grandfather's death, this is the first opportunity I have had of waiting upon you.

Lady R. I must desire you not to mention the death of that dear good man in my hearing; my spirits cannot support it.

Charles. I shall obey you: permit me to say, that, as that event has richly supplied you with the materials of bounty, the distresses of my family can furnish you with objects of it.

Lady R. The distresses of your family, child, are quite out of the question at present. Tell your father and your sister, I totally disapprove of their coming up to town.

Charles. Must I tell my father that, before your ladyship knows the motives that brought him hither? Allured by the offer of exchanging for a commission on full pay, the veteran, after thirty years' service, prepares to encounter the fatal heats of Senegambia; but wants a small supply to equip him for the expedition.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Major O'Flaherty, to wait on your ladyship. [*Exit.*]

Enter Major O'FLAHERTY.

O'Fla. Spare your speeches, young man; don't you think her ladyship can take my word for that? I hope, madam, 'tis evidence enough of my being present, when I have the honour of telling you so myself.

Lady R. Major O'Flaherty, I am rejoiced to see you. Nephew Dudley, you perceive I'm engaged.

Charles. I shall not intrude upon your ladyship's more agreeable engagements. I presume I have my answer?

Lady R. Your answer, child! What answer can you possibly expect? or how can your romantic father suppose that I am to abet him in all his idle and extravagant undertakings? Come, Major, let me shew you the way into my dressing-room; and let us leave this young adventurer to his meditation. [*Exit.*]

O'Fla. I follow you, my lady. Young gentleman, your obedient! Upon my conscience, as fine a young

fellow as I would wish to clap my eyes on: he might have answered my salute, however: well, let it pass. Fortune, perhaps, frowns upon the poor lad; she's a d—d slippery lady, and very apt to jilt us poor fellows that wear cockades in our hats. Fare thee well, honey, whoever thou art. [*Exit.*]

Charles. So much for the virtues of a puritan! Out upon it! her heart is flint; yet that woman, that aunt of mine, without one worthy particle in her composition, would, I dare be sworn, as soon set her foot in a pesthouse as in a playhouse.

Enter Miss RUSPORT.

Miss R. Stop, stay a little, Charles; whither are you going in such haste?

Charles. Madam; Miss Rusport; what are your commands?

Miss R. Why so reserved? We had used to answer to no other names than those of Charles and Charlotte.

Charles. What ails you? You have been weeping.

Miss R. No, no; or if I have, your eyes are full too; but I have a thousand things to say to you: before you go, tell me, I conjure you, where you are to be found: here, give me your direction; write it upon the back of this visiting ticket. Have you a pencil?

Charles. I have; but why should you desire to find us out? 'tis a poor little inconvenient place; my sister has no apartment fit to receive you in.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Madam, my lady desires your company directly. [*Exit.*]

Miss R. I am coming: well, have you wrote it? Give it me. O, Charles! either you do not, or you will not understand me. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II

SCENE I.—A Room in Fulmer's House.

FULMER discovered seated; Mrs. FULMER enters to him.

Mrs. F. Why, how you sit, musing and moping, sighing and desponding! I'm ashamed of you, Mr. Fulmer: is this the country you described to me, a second Eldorado, rivers of gold and rocks of diamonds? You found me in a pretty snug retired way of life at Boulogne, out of the noise and bustle of the world, and wholly at my ease: but, thank heaven! our partnership is revocable; I am not your wedded wife, praised be my stars! for what have we got? whom have we gulled but ourselves? which of all your trains has taken fire? Even this poor expedient of your bookseller's shop seems abandoned; for if a chance customer drops in, who is there, pray, to help him to what he wants?

Ful. Patty, you know it is not upon slight grounds that I despair; there had used to be a livelihood to be picked up in this country, both for the honest and dishonest: I have tried each walk, and am likely to starve at last: there is not a point to which the wit and faculty of man can turn, that I have not set mine to, but in vain; I am beat through every quarter of the compass.

Mrs. F. Ah! common efforts all: strike me a master-stroke, Mr. Fulmer, if you wish to make any figure in this country.

Ful. But where, how, and what? I have blustered for prerogative; I have bellowed for freedom; I have offered to serve my country; I have engaged to betray it. A master-stroke, truly! why, I have talked treason, writ treason, and if a man can't live by that, he can live by nothing. Here I set up as a bookseller; why, men leave off reading; and if I was to turn butcher, I believe, o'my conscience, they'd leave off eating.

Captain DUDLEY crosses the stage.

Mrs. F. Why, there now's your lodger, old Captain Dudley, as he calls himself; there's no flint without fire: something might be struck out of him, if you had the wit to find the way.

Ful. Haug him, an old dry skinned curmudgeon; you may as well think to get truth out of a courtier, or candour out of a critic: I can make nothing of him; besides he's poor, and therefore not for our purpose.

Mrs. F. The more fool he! Would any man be poor, that had such a prodigy in his possession?

Ful. His daughter, you mean; she is, indeed, uncommonly beautiful.

Mrs. F. Beautiful! Why, she need only be seen, to have the first men in the kingdom at her feet. Egad! I wish I had the leasing of her beauty; what would some of our young nabobs give?

Ful. Hush! here comes the Captain; good girl, leave us to ourselves, and let me try what I can make of him.

Mrs. F. Captain, truly! i'faith I'd have a regiment had I such a daughter, before I was three months older. [Exit.]

Enter Captain DUDLEY.

Ful. Captain Dudley, good morning to you.

Dud. Mr. Fulmer, I have borrowed a book from your shop; 'tis the sixth volume of my deceased friend Tristram: he is a flattering writer to us poor soldiers; and the divine story of *Le Fevre*, which makes part of this book, in my opinion of it, does honour, not to its author only, but to human nature.

Ful. He's an author I keep in the way of trade, but one I never relished: he is much too loose and profligate for my taste.

Dud. That's being too severe: I hold him to be a moralist in the noblest sense; he plays, indeed, with the fancy, and sometimes, perhaps, too wantonly; but while he thus designedly masks his main attack, he comes at once upon the heart; refines, amends it, softens it; beats down each selfish barrier from about it, and opens every sluice of pity and benevolence.

Ful. Well, sir, I shall not oppose your opinion; a favourite author is like a favourite mistress; and there you know, Captain, no man likes to have his taste arraigned.

Dud. Upon my word, sir, I don't know what a man likes in that case; 'tis an experiment I never made.

Ful. Sir! Are you serious?

Dud. 'Tis of little consequence whether you think so.

Ful. What a formal old prig it is. [Aside.] I apprehend you, sir; you speak with caution; you are married?

Dud. I have been.

Ful. And this young lady, which accompanies you—

Dud. Passes for my daughter.

Ful. Passes for his daughter! humph! [Aside.]

She is exceedingly beautiful, finely accomplished, of a most enchanting shape and air.

Dud. You are much too partial; she has the greatest defect a woman can have.

Ful. How so, pray?

Dud. She has no fortune.

Ful. Rather say, that you have none; and that's a sore defect in one of your years, Captain Dudley; you have served, no doubt?

Dud. Familiar coxcomb! But I'll humour him.

Ful. A close old fox; but I'll unkennel him. [Aside.]

Dud. Above thirty years I have been in the service, Mr. Fulmer.

Ful. I guessed as much; I laid it at no less. Why, 'tis a wearisome time; 'tis an apprenticeship to a profession, fit only for a patriarch. But ferment must be closely followed: you never could have been so far behind-hand in the chase, unless you had palpably mistaken your way. You'll pardon me, but I begin to perceive you have lived in the world, not with it.

Dud. It may be so; and you perhaps can give me better counsel. I am now soliciting a favour; an exchange to a company on full pay; nothing more, and yet I meet a thousand bars to that; though without boasting, I should think the certificate of services which I sent in might have purchased that indulgence to me.

Ful. Who thinks or cares about them? Certificate of services, indeed. Send in a certificate of your fair daughter; carry her in your hand with you.

Dud. What! Who! My daughter! Carry my daughter! Well, and what then?

Ful. Why, then your fortune's made, that's all.

Dud. I understand you: and this you call knowledge of the world. Despicable knowledge; but sirrah, I will have you know— [Threatens him.]

Ful. Help! Who's within? Would you strike me, sir? would you lift up your hand against a man in his own house?

Dud. In a church, if he dare insult the poverty of a man of honour.

Ful. Have a care what you do; remember there is such a thing in law as an assault and battery; ay, and such trifling forms as warrants and indictments.

Dud. Go, sir; you are too mean for my resentment: 'tis that, and not the law protects you. Hence!

Ful. An old, absurd, incorrigible, blockhead! I'll be revenged of him. [Exit.]

Enter CHARLES DUDLEY.

Charles. What is the matter, sir? Sure I heard an outcry as I entered the house.

Dud. Not unlikely; our landlord and his wife are for ever wrangling. Did you find your aunt Rusport at home?

Charles. I did.

Dud. And what was your reception?

Charles. Cold as our poverty and her pride could make it.

Dud. You told her the pressing occasion I had for a small supply to equip me for this exchange; was she granted me the relief I asked?

Charles. Alas, sir, she has peremptorily refused it.

Dud. That's hard; that's hard, indeed. My petition was for a small sum; she has refused it, you say.—Well, be it so, I must not complain. Did you see the broker, about the insurance on my life?

Charles. There again I am the messenger of ill news; I can raise no money, so fatal is the climate. Alas! that ever my father should be sent to perish in such a place.

Enter LOUISA DUDLEY, hastily.

Dud. Louisa, what's the matter? you seem frightened.

Lou. I am, indeed. Coming from Miss Rusport's, I met a young gentleman in the streets, who has beset me in the strangest manner.

Charles. Insufferable! Was he rude to you?

Lou. I cannot say he was absolutely rude to me, but he was very importunate to speak to me, and once or twice attempted to lift up my hat; he followed me to the corner of the street, and there I gave him the slip.

Dud. You must walk no more in the streets, child, without me, or your brother.

Lou. O, Charles! Miss Rusport desires to see you directly; Lady Rusport is gone out, and she has something particular to say to you.

Charles. Have you any commands for me, sir?

Dud. None, my dear; by all means wait upon Miss Rusport. Come, Louisa; I must desire you to get up to your chamber, and compose yourself.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter BELCOUR, after peeping in at the door.

Bel. Not a soul, as I'm alive. Why, what an odd sort of a house is this! Confound the little jilt, she has fairly given me the slip. A plague upon this London, I shall have no luck in it; such a crowd, and such a hurry, and such a number of shops, and one so like the other, that whether the wench turned into this house or the next, or whether she went up stairs or down stairs (for there's a world above and a world below, it seems,) I declare I know no more than if I was in the Blue Mountains. In the name of all the devils at once, why did she run away? If every handsome girl I meet in this town is to lead me such a wildgoose chase, I had better have stayed in the torrid zone. I shall be wasted to the size of a sugar-cane. What shall I do? give the chase up? hang it, that's cowardly. Shall I, a true-born son of Phœbus, suffer this little nimble-footed Daphne to escape me?—"Forbid it, honour, and forbid it, love." Hush, hush! here she comes! Oh! the devil! What tawdry thing have we got here?

Enter Mrs. FULMER.

Mrs. F. Your humble servant, sir.

Bel. Your humble servant, madam.

Mrs. F. A fine summer's day, sir.

Bel. Yes, ma'am; and so cool, that if the calendar didn't call it July, I should swear it was January.

Mrs. F. Sir!

Bel. Madam!

Mrs. F. Do you wish to speak to Mr. Fulmer, sir?

Bel. Mr. Fulmer, madam? I haven't the honour of knowing such a person.

Mrs. F. No! I'll be sworn you have not; thou art much too pretty a fellow, and too much of a gentleman, to be an author thyself, or to have anything to say to those that are so. 'Tis the Captain, I suppose, you are waiting for.

Bel. I rather suspect it is the Captain's wife.

Mrs. F. The Captain has no wife, sir.

Bel. No wife! I'm heartily sorry for it! for then she's his mistress; and that I take to be the more desperate case of the two. Pray, madam, wasn't there a lady just now turned into your house? 'Twas with her I wished to speak.

Mrs. F. What sort of a lady, pray?

Bel. One of the loveliest sort my eyes ever beheld; young, tall, fresh, fair; in short, a goddess.

Mrs. F. Nay, but dear, dear sir, now I'm sure you flatter; for 'twas me you followed into the shop-door this minute.

Bel. You! No, no, take my word for it, it was not you, madam.

Mrs. F. But what is it you laugh at?

Bel. Upon my soul, I ask your pardon; but it was not you, believe me; be assured it wasn't.

Mrs. F. Well, sir, I shall not contend for the honour of being noticed by you; I hope you think you wouldn't have been the first man that noticed me in the streets; however, this I'm positive of, that no living woman but myself has entered these doors this morning.

Bel. Why, then, I'm mistaken in the house, that's all; for it is not humanly possible I can be so far out in the lady. [*Going.*]

Mrs. F. Coxcomb—But hold—a thought occurs as sure as can be, he has seen Miss Dudley. A word with you, young gentleman; come back.

Bel. Well, what's your pleasure?

Mrs. F. You seem greatly captivated with this young lady; are you apt to fall in love thus at first sight?

Bel. Oh, yes: 'tis the only way I can ever fall in love; any man may tumble into a pit by surprise; none but a fool would walk into one by choice.

Mrs. F. You are a hasty lover, it seems; have you spirit to be a generous one? They, that will please the eye, mustn't spare the purse.

Bel. Try me: put me to the proof; bring me to an interview with the dear girl that has thus captivated me, and see whether I have spirit to be grateful.

Mrs. F. But how, pray, am I to know the girl you have set your heart on?

Bel. By an undescrivable grace, that accompanies every look and action that falls from her; there can be but one such woman in the world, and nobody can mistake that one.

Mrs. F. Well, if I should stumble upon this angel in my walks, where am I to find you? What's your name?

Bel. Upon my soul I can't tell you my name!

Mrs. F. Not tell me! Why so?

Bel. Because I don't know what it is myself; as yet I have no name.

Mrs. F. No name!

Bel. None; a friend, indeed, lent me his; but he forbade me to use it on any unworthy occasion.

Mrs. F. But where is your place of abode?

Bel. I have none; I never slept a night in England in my life. [*Retires.*]

Enter FULMER.

Mrs. F. Hey day!

Ful. A fine case, truly, in a free country; a pretty pass things are come to, if a man is to be assaulted in his own house.

Mrs. F. Who has assaulted you, my dear?

Ful. Who! why this Captain Drawcansir, this old Dudley, my lodger; but I'll unlodge him: I'll unharbour him, I warrant.

Mrs. F. Hush! hush! Hold your tongue, man: pocket the affront, and be quiet; I've a scheme on foot will pay you a hundred beatings. [*Aside to FUL.*] Why you surprise me, Fulmer; Captain Dudley assault you! Impossible.

Ful. Nay, I can't call it an absolute assault; but he threatened me.

Mrs. F. Oh, was that all? I thought how it would turn out—A likely thing, truly, for a person of his obliging, compassionate turn: no, no, poor Captain Dudley, he has sorrows and distresses enough of his own to employ his spirits, without setting them against other people. Make it up as fast as you can: watch this gentleman out; follow him wherever he goes, and bring me word who and what he is; be sure you don't lose sight of him; I've other business in hand. *[Exit.]*

Bel. Pray, sir, what sorrows and distresses have befallen this old gentleman you speak of?

Ful. Poverty, disappointment, and all the distresses attendant thereupon: sorrow enough of all conscience: I soon found how it was with him, by his way of living, low enough of all reason; but what I overheard this morning put it out of all doubt.

Bel. What did you overhear this morning?

Ful. Why, it seems he wants to join his regiment, and has been beating the town over to raise a little money for that purpose upon his pay; but the climate, I find, where he is going is so unhealthy, that nobody can be found to lend him any.

Bel. Why then your town is a d—d good-for-nothing town: and I wish I had never come into it.

Ful. That's what I say, sir; the hard-heartedness of some folks is unaccountable. There's an old Lady Rusport, a near relation of this gentleman's; she lives hard by here, opposite to Stockwell's, the great merchant; he sent to her a-begging, but to no purpose; though she is as rich as a Jew, she would not furnish him with a farthing.

Bel. Is the Captain at home?

Ful. He is up stairs, sir.

Bel. Will you take the trouble to desire him to step hither? I want to speak to him.

Ful. I'll send him to you directly. I don't know what to make of this young man; but, if I live, I will find him out, or know the reason why. *[Exit.]*

Bel. I've lost the girl, it seems, that's clear: she was the first object of my pursuit; but the case of this poor officer touches me; and, after all, there may be as much true delight in rescuing a fellow-creature from distress, as there would be in plunging one into it.—But let me see: it's a point that must be managed with some delicacy. Apropos! there's pen and ink—I've struck upon a method that will do. *[Writes.]* Ay, ay, this is the very thing: 'twas devilish lucky I happened to have these bills about me. There, there, fare you well! I'm glad to be rid of you; you stood a chance of being worse applied, I can tell you.

[Incloses and seals the paper.]

Re-enter FULMER, with DUDLEY.

Ful. That's the gentleman, sir. I shall make bold, however, to lend an ear. *[Exit.]*

Dud. Have you any commands for me, sir?

Bel. Your name is Dudley, sir?—

Dud. It is.

Bel. You command a company, I think, Captain Dudley?

Dud. I did: I am now upon half-pay.

Bel. You have served some time?

Dud. A pretty many years; long enough to see some people of more merit, and better interest than myself, made general officers.

Bel. Their merit I may have some doubt of; their interest I can readily give credit to; there is little promotion to be looked for in your profession, I believe, without friends, Captain?

Dud. I believe so too: have you any other business with me, may I ask?

Bel. Your patience for a moment. I was informed you was about to join your regiment in distant quarters abroad.

Dud. I have been soliciting an exchange to a company of full pay, quartered at James' Fort, in Senegambia; but I'm afraid I must drop the undertaking.

Bel. Why so, pray?

Dud. Why so, sir? 'Tis a home question, for a perfect stranger to put; there is something very particular in all this.

Bel. If it is not impertinent, sir, allow me to ask you what reason you have for despairing of success?

Dud. Why, really, sir, mine is an obvious reason, for a soldier to have—Want of money; simply that.

Bel. May I beg to know the sum you have occasion for?

Dud. Truly, sir, I cannot exactly tell you on a sudden; nor is it, I suppose, of any great consequence to you to be informed: but I should guess, in the gross, that two hundred pounds would serve.

Bel. And you find a difficulty in raising that sum upon your pay? 'tis done every day.

Dud. The nature of the climate makes it difficult; I can get no one to insure my life.

Bel. Oh! that's a circumstance may make for you, as well as against; in short, Captain Dudley, it so happens, that I can command the sum of two hundred pounds: seek no further; I'll accommodate you with it upon easy terms.

Dud. Sir! do I understand you rightly?—I beg your pardon; but am I to believe that you are in earnest?

Bel. What is your surprise? Is it an uncommon thing for a gentleman to speak truth? Or is it incredible that one fellow-creature should assist another?

Dud. I ask your pardon—May I beg to know to whom?—Do you propose this in the way of business?

Bel. Entirely: I have no other business on earth.

Dud. Indeed! you are not a broker, I'm persuaded.

Bel. I am not.

Dud. Nor an army agent, I think?

Bel. I hope you will not think the worse of me for being neither; in short, sir, if you will peruse this paper, it will explain to you who I am, and upon what terms I act; while you read it, I will step home, and fetch the money: and we will conclude the bargain without loss of time. In the meanwhile, good day to you. *[Exit hastily.]*

Dud. Humph! there's something very odd in all this—let me see what we've got here—This paper is to tell me who he is, and what are his terms: in the name of wonder, why has he sealed it? Hey-day! what's here? Two bank notes, of a hundred each! I can't comprehend what this means. Hold; here's a writing, perhaps that will show me. Accept this trifle; pursue your fortune and prosper. Am I in a dream? is this a reality?

Enter MAJOR O'FLAHERTY.

O'Fla. 'Save you, my dear! Is it you now that are Captain Dudley, I would ask? *[Exit DUDLEY.]* Whuh! What's the hurry the man's in? If 'tis the lad that run out of the shop you would overtake, you might as well stay where you are; by my soul he's as nimble as a Croat; you are a full hour's march in his rear.—Ay faith, you may as well turn back, and give over the pursuit.

Re-enter DUDLEY.

Well, Captain Dudley, if that's your name, there's a letter for you. Read, man; read it; and I'll have a word with you after you have done.

Dud. More miracles on foot! So, so, from Lady Rusport.

O'Fla. You're right; it's from her ladyship.

Dud. Well, sir, I have cast my eye over it; 'tis short and peremptory; are you acquainted with the contents?

O'Fla. Not at all, my dear; not at all.

Dud. Have you any message from Lady Rusport?

O'Fla. Not a syllable, honey: only when you've digested the letter, I've a little bit of a message to deliver you from myself.

Dud. And may I beg to know who yourself is?

O'Fla. Dennis O'Flaherty, at your service; a poor major of grenadiers: nothing better.

Dud. So much for your name and title, sir; now be so good as to favour me with your message.

O'Fla. Why, then, Captain, I must tell you, I have promised Lady Rusport you shall do whatever it is she bids you to do in that letter there.

Dud. Ay, indeed! have you undertaken so much, Major, without knowing either what she commands, or what I can perform?

O'Fla. That's your concern, my dear, not mine; I must keep my word, you know.

Dud. Or else, I suppose, you and I must measure swords.

O'Fla. Upon my soul you've hit it.

Dud. That would hardly answer to either of us: you and I have, probably, had enough of fighting in our time, before now.

O'Fla. Faith and troth, master Dudley, you may say that; 'tis thirty years, come the time, that I have followed the trade, and in a pretty many countries. Let me see—In the war before last, I served in the Irish brigade, d'ye see; there, after bringing off the French monarch, I left his service, with a British bullet in my body, and this riband in my button-hole. Last war I followed the fortunes of the German eagle, in the corps of grenadiers; there I had my bellyful of fighting, and a plentiful scarcity of every thing else. After six-and-twenty engagements, great and small, I went off with this gash on my skull, and a kiss of the empress queen's sweet hand, (heaven bless it!) for my pains. Since the peace, my dear, I took a little turn with the confederates there in Poland; but such another set of madcaps!—by the Lord Harry, I never knew what it was they were scuffling about.

Dud. Well, major, I won't add another action to the list; you shall keep your promise with Lady Rusport: she requires me to leave London; I shall go in a few days, and you may take what credit you please from my compliance.

O'Fla. Give me your hand, my dear boy! this will make her my own; when that's the case, we shall be brothers, you know, and we'll share her fortune between us.

Dud. Not so, Major; the man who marries Lady Rusport, will have a fair title to her whole fortune without division: but I hope your expectations of prevailing are founded upon good reasons.

O'Fla. Upon the best grounds in the world; first, I think she will comply, because she is a woman; secondly, I am persuaded she won't hold out long, because she is a widow; and thirdly, I make sure of her, because I have married five wives [*en militaire*, Captain,] and never failed yet; and for

what I know, they are all alive and merry at this very hour.

Dud. Well, sir, go on, and prosper; if you can inspire Lady Rusport with half your charity, I shall think you deserve all her fortune; at present, I must beg your excuse: good morning to you. [*Erit.*]

O'Fla. A good, sensible man, and very much of a soldier: I did not care if I was better acquainted with him; but 'tis an awkward kind of country for that: the English, I observe, are close friends, but distant acquaintance. I suspect the old lady has not been over generous to poor Dudley; I shall give her a little touch about that. Upon my soul, I know but one excuse a person can have for giving nothing, and that is, like myself, having nothing to give. [*Erit.*]

SCENE II.—Lady Rusport's House. A dressing-room.

Enter Miss Rusport and Lucy.

Miss R. Well, Lucy, you've dislodged the old lady at last; but methought you was a tedious time about it.

Lucy. A tedious time, indeed; I think they who have least to spare, contrive to throw the most away; I thought I should never have got her out of the house: then, madam, this being a visit of great ceremony to a person of distinction at the west end of the town, the old state chariot was brought forth on the occasion, with strict charges to dress out the box with the leopard skin hammer-cloth.

Miss R. Yes; and to hang the false tails on the miserable stumps of the old crawling cattle: well, well, pray heaven, the old crazy affair don't break down again with her, at least till she gets to her journey's end.—But where's Charles Dudley? Run down, dear girl, and be ready to let him in; I think he's as long in coming, as she was in going.

Lucy. Why, indeed, madam, you seem the more alert of the two, I must say. [*Erit.*]

Miss R. Now the deuce take the girl, for putting that notion into my head: I am sadly afraid Dudley does not like me; so much encouragement as I have given him to declare himself, I never could get a word from him on the subject: this may be very honourable, but, upon my life, it's very provoking. By the way, I wonder how I look to-day: Oh! shockingly! hideously pale! like a witch! this is the old lady's glass, and she has left some of her wrinkles on it. How frightfully have I put on my cap! all awry!—and my hair dressed so unbecomingly! altogether, I'm a most complete fright!—

Enter CHARLES, unobserved.

Charles. That I deny.

Miss R. Ah!

Charles. Quarrelling with your glass, cousin? Make it up, make it up, and be friends; it cannot compliment you more than by reflecting you as you are.

Miss R. Well, I vow, my dear Charles, that is delightfully said, and deserves my very best curtsy; your flattery, like a rich jewel, has a value not only from its superior lustre, but from its extraordinary scarceness: I verily think, this is the only civil speech you ever directed to my person in your life.

Charles. And I ought to ask pardon of your good sense, for having done it now.

Miss R. Nay, now you relapse again: don't you know, if you keep well with a woman on the great score of beauty, she'll never quarrel with you on

the trifling article of good sense? but any thing serves to fill up a dull, yawning hour, with an insipid cousin: you have brighter moments, and warmer spirits, for the dear girl of your heart.

Charles. Oh, fie upon you! fie upon you!

Miss R. You blush, and the reason is apparent: you are a novice at hypocrisy; but no practice can make a visit of ceremony pass for a visit of choice. Love is ever before its time; friendship is apt to lag a little after it. Pray, Charles, did you make any extraordinary haste hither?

Charles. By your question, I see, you acquit me of the impertinence of being in love.

Miss R. But why impertinence? Why the impertinence of being in love? You have one language for me, Charles, and another for the woman of your affection.

Charles. You are mistaken; the woman of my affection shall never hear any other language from me, than what I use to you.

Miss R. I am afraid, then, you'll never make yourself understood by her.

Charles. It is not fit I should; there is no need of love to make me miserable; 'tis wretchedness enough to be a beggar.

Miss R. A beggar do you call yourself! O, Charles, Charles! rich in every merit and accomplishment, whom may you not aspire to? and why think you so unworthy of our sex, as to conclude there is not one to be found with sense to discern your virtue, and generosity to reward it?

Charles. You distress me; I must beg to hear no more.

Miss R. Well, I can be silent. Thus does he always serve me, whenever I am about to disclose myself to him. *[Aside.]*

Charles. Why do you not banish me and my misfortunes for ever from your thoughts?

Miss R. Ay, wherefore do I not, since you never allowed me a place in your's? but go, sir: I have no right to stay you; go where your heart directs you; go to the happy, the distinguished, fair one.

Charles. Now, by all that's good, you do me wrong; there is no such fair one for me to go to; nor have I an acquaintance among the sex, yourself excepted, which answers to that description.

Miss R. Indeed!

Charles. In very truth; there, then, let us drop the subject. May you be happy, though I never can!

Miss R. O Charles! give me your hand; if I have offended you, I ask your pardon; you have been long acquainted with my temper, and know how to bear with its infirmities.

Charles. Thus, my dear Charlotte, let us seal our reconciliation. *[Kissing her hand.]* Bear with thy infirmities! By heaven, I know not any one failing in thy whole composition except that of too great a partiality for an undeserving man.

Miss R. And you are now taking the very course to augment that failing. A thought strikes me;—I have a commission that you must absolutely execute for me; I have immediate occasion for the sum of two hundred pounds; you know my fortune is shut up till I am of age: take this paltry box, (it contains my ear-rings and some other baubles I have no use for) carry it to our opposite neighbour, Mr. Stockwell, (I don't know where else to apply) leave it as a deposit in his hands, and beg him to accommodate me with the sum.

Charles. Dear Charlotte, what are you about to do? How can you possibly want two hundred pounds?

Miss R. How can I possibly do without it, you

mean? Doesn't every lady want two hundred pounds? Perhaps, I have lost it at play; perhaps, I mean to win as much to it; perhaps, I want it for two hundred different uses.

Charles. Pooh, pooh! all this is nothing; don't I know you never play?

Miss R. You mistake; I have a spirit to set, not only this trifle, but my whole fortune upon a stake; therefore, make no wry faces, but do as I bid you. You will find Mr. Stockwell a very honourable gentleman.

Enter LUCY, in haste.

Lucy. Dear madam, as I live, here comes the old lady in a hackney-coach.

Miss R. The old chariot has given her a second tumble: away with you! you know your way out, without meeting her. Take the box, and do as I desire you.

Charles. I must not dispute your orders. Farewell! *[Exeunt CHARLES and Miss RUSPORT.]*

Enter LADY RUSPORT, leaning on MAJOR O'FLAHERTY'S arm.

O'Fla. Rest yourself upon my arm; never spare it; 'tis strong enough: it has stood harder service than you can put it to.

Lucy. Mercy upon me! what is the matter? I am frightened out of my wits. Has your Ladyship had an accident?

Lady R. O, Lucy, the most untoward one in nature! I know not how I shall repair it.

O'Fla. Never go about to repair it, my lady; even build a new one; 'twas but a crazy piece of business at best.

Lucy. Bless me, is the old chariot broke down with you again?

Lady R. Broke, child! I don't know what might have been broke, if, by great good fortune, this obliging gentleman had not been at hand to assist me.

Lucy. Dear madam, let me run and fetch you a cup of the cordial drops.

Lady R. Do, Lucy. *[Exit Lucy.]* Alas, sir! ever since I lost my husband, my poor nerves have been shook to pieces: there hangs his beloved picture; that precious relic, and a plentiful jointure, is all that remains to console me for the best of men.

O'Fla. Let me see; i'faith, a comely personage! by his fur cloak, I suppose he was in the Russian service; and, by the gold chain round his neck, I should guess, he had been honoured with the order of St. Catherine.

Lady R. No, no, he meddled with no St. Catherine's; that's the habit he wore in his mayoralty. Sir Stephen was lord mayor of London; but he is gone, and has left me, a poor, weak, solitary widow, behind him.

O'Fla. By all means, then, take a strong, able, hearty man, to repair his loss. If such a plain fellow as one Dennis O'Flaherty can please you, I think I may venture to say, without any disparagement to the gentleman in the fur gown there—

Lady R. What are you going to say? Don't shock my ears with any comparisons, I desire.

O'Fla. Not I, my soul; I don't believe there's any comparison in the case.

Re-enter LUCY, with a bottle and glass.

Lady R. Oh, are you come? Give me the drops—*[I'm all in a flutter.]* *[LUCY fills, LADY R. drinks.]*

O'Fla. Hark ye, sweetheart, what are these same

drops? Have you any more left in the bottle? I didn't care if I took a little sip of them myself.

Lucy. Oh, sir, they are called the cordial restorative elixir, or the nervous golden drops; they are only for ladies' cases.

O'Fla. Yes, yes, my dear, there are gentlemen as well as ladies, that stand in need of those same golden drops; they'd suit my case to a tittle.

Lady R. Well, Major, did you give old Dudley my letter? and will the silly man do as I bid him, and begone?

O'Fla. You are obeyed; he's on his march.

Lady R. That's well; you have managed this matter to perfection; I didn't think he would have been so easily prevailed upon.

O'Fla. At the first word; no difficulty in life; 'twas the very thing he was determined to do, before I came: I never met with a more obliging gentleman.

Lady R. Well, 'tis no matter; so I am but rid of him, and his distresses. Would you believe it, Major O'Flaherty, it was but this morning he sent a-begging to me for money to fit him out upon some wildgoose expedition to the coast of Africa, I know not where?

O'Fla. Well, you sent him what he wanted?

Lady R. I sent him, what he deserved, a flat refusal.

O'Fla. You refused him?

Lady R. Most undoubtedly.

O'Fla. You sent him nothing?

Lady R. Not a shilling.

O'Fla. Good morning to you—Your servant—
[Going.]

Lady R. Hey-day! what ails the man? Where are you going?

O'Fla. Out of your house, before the roof falls on my head; to poor Dudley, to share the little modicum, that thirty years' hard service has left me; I wish it was more, for his sake.

Lady R. Very well, sir; take your course; I shan't attempt to stop you; I shall survive it: it will not break my heart, if I never see you more.

O'Fla. Break your heart! No, o'my conscience will it not. You preach and you pray, and you turn up your eyes, and all the while you are as hard-hearted as a hyena—A hyena, truly! by my soul, there isn't in the whole creation so savage an animal, as a human creature without pity!

Lady R. A hyena, truly!

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Room in Stockwell's House.

Enter STOCKWELL and BELCOUR.

Stock. Gratify me so far, however, Mr. Belcour, as to see Miss Rusport; carry her the sum she wants, and return the poor girl her box of diamonds, which Dudley left in my hands: you know what to say on the occasion better than I do; that part of your commission I leave to your own discretion, and you may season it with what gallantry you think fit.

Bel. You could not have pitched upon a greater bungler at gallantry than myself, if you had rummaged every company in the city, and the whole court of aldermen into the bargain: part of your errand, however, I will do; but whether it shall be

with an ill grace or a good one, depends upon the caprice of the moment, the humour of the lady, the mode of our meeting, and a thousand undefinable small circumstances, that, nevertheless, determine us upon all the great occasions of life.

Stock. I persuade myself you will find Miss Rusport an ingenuous, worthy, animated girl.

Bel. Why, I like her the better as a woman; but name her not to me as a wife: No, if ever I marry, it must be a staid, sober, considerate damsel, with blood in her veins as cold as a turtle's; quick of scent as a vulture, when danger's in the wind; wary and sharp-sighted as a hawk, when treachery is on foot: with such a companion at my elbow, for ever whispering in my ear—Have a care of this man, he's a cheat; don't go near that woman, she's a jilt; overhead there's a scaffold, underfoot there's a well; oh, sir! such a woman might lead me up and down this great city without difficulty or danger; but with a girl of Miss Rusport's complexion, heaven and earth, sir! we should be duped, undone, and distracted, in a fortnight.

Stock. Ha, ha, ha! Why, you are become wonderful circumspect of a sudden, pupil; and, if you can find such a prudent damsel as you describe, you have my consent, only beware how you choose: discretion is not the reigning quality amongst the fine ladies of the present time; and, I think, in Miss Rusport's particular, I have given you no bad counsel.

Bel. Well, well, if you'll fetch me the jewels, I believe, I can undertake to carry them to her: but as for the money, I'll have nothing to do with that: Dudley would be your fittest ambassador on that occasion; and, if I mistake not, the most agreeable to the lady.

Stock. Why, indeed, from what I know of the matter, it may not improbably be destined to find its way into his pockets.

Bel. Then, depend upon it, these are not the only trinkets she means to dedicate to Captain Dudley. As for me, Stockwell, indeed, wants me to marry; but, till I can get this bewitching girl, this incognita, out of my head, I can never think of any other woman.

Enter a Servant, and delivers a letter

Hey-day! Where can I have picked up a correspondent already? 'Tis a most execrable manuscript—Let me see—*Martha Fulmer*—Who is *Martha Fulmer*?—Pshaw! I won't be at the trouble of deciphering her d-d pothooks.—Hold, hold, hold; what have we got here?

"*Dear Sir,*—I have discovered the lady you was so much smitten with, and can procure you an interview with her; if you can be as generous to a pretty girl, as you was to a paltry old captain—How did she find that out?—you need not despair; come to me immediately; the lady is now in my house, and expects you.

Yours, MARTHA FULMER."

O thou dear, lovely, and enchanting paper! which I was about to tear into a thousand scraps, devoutly I entreat thy pardon: I have slighted thy contents, which are delicious; slandered thy characters, which are divine; and all the atonement I can make, is implicitly to obey thy mandates.

Enter STOCKWELL.

Stock. Mr. Belcour, here are the jewels; this letter encloses bills for the money; and, if you will deliver it to Miss Rusport, you'll have no further trouble on that score.

Bel. Ah! sir, the letter which I have been read-

ing, disqualifies me for delivering the letter, which you have been writing; I have other game on foot: the loveliest girl my eyes ever feasted upon is started in view, and the world cannot now divert me from pursuing her.

Stock. Hey day; What has turned you thus on a sudden?

Bel. A woman; one that can turn, and overturn me and my tottering resolutions every way she will. Oh, sir, if this is folly in me, you must rail at nature: you must chide the sun, that was vertical at my birth, and would not wink upon my nakedness, but swaddled me in the broadest, hottest glare of his meridian beams.

Stock. Mere rhapsody, mere childish rhapsody; the libertine's familiar plea. Nature made us, 'tis true, but we are the responsible creatures of our own faults and follies.

Bel. Sir!

Stock. Slave of every face you meet, some hussy has inveigled you; some handsome profligate (the town is full of them) and, when once fairly bankrupt in constitution as well as fortune, nature no longer serves as your excuse for being vicious, necessity, perhaps, will stand your friend, and you'll reform.

Bel. You are severe.

Stock. It fits me to be so; it well becomes a father,—I would say, a friend. How strangely I forgot myself! [*Aside.*] How difficult it is to counterfeit indifference, and put a mask upon the heart!

Bel. How could you tempt me so? Had you not inadvertently dropped the name of father, I fear our friendship, short as it has been, would scarce have held me; but even your mistake I reverence—Give me your hand—'tis over.

Stock. Generous young man! because I bore you the affection of a father, I rashly took up the authority of one. I ask your pardon; pursue your course; I have no right to stop it. What would you have me do with these things?

Bel. This, if I might advise; carry the money to Miss Rusport immediately; never let generosity wait for its materials; that part of the business presses. Give me the jewels: I'll find an opportunity of delivering them into her hands; and your visit may pave the way for my reception. [*Exit.*]

Stock. Be it so; good morning to you. Farewell, advice! Away goes he upon the wing for pleasure. What various passions he awakens in me! He pains, yet pleases me; affrights, offends, yet grows upon my heart. His very failings set him off: for ever trespassing, for ever atoning, I almost think he would not be so perfect, were he free from fault: I must dissemble longer; and yet how painful the experiment! Even now he's gone upon some wild adventure; and who can tell what mischief may befall him? O nature! what it is to be a father! [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—Fulmer's House.

Enter FULMER and MRS. FULMER.

Ful. I tell you, Patty, you are a fool, to think of bringing him and Miss Dudley together; 'twill ruin every thing, and blow your whole scheme up to the moon at once.

Mrs. F. Why sure, Mr. Fulmer, I may be allowed to rear a chicken of my own hatching, as they say. Who first sprung the thought, but I, pray? Who first contrived the plot? Who proposed the letter, but I—I?

Ful. And who dogged the gentleman home? Who found out his name, fortune, connexion:—that he was a West Indian, fresh landed, and full of cash;—a gull to our heart's content;—a hot-brained, headlong spark, that would run into our trap, like a wheatear under a turf, but I—I—I?

Mrs. F. Hark! he's come! disappear, march! and leave the field open to my machination.

[*Exit FULMER.*]

Enter BELCOUR.

Bel. O, thou dear minister to my happiness, let me embrace thee! Why, thou art my polar star, my propitious constellation, by which I navigate my impatient bark into the port of pleasure and delight.

Mrs. F. Oh, you men are sly creatures! Do you remember now, you cruel, what you said to me this morning?

Bel. All a jest, a frolic; never think on't; bury it for ever in oblivion: thou! why, thou art all over nectar and ambrosia, powder of pearl and odour of roses! thou hast the youth of Hebe, the beauty of Venus, and the pen of Sappho! But, in the name of all that's lovely, where's the lady? I expected to find her with you.

Mrs. F. No doubt you did, and these raptures were designed for her; but where have you loitered? the lady's gone; you are too late; girls of her sort are not to be kept waiting, like negro slaves in your sugar plantations.

Bel. Gone! whither is she gone? Tell me, that I may follow her.

Mrs. F. Hold, hold, not so fast, young gentleman, this is a case of some delicacy: should Captain Dudley know that I introduced you to his daughter, he is a man of such scrupulous honour—

Bel. What do you tell me! is she daughter to the old gentleman I met here this morning?

Mrs. F. The same; him you was so generous to.

Bel. There's an end of the matter then at once; it shall never be said of me, that I took advantage of the father's necessities to trepan the daughter.

[*Going.*]

Mrs. F. So, so; I've made a wrong cast; he's one of your conscientious sinners, I find; but I won't lose him thus. [*Aside.*] Ha, ha, ha!

Bel. What is it you laugh at?

Mrs. F. Your absolute inexperience; have you lived so very little time in this country, as not to know that, between young people of equal ages, the term of sister often is a cover for that of mistress? This young lady is, in that sense of the word, sister to young Dudley, and consequently daughter to my old lodger.

Bel. Indeed! are you serious?

Mrs. F. Can you doubt it? I must have been pretty well assured of that, before I invited you hither.

Bel. That's true; she cannot be a woman of honour, and Dudley is an unconscionable young rogue, to think of keeping one fine girl in pay, by raising contributions on another; he shall, therefore, give her up: she is a dear, bewitching, mischievous little devil, and he shall positively give her up.

Mrs. F. Ay, now the freak has taken you again; I say, give her up: there's one way, indeed, and certain of success.

Bel. What's that?

Mrs. F. Out-bid him; never dream of out-blustering him; all things,—then, will be made easy enough: let me see—some little genteel present to

begin with: what have you got about you? Ay, search; I can bestow it to advantage, there's no time to be lost.

Bel. Hang it, confound it, a plague upon't, say I; I hav'n't a guinea left in my pocket: I parted from my whole stock here this morning, and have forgot to supply myself since.

Mrs. F. Mighty well! let it pass, then; there's an end: think no more of the lady, that's all.

Bel. Distraction! think no more of her? let me only step home and provide myself; I'll be back with you in an instant.

Mrs. F. Pooh, pooh! that's a wretched shift; have you nothing of value about you? Money's a coarse, slovenly vehicle, fit only to bribe electors in a borough; there are more graceful ways of purchasing a lady's favours—rings, trinkets, jewels.

Bel. Jewels; gadso! I protest, I had forgot: I have a case of jewels; but they won't do, I must not part from them: no, no, they are appropriated; they are none of my own.

Mrs. F. Let me see, let me see! Ay, now, this were something like! pretty creatures, how they sparkle! these would ensure success.

Bel. Indeed!

Mrs. F. These would make her your own for ever.

Bel. Then the deuce take them for belonging to another person; I could find in my heart to give them the girl, and swear I've lost them.

Mrs. F. Ay, do; say they were stolen out of your pocket.

Bel. No, hang it, that's dishonourable; here, give me the paltry things, I'll write you an order on my merchant, for double their value.

Mrs. F. An order! No order for me! no orders upon merchants, with their value received and three days' grace; their noting, protesting, and indorsing, and all their counting-house formalities; I'll have nothing to do with them: leave your diamonds with me, and give your order for the value of them to the owner; the money would be as good as the trinkets, I warrant you.

Bel. Hey! how! I never thought of that; but a breach of trust!—'tis impossible! I never can consent; therefore give me the jewels back again.

Mrs. F. Take them; I am now to tell you, the lady is in this house.

Bel. In this house?

Mrs. F. Yes, sir, in this very house; but what of that? you have got what you like better,—your toys, your trinkets: go, go. Oh, you are a man of notable spirit, are you not?

Bel. Provoking creature! bring me to the sight of my dear girl, and dispose of me as you think fit.

Mrs. F. And of the diamonds too?

Bel. D—n them, I would there was not such a hauble in nature! But, come, come, despatch; if I had the throne of Delhi, I should give it to her.

Mrs. F. Swear to me then, that you will keep within bounds; remember, she passes for the sister of young Dudley. Oh! if you come to your flights and your rhapsodies, she'll be off in an instant.

Bel. Never fear me.

Mrs. F. You must expect to hear her talk of her father, as she calls him, and her brother, and your bounty to her family.

Bel. Ay, ay, never mind what she talks of, only bring her.

Mrs. F. You'll be prepared upon that head?

Bel. I shall be prepared, never fear: away with you.

Mrs. F. But hold, I had forgot: not a word of

the diamonds; leave that matter to my management.

Bel. Hell and vexation! Get out of the room, or I shall run distracted. [*Exit Mrs. F.*] Of a certain, Belcour, thou art born to be the fool of woman! Sure no man sins with so much repentance, or repents with so little amendment as I do. I cannot give away another person's property, honour forbids me; and I positively cannot give up the girl: love, passion, constitution, everything protests against that. How shall I decide? I cannot bring myself to break a trust, and I am not at present in the humour to baulk my inclinations. Is there no middle way? Let me consider—There is, there is: my good genius has presented me with one; apt, obvious, honourable: the girl shall not go without her baubles; I'll not go without the girl. Miss Rusport shan't lose her diamonds; I'll save Dudley from destruction, and every party shall be a gainer by the project.

Re-enter Mrs. FULMER, introducing Miss DUDLEY

Mrs. F. Miss Dudley, this is the worthy gentleman you wish to see; this is Mr. Belcour.

Lou. As I live, the very man that beset me in the streets! [*Aside.*]

Bel. An angel, by this light! Oh, I am gone, past all retrieving! [*Aside.*]

Lou. Mrs. Fulmer, sir, informs me, you are the gentleman from whom my father has received such civilities.

Bel. Her father! [*Aside.*] Oh, never name them. *Lou.* Pardon me, Mr. Belcour, they must be both named and remembered; and if my father were here—

Bel. Her father again! [*Aside.*] I am much better pleased with his representative.

Lou. That title is my brother's, sir; I have no claim to it.

Bel. I believe it.

Lou. But, as neither he nor my father were fortunate enough to be at home, I could not resist the opportunity—

Bel. Nor I, neither, upon my soul, madam: let us improve it, therefore. I am in love with you to distraction, I was charmed at the first glance; I attempted to accost you; you fled; I followed, but was defeated of an interview: at length I have obtained one, and seize the opportunity of casting my person and my fortune at your feet.

Lou. You astonish me! Are you in your senses, or do you make a jest of my misfortunes? Do you ground pretences on your generosity, or do you make a practice of this folly with every woman you meet?

Bel. Upon my life, no; as you are the handsomest woman I ever met, so you are the first to whom I ever made the like professions: as for my generosity, madam, I must refer you on that score to this good lady, who, I believe, has something to offer in my behalf.

Lou. Don't build upon that, sir: I must have better proofs of your generosity, than the mere divestment of a little superfluous dress, before I can credit the sincerity of professions so abruptly delivered. [*Exit, hastily.*]

Bel. Oh, ye gods and goddesses! how her anger animates her beauty! [*Going out.*]

Mrs. F. Stay, sir; if you stir a step after her, I renounce your interest for ever: why, you'll ruin everything.

Bel. Well, I must have her, cost what it will: I

see she understands her own value though: a little superfluous dross, truly! She must have better proofs of my generosity!

Mrs. F. 'Tis exactly as I told you: your money she calls dross; she's too proud to stain her fingers with your coin; bait your hook well with jewels; try that experiment, and she's your own.

Bel. Take them; let them go; lay them at her feet; I must get out of the scrape as I can; my propensity is irresistible: there; you have them; they are your's: they are her's; but remember, they are a trust: I commit them to her keeping, till I can buy them off, with something she shall think more valuable.—Now tell me when I shall meet her.

Mrs. F. How can I tell that! Don't you see what an alarm you have put her into? Oh! you're a rare one; but go your ways for this while: leave her to my management, and come to me at seven this evening; but remember not to bring empty pockets with you, ha, ha, ha!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—Lady Rusport's House.

Enter Miss RUSPORT, followed by a Servant.

Miss R. Desire Mr. Stockwell to walk in.
[*Exit Servant.*]

Enter STOCKWELL.

Stock. Madam, your most obedient servant: I am honoured with your commands, by Captain Dudley; and have brought the money with me, as you directed. I understand the sum you have occasion for is two hundred pounds.

Miss R. It is, sir: I am quite confounded at your taking this trouble upon yourself, Mr. Stockwell.

Stock. There is a bank note, madam, to the amount: your jewels are in safe hands, and will be delivered to you directly. If I had been happy in being better known to you, I should have hoped you would not have thought it necessary to place a deposit in my hands for so trifling a sum as you have now required me to supply you with.

Miss R. The baubles I sent you may very well be spared; and, as they are the only security, in my present situation, I can give you, I could wish you would retain them in your hands: when I am of age, (which, if I live a few months, I shall be) I will replace your favour, with thanks.

Stock. It is obvious, Miss Rusport, that your charms will suffer no impeachment by the absence of those superficial ornaments; but they should be seen in the suite of a woman of fashion, not as creditors to whom you are indebted for your appearance, but as subservient attendants, which help to make up your equipage.

Miss R. Mr. Stockwell is determined not to wrong the confidence I reposed in his politeness.

Stock. I have only to request, madam, that you will allow Mr. Belcour, a young gentleman, in whose happiness I particularly interest myself, to have the honour of delivering you the box of jewels.

Miss R. Most gladly; any friend of your's cannot fail of being welcome here.

Stock. I flatter myself you will not find him totally undeserving your good opinion: an education, not of the strictest kind, and strong animal spirits, are apt sometimes to betray him into youthful irregularities; but a high principle of honour, and an uncommon benevolence, in the eye of candour, will, I hope, atone for any faults, by which these good qualities are not impaired.

Miss R. I dare say Mr. Belcour's behaviour wants

no apology: we have no right to be over strict in canvassing the morals of a common acquaintance.

Stock. I wish it may be my happiness to see Mr. Belcour in the list, not of your common, but particular acquaintance, of your friends, Miss Rusport: I dare not be more explicit.

Miss R. Nor need you, Mr. Stockwell: I shall be studious to deserve his friendship; and though I have long since unalterably placed my affection on another, I trust, I have not left myself insensible to the merits of Mr. Belcour; and hope that neither you nor he will, for that reason, think me less worthy your good opinion and regards.

Stock. Miss Rusport, I sincerely wish you happy: I have no doubt you have placed your affections on a deserving man; and I have no right to combat your choice.

[*Exit.*]

Miss R. How honourable is that behaviour! Now, if Charles were here, I should be happy. The old lady is so fond of her new Irish acquaintance, that I have the whole house at my disposal.

[*Exit.*]

Enter BELCOUR, preceded by a Servant.

Serv. I ask your honour's pardon; I thought my young lady was here. Who shall I inform her would speak to her?

Bel. Belcour is my name, sir; and pray, beg your lady to put herself in no hurry on my account: for I'd sooner see the devil than see her face. [*Aside.* —*Exit Servant.*] In the name of all that's mischievous, why did Stockwell drive me hither in such haste? A pretty figure, truly, I shall make! an ambassador, without credentials! Blockhead that I was, to charge myself with her diamonds! officious, meddling puppy! Now they are irretrievably gone: that suspicious jade, Fulmer, wouldn't part even with a sight of them, though I would have ransomed them at twice their value. Now must I trust to my poor wits, to bring me off; a lamentable dependence. Fortune, be my helper! here comes the girl. If she is noble-minded, as she is said to be, she will forgive me; if not, 'tis a lost cause; for I have not thought of one word in my excuse.

Enter Miss RUSPORT.

Miss R. Mr. Belcour, I'm proud to see you: your friend, Mr. Stockwell, prepared me to expect this honour; and I am happy in the opportunity of being known to you.

Bel. A fine girl, by my soul! Now what a cursed hang-dog do I look like.

[*Aside.*]

Miss R. You are newly arrived in this country, sir?

Bel. Just landed, madam; just set ashore, with a large cargo of Muscavado sugars, rum-puncheons, mahogany slabs, wet sweetmeats, and green parquets.

Miss R. May I ask you how you like London, sir?

Bel. To admiration; I think the town and the town's folk are exactly suited; 'tis a great, rich, overgrown, noisy, tumultuous place; the whole morning is a bustle to get money, and the whole afternoon is a hurry to spend it.

Miss R. Are these all the observations you have made?

Bel. No, madam; I have observed the women are very captivating, and the men very soon caught.

Miss R. Ay, indeed! Whence do you draw that conclusion?

Bel. From infallible guides; the first remark I collect from what I now see, the second from what I now feel.

Miss R. Oh, the deuce take you! But to waive this subject, I believe, sir, this was a visit of business, not compliment; was it not?

Bel. Ay; now comes on my execution. *[Aside.]*

Miss R. You have some foolish trinkets of mine, Mr. Belcour; haven't you?

Bel. No, in truth; they are gone in search of a trinket still more foolish than themselves. *[Aside.]*

Miss R. Some diamonds I mean, sir; Mr. Stockwell informed me you was charged with them.

Bel. Oh, yes, madam; but I have the most treacherous memory in life—Here they are! Pray put them up; they're all right; you need not examine them. *[Gives a box.]*

Miss R. Hey-day! right, sir! Why these are not my diamonds; these are quite different; and, as it should seem, of much greater value.

Bel. Upon my life I'm glad on't; for then I hope you value them more than your own.

Miss R. As a purchaser I should, but not as an owner; you mistake—these belong to somebody else.

Bel. 'Tis your's, I'm afraid, that belong to somebody else. *[Aside.]*

Miss R. What is it you mean? I must insist upon your taking them back again.

Bel. Pray, madam, don't do that; I shall infallibly lose them; I have the worst luck with diamonds of any man living.

Miss R. That you might well say, were you to give me these in the place of mine; but pray, sir, what is the reason of all this? Why have you changed the jewels? And where have you disposed of mine?

Bel. Miss Rusport, I cannot invent a lie for my life; and if it was to save it, I couldn't tell one: I am an idle, dissipated, unthinking fellow, not worth your notice; in short, I am a West Indian; and you must try me according to the charter of my colony, not by a jury of English spinsters: the truth is, I have given away your jewels; caught with a pair of sparkling eyes, whose lustre blinded their's, I served your property as I should my own, and lavished it away; let me not totally despair of your forgiveness; I frequently do wrong, but never with impunity; if your displeasure is added to my own, my punishment will be too severe. When I parted from the jewels, I had not the honour of knowing their owner.

Miss R. Mr. Belcour, your sincerity charms me; I enter at once into your character, and I make all the allowances for it you can desire. I take your jewels for the present, because I know there is no other way of reconciling you to yourself; but, if I give way to your spirit in one point, you must yield to mine in another; remember, I will not keep more than the value of my own jewels; there is no need to be pillaged by more than one woman at a time, sir.

Bel. Now, may every blessing that can crown your virtues, and reward your beauty, be shower'd upon you; may you meet admiration without envy, love without jealousy, and old age without malady; may the man of your heart be ever constant, and you never meet a less penitent, or less grateful offender, than myself!

Enter Servant, who delivers a letter.

Miss R. Does your letter require such haste?

Serv. I was bade to give it into your own hands, madam.

Miss R. From Charles Dudley, I see: have I

your permission? *[He retires.]* Good heaven, what do I read! Mr. Belcour, you are concerned in this. *[Reads.]* "Dear Charlotte,—In the midst of our distress, Providence has cast a benefactor in our way, after the most unexpected manner: a young West Indian, rich, and with a warmth of heart peculiar to his climate, has rescued my father from his troubles, satisfied his wants, and enabled him to accomplish his exchange; when I relate to you the manner in which this was done, you will be charmed. I can only now add, that it was by chance we found out that his name is Belcour, and that he is a friend of Mr. Stockwell's. I lose not a moment's time, in making you acquainted with this fortunate event, for reasons which delicacy obliges me to suppress; but, perhaps, if you have not received the money on your jewels, you will not think it necessary now to do it.—I have the honour to be, dear Madam, most faithfully your's,—Charles Dudley."—Is this your doing, sir? Never was generosity so worthily exerted.

Bel. Or so greatly overpaid.

Miss R. After what you have now done for this noble but indigent family, let me not scruple to unfold the whole situation of my heart to you. Know then, sir, and don't think the worse of me for the frankness of my declaration, that such is my attachment to the son of that worthy officer, whom you relieved, that the moment I am of age, and in possession of my fortune, I should hold myself the happiest of women to share it with young Dudley.

Bel. Say you so, madam? then let me perish if I don't love and reverence you above all woman-kind; and, if such is your generous resolution, never wait till you are of age; life is too short, pleasure too fugitive; the soul grows narrower every hour. I'll equip you for your escape; I'll convey you to the man of your heart, and away with you then to the first hospitable person that will take you in.

Miss R. O! blessed be the torrid zone for ever, whose rapid vegetation quickens nature into such benignity! But had I spirit to accept your offer, which is not improbable, wouldn't it be a mortifying thing, for a fond girl to find herself mistaken, and sent back to her home, like a vagrant? and such, for what I know, might be my case.

Bel. Then he ought to be proscribed the society of mankind for ever: ay, ay; 'tis the sham sister, that makes him thus indifferent. 'Twill be a meritorious office to take that girl out of the way. *[Aside.]*

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Miss Dudley, to wait on you, madam.

Bel. Who?

Serv. Miss Dudley.

Miss R. What's the matter, Mr. Belcour? Are you frightened at the name of a pretty girl? 'Tis the sister of him we were speaking of; pray admit her. *[Exit Servant.]*

Bel. The sister? So, so; he has imposed on her, too; this is an extraordinary visit, truly. Upon my soul, the assurance of some folks is not to be accounted for. *[Aside, bows, and is going.]*

Miss R. I insist upon your not running away; you'll be charmed with Louisa Dudley.

Bel. O yes, I am charmed with her.

Miss R. You have seen her, then, have you?

Bel. Yes, yes, I've seen her.

Miss R. Well, isn't she a delightful girl?

Bel. Very delightful.

Miss R. Why, you answer as if you were in a court of justice. O' my conscience I believe you

are caught; I've a notion she has tricked you out of your heart.

Bel. I believe she has, and you out of your jewels; for, to tell you the truth, she's the very person I gave them to.

Miss R. You gave her my jewels! Louisa Dudley, my jewels! admirable! inimitable! Oh, the sly little jade! but, hush! here she comes; I don't know how I shall keep my countenance.

Enter LOUISA.

My dear, I'm rejoiced to see you; how do you do? I beg leave to introduce Mr. Belcour, a very worthy friend of mine. I believe, Louisa, you have seen him before.

Lou. I have met the gentleman.

Miss R. You have met the gentleman:—well, sir, and you have met the lady; in short, you have met each other; why, then, don't you speak to each other? How you both stand; tongue-tied and fixed as statues—Ha, ha, ha! why, you'll fall asleep by-and-by.

Lou. Fie upon you, fie upon you; is this fair?

Bel. Upon my soul, I never looked so like a fool in my life; the assurance of that girl puts me quite down. *[Aside.]*

Miss R. Sir—Mr. Belcour; was it your pleasure to advance anything? Not a syllable. Come, Louisa, woman's wit, they say, is never at a loss; nor you neither?—Speechless both; why, you were merry enough before this lady came in.

Lou. I am sorry I have been any interruption to your happiness, sir.

Bel. Madam!

Miss R. Madam! Is that all you can say? But come, my dear girl, I won't tease you—apropos! I must show you what a present this dumb gentleman has made me: Are not these handsome diamonds?

Lou. Yes, indeed, they seem very fine; but I am no judge of these things.

Miss R. Oh, you wicked little hypocrite; you are no judge of these things, Louisa; you have no diamonds, not you.

Lou. You know I haven't, Miss Rusport; you know those things are infinitely above my reach.

Miss R. Ha, ha, ha!

Bel. She does tell a lie with an admirable countenance, that's true enough. *[Aside.]*

Lou. What ails you, Charlotte? what impertinence have I been guilty of, that you should find it necessary to humble me at such a rate? If you are happy, long may you be so; but, surely, it can be no addition to it to make me miserable.

Miss R. So serious; there must be some mystery in this; Mr. Belcour, will you leave us together? You see I treat you with all the familiarity of an old acquaintance already.

Bel. Oh, by all means; pray command me. Miss Rusport, I am your most obedient. By your condescension in accepting these poor trifles, I am under eternal obligations to you. To you, Miss Dudley, I shall not offer a word on that subject; you despise finery; you have a soul above it; I adore your spirit; I was rather unprepared for meeting you here, but I shall hope for an opportunity of making myself better known to you. *[Exit.]*

Miss R. Louisa Dudley, you surprise me; I never saw you act thus before; can't you bear a little innocent railery before the man of your heart?

Lou. The man of my heart, madam! Be assured I never was so visionary as to aspire to any man whom Miss Rusport honours with her choice.

Miss R. My choice, my dear! Why, we are playing at cross-purposes; how entered it into your head that Mr. Belcour was the man of my choice?

Lou. Why, didn't he present you with these diamonds?

Miss R. Well; perhaps, he did; and pray, Louisa, have you no diamonds?

Lou. I diamonds truly! Who should give me diamonds?

Miss R. Who but this very gentleman;—apropos, here comes your brother.

Enter CHARLES.

I insist upon referring our dispute to him: your sister and I, Charles, have a quarrel. Belcour, the hero of your letter, has just left us: somehow or other, Louisa's bright eyes have caught him; and the poor fellow's fallen desperately in love with her, —(don't interrupt me, hussy.) Well, that's excusable enough, you'll say; but the jest of the story is, that this hair-brain'd spark, who does nothing like other people, has given her the very identical jewels which you pledged for me to Mr. Stockwell; and will you believe that this little demure slut made up a face, and squeezed out three or four hypocritical tears, because I rallied her about it.

Charles. I'm all astonishment! Louisa, tell me, without reserve, has Mr. Belcour given you any diamonds?

Lou. None, upon my honour.

Charles. Has he made any professions to you?

Lou. He has; but altogether in a style so whimsical and capricious, that the best which can be said of them, is to tell you, that they seemed more the result of good spirits than good manners.

Miss R. Ay, ay, now the murder's out; he's in love with her, and she has no very great dislike to him; trust to my observations, Charles, for that: as to the diamonds, there's some mistake about them, and you must clear it up; three minutes' conversation with him will put everything in a right train: go, go, Charles, 'tis a brother's business; about it instantly; ten to one you'll find him over the way, at Mr. Stockwell's.

Charles. I confess I'm impatient to have the case cleared up: I'll take your advice, and find him out; good bye to you.

Miss R. Your servant; my life upon it, you'll find Belcour a man of honour. Come, Louisa, let us adjourn to my dressing-room; I've a little private business to transact with you, before the old lady comes up to tea, and interrupts us. *[Reunt.]*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Room in Fulmer's House.

Enter FULMER and Mrs. FULMER.

Ful. Patty, wasn't Mr. Belcour with you?

Mrs. F. He was; and is now shut up in my chamber, in high expectation of an interview with Miss Dudley; she's at present with her brother, and 'twas with some difficulty I persuaded my hot-headed spark to wait till he has left her.

Ful. Well, child, and what then?

Mrs. F. Why, then, Mr. Fulmer, I think it will be time for you and me to steal a march, and be gone.

Ful. So this is all the fruit of your ingenious project; a shameful overthrow, or a sudden flight.

Mrs. F. Why, my project was a mere impromptu, and can, at worst, but quicken our departure a few days; you know we had fairly outlived our credit here, and a trip to Boulogne is no ways unseasonable. Nay, never dream, man; hark, hark! here's enough to bear charges. [*Showing a purse.*]

Ful. Let me see, let me see; this weighs well, this is of the right sort: why, your West Indian bled freely.

Mrs. F. But that's not all; look here. Here are the sparklers. [*Showing the jewels.*] Now what d'ye think of my performances? Eh! a foolish scheme, isn't it—a silly woman?

Ful. Thou art a Judith, a Joan of Arc, and I'll march under thy banners, girl, to the world's end. Come, let's be gone: I've little to regret; my creditors may share the old books among them; they'll have occasion for philosophy to support their loss, they'll find enough upon my shelves; the world is my library, I read mankind. Now, Patty, lead the way.

Mrs. F. Adieu, Belcour!

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter CHARLES DUDLEY and LOUISA.

Charles. Well, Louisa, I confess the force of what you say; I accept Miss Rusport's bounty, and when you see my generous Charlotte, tell her—but have a care, there is a selfishness even in gratitude, when it is too profuse; to be over-thankful for any one favour, is, in effect, to lay out for another; the best return I could make my benefactress would be, never to see her more.

Lou. I understand you.

Charles. We that are poor, Louisa, should be cautious: for this reason, I would guard you against Belcour; at least, till I can unravel the mystery of Miss Rusport's diamonds; I was disappointed of finding him at Mr. Stockwell's, and am now going in search of him again. He may intend honourably; but, I confess to you, I am staggered; think no more of him, therefore, for the present. Of this be sure, while I have life and you have honour, I will protect you, or perish in your defence. [*Exit.*]

Lou. Think of him no more! Well, I'll obey; but if a wandering, uninvited thought should creep by chance into my bosom, must I not give the harmless wretch a shelter? Fie, fie upon it. Belcour pursues, insults me; yet, such is the fatality of my condition, that what should rouse resentment, only calls up love.

Enter BELCOUR.

Bel. Alone, by all that's happy!

Lou. Ah!

Bel. Oh! shriek not, start not, stir not, loveliest creature; but let me kneel and gaze upon your beauties.

Lou. Sir! Mr. Belcour, rise! What is it you do? Should he that parted from me but this minute, now return, I tremble for the consequence.

Bel. Fear nothing; let him come: I love you, madam; he'll find it hard to make me unsay that.

Lou. You terrify me; your impetuous temper frightens me; you know my situation, it is not generous to pursue me thus.

Bel. True, I do know your situation, your real one, Miss Dudley, and am resolved to snatch you from it; 'twill be a meritorious act. Come, thou art a dear enchanting girl, and I'm determined not to live a minute longer without thee.

Lou. Hold! are you mad? I see you are a bold assuming man; and know not where to stop.

Bel. Who that beholds such beauty can? Provoking girl, is it within the stretch of my fortune to content you? What is it you can further ask, that I am not ready to grant?

Lou. Yes, with the same facility, that you bestowed upon me Miss Rusport's diamonds. For shame, for shame! was that a manly story?

Bel. So, so! these devilish diamonds meet me everywhere. Let me perish, if I meant you any harm. Oh! I could tear my tongue out for saying a word about the matter.

Lou. Go to her then, and contradict it; till that is done, my reputation is at stake.

Bel. Her reputation! Now she has got upon that she'll go on for ever. [*Aside.*] What is there I will not do for your sake? I will go to Miss Rusport.

Lou. Do so; restore her own jewels to her, which I suppose you kept back for the purpose of presenting others to her of a greater value; but, for the future, Mr. Belcour, when you would do a gallant action to that lady, don't let it be at my expense.

Bel. I see where she points: she is willing enough to give up Miss Rusport's diamonds, now she finds she shall be a gainer by the exchange. Be it so, 'tis what I wished. Well, madam, I will return to Miss Rusport her own jewels, and you shall have others of tenfold their value.

Lou. No, sir, you err most widely; it is my good opinion, not my vanity, which you must bribe.

Bel. Why what the devil would she have now? [*Aside.*] Miss Dudley, it is my wish to obey and please you; but I have some apprehension that we mistake each other.

Lou. I think we do.—Tell me, then, in a few words, what is it you aim at.

Bel. In a few words, then, and in plain honesty, I must tell you, so entirely am I captivated with you, that had you but been such as it would have become me to have called my wife, I had been happy in knowing you by that name; as it is, you are welcome to partake my fortune, give me in return your person, give me pleasure, give me love; free, disencumbered, anti-matrimonial love.

Lou. Stand off, and never let me see you more.

Bel. Hold, hold, thou dear, tormenting, tantalizing girl. Upon my knees, I swear you shall not stir till you have consented to my bliss. [*Kneels.*]

Lou. Unhand me, sir; O, Charles, protect me, rescue me, redress me. [*Exit.*]

Enter CHARLES DUDLEY.

Charles. How's this? Rise, villain, and defend yourself.

Bel. Villain!

Charles. The man who wrongs that lady is a villain.—Draw! [*Rises.*]

Bel. Never fear me, young gentleman; brand me for a coward if I baulk you.

Charles. Yet hold! let me not be too hasty; your name, I think, is Belcour.

Bel. Well, sir.

Charles. How is it, Mr. Belcour, you have done this mean, unmanly wrong; beneath the mask of generosity, to give this fatal stab to our domestic peace? You might have had my thanks, my blessing: take my defiance now. 'Tis Dudley speaks to you! the brother, the protector, of that injured lady.

Bel. The brother! give yourself a truer title.

Charles. What is't you mean?

Bel. Come, come, I know both her and you: I found you, sir, (but how or why I know not) in the

good graces of Miss Rusport, (yes, colour at that name,) I gave you no disturbance there, never broke in upon you in that rich and plenteous quarter, but, when I could have blasted all your projects with a word, spared you, in foolish pity spared you, nor roused her from the fond credulity in which your artifice had lulled her.

Charles. No, sir, nor boasted to her of the splendid present you had made my poor Louisa; the diamonds, Mr. Belcour, how was that? What can you plead to that arraignment?

Bel. You question me too late; the name of Belcour and of villain never met before: had you inquired of me before you uttered that rash word, you might have saved yourself or me a mortal error; now, sir, I neither give nor take an explanation;—so come on. [*They fight.*]

Enter LOUISA and O'FLAHERTY.

Lou. Hold, hold; for heaven's sake!

O'Fla. Hell and confusion! What's all this uproar for? Can't you leave off cutting one another's throats, and mind what the poor girl says to you? You've done a notable thing, haven't you both, to put her into such a flurry? I think, o'my conscience, she's the most frightened of the three.

Charles. Dear Louisa, recollect yourself; why did you interfere? 'tis in your cause.

Bel. Now could I kill him for caressing her.

O'Fla. O, sir, your most obedient! You are the gentleman I had the honour of meeting here before; you was then running off at full speed, like a Kalmuck; now you are tilting and driving like a bedlamite, with this lad here, that seems as mad as yourself: 'tis a pity but your country had a little more employment for you both.

Bel. Mr. Dudley, when you have recovered the lady, you know where I am to be found. [*Exit.*]

O'Fla. Well, then, can't you stay where you are, and that will save the trouble of looking after you? Yon volatile fellow thinks to give a man the meeting by getting out of his way; by my soul, 'tis a roundabout method that of his. But I think he called you Dudley: harkye, young man, are you the son of my friend, the old captain?

Charles. I am. Help me to convey this lady to her chamber, and I shall be more at leisure to answer your questions.

O'Fla. Ay, will I: come along, pretty one: if you've had wrong done you, young man, you need look no further for a second; Dennis O'Flaherty's your man for that: but never draw your sword before a woman, Dudley; d—n it, never, while you live, draw your sword before a woman. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—Lady Rusport's House.

Enter LADY RUSPORT and Servant.

Serv. An elderly gentleman, who says his name is Varland, desires leave to wait on your ladyship. [*Exit.*]

Lady R. Show him in; the very man I wish to see. Varland, he was Sir Oliver's solicitor, and privy to all his affairs; he brings some good tidings; some fresh mortgage, or another bond come to light; they start up every day.

Enter VARLAND.

Mr. Varland, I'm glad to see you; you are heartily welcome, honest Mr. Varland; you and I haven't met since our late irreparable loss: how have you passed your time this age?

Var. Truly, my lady, ill enough; I thought I must have followed good Sir Oliver.

Lady R. Alack-a-day, poor man! Well, Mr. Varland, you find me here overwhelmed with trouble and fatigue; torn to pieces with a multiplicity of affairs, a great fortune poured upon me, unsought for and unexpected: 'twas my good father's will and pleasure it should be so, and I must submit.

Var. Your ladyship inherits under a will, made in the year forty-five, immediately after Captain Dudley's marriage with your sister.

Lady R. I do so, Mr. Varland; I do so.

Var. I well remember it; I engrossed every syllable; but I am surprised to find your ladyship set so little store by this vast accession.

Lady R. Why, you know, Mr. Varland, I am a moderate woman; I had enough before; a small matter satisfies me; and Sir Stephen Rusport (heaven be his portion!) took care I shouldn't want that.

Var. Very true, very true; he did so; and I am overjoyed to find your ladyship in this disposition; for truth to say, I was not without apprehension the news I have to communicate would have been of some prejudice to your ladyship's tranquillity.

Lady R. News, sir! what news have you for me?

Var. Nay, nothing to alarm you; a trifle in your present way of thinking: I have a will of Sir Oliver's, you have never seen.

Lady R. A will! impossible! how came you by it?

Var. I drew it up, at his command, in his last illness: it will save you a world of trouble; it gives his whole estate from you to his grandson, Charles Dudley.

Lady R. To Dudley! his estate to Charles Dudley! I can't support it; I shall faint! You have killed me, you vile man! I never shall survive it!

Var. Lookye there, now; I protest, I thought you would have rejoiced at being clear of the incumbrance.

Lady R. 'Tis false; 'tis all a forgery, concerted between you and Dudley; why, else, did I never hear of it before?

Var. Have patience, my lady, and I'll tell you. By Sir Oliver's direction, I was to deliver this will into no hands but his grandson Dudley's; the young gentleman happened to be then in Scotland: I was despatched thither in search of him: the hurry and fatigue of my journey brought on a fever by the way, which confined me in extreme danger for several days; upon my recovery, I pursued my journey, found young Dudley had left Scotland in the interim, and am now directed hither: where, as soon as I can find him, doubtless, I shall discharge my conscience, and fulfil my commission.

Lady R. Dudley, then, as yet knows nothing of this will?

Var. Nothing; that secret rests with me.

Lady R. A thought occurs; by this fellow's talking of his conscience, I should guess it was upon sale. [*Aside.*] Come, Mr. Varland, if 'tis as you say, I must submit, I was somewhat flurried at first, and forgot myself; I ask your pardon: this is no place to talk of business, step with me into my room; we will there compare the will, and resolve accordingly. Oh! would your fever had you, and I had your paper. [*Aside—Exeunt.*]

Enter MISS RUSPORT, CHARLES, and O'FLAHERTY.

Miss R. So, so! my lady and her lawyer have retired to close confabulation; now, Major, if you

are the generous man I take you for, grant me one favour.

O'Fla. 'Faith, will I, and not think much of my generosity neither; for, though it may not be in my power to do the favour you ask, look you, it can never be in my heart to refuse it.

Charles. Could this man's tongue do justice to his thoughts, how eloquent would he be! [*Aside.*]

Miss R. Plant yourself, then, in that room; keep guard for a few moments upon the enemy's motions in the chamber beyond; and if they should attempt a sally, stop their march a moment, till your friend here can make good his retreat down the back stairs.

O'Fla. A word to the wise! I'm an old campaigner: make the best use of your time; and trust me for tying the old cat up to the picket.

Miss R. Hush! hush! not so loud.

Charles. 'Tis the office of a sentinel, Major, you have undertaken, rather than that of a field-officer.

O'Fla. 'Tis the office of a friend, my dear boy; and therefore no disgrace to a general. [*Exit.*]

Miss R. Well, Charles, will you commit yourself to me for a few minutes?

Charles. Most readily; and let me, before one goes by, tender you the only payment I can ever make for your abundant generosity.

Miss R. Hold, hold! so vile a thing as money must not come between us. What shall I say? *O Charles!* *O Dudley!* What difficulties have you thrown upon me! Familiarly as we have lived, I shrink at what I am doing; and anxiously as I have sought this opportunity, my fears almost persuade me to abandon it.

Charles. You alarm me!

Miss R. Your looks and actions have been so distant, and at this moment are so deterring, that, were it not for the hope that delicacy, and not disgust, inspires this conduct in you, I should sink with shame and apprehension: but time presses; and I must speak, and plainly too. Were you now in possession of your grandfather's estate, as justly you ought to be, and were you inclined to seek a companion for life, should you, or should you not, in that case, honour your unworthy Charlotte with your choice?

Charles. My unworthy Charlotte! So judge me, heaven, there is not a circumstance on earth so valuable as your happiness, so dear to me as your person: but to bring poverty, disgrace, reproach from friends, ridicule from all the world, upon a generous benefactress; thievishly to steal into an open and unreserved, ingenuous heart, *O Charlotte!* dear, unhappy girl, it is not to be done.

Miss R. Come, my dear Charles, I have enough; make that enough still more by sharing it with me: sole heiress of my father's fortune, a short time will put it in my disposal; in the meanwhile you will be sent to join your regiment; let us prevent a separation, by setting out this very night for that happy country, where marriage still is free: carry me this moment to Belcour's lodgings.

Charles. Belcour's? The name is ominous; there's murder in it: inexorable honour! [*Aside.*]

Miss R. D'y'e pause? Put me into his hands, while you provide the means for our escape; he is the most generous, the most honourable of men.

Charles. Honourable! most honourable!

Miss R. Can you doubt it? Do you demur? Have you forgot your letter? Why, Belcour 'twas that prompted me to this proposal, that promised to supply the means, that nobly offered his unasked assistance,

Enter O'FLAHERTY.

O'Fla. Run, run; for holy St. Anthony's sake, to horse, and away! The conference is broke up, and the enemy advances upon a full Piedmontese trot, within pistol-shot of our encampment.

Miss R. Here, here; down the back stairs! *O, Charles, remember me!*

Charles. Farewell! Now, now, I feel myself a coward. [*Exit.*]

Miss R. What does he mean?

O'Fla. Ask no questions, but be gone; she has cooled the lad's courage, and wonders he feels like a coward. There's a damned deal of mischief brewing between this hyena and her lawyer: here comes old six-and-eight-pence—'egad! I'll step behind this screen, and listen; a good soldier must sometimes fight in ambush, as well as in open field. [*Retires behind a screen.*]

Enter VARLAND.

Var. Let me consider—five thousand pounds, prompt payment, for destroying this scrap of paper, not worth five farthings; 'tis a fortune easily earned; yes, and 'tis another man's fortune easily thrown away; 'tis a good round sum, to be paid down at once for a bribe: but 'tis a d—d rogue's trick in me to take it.

O'Fla. So, so! this fellow speaks truth to himself, though he lies to other people. [*Aside.*]

Var. 'Tis breaking the trust of my benefactor, that's a foul crime; but he's dead, and can never reproach me with it: and 'tis robbing young Dudley of his lawful patrimony, that's a hard case; but he's alive, and knows nothing of the matter.

O'Fla. These lawyers are so used to bring off the rogues of others, that they are never without an excuse for their own. [*Aside.*]

Var. Were I assured now that Dudley would give me half the money for producing this will, that Lady Rusport does for concealing it, I would deal with him, and be an honest man at half-price; and I wish every gentleman of my profession could lay his hand on his heart, and say the same thing.

O'Fla. A bargain, old gentleman! Nay, never start nor stare; you wasn't afraid of your own conscience; never be afraid of me.

Var. Of you, sir! who are you, pray?

O'Fla. I'll tell you who I am: you seem to wish to be honest, but want the heart to set about it; now I am the very man in the world to make you so; for if you do not give up that paper this very instant, by the soul of me, fellow, I will not leave one whole bone in your skin that sha'n't be broken.

Var. What right have you, pray, to take this paper from me?

O'Fla. What right have you, pray, to keep it from young Dudley? I don't know what it contains, but I am apt to think it will be safer in my hands than in yours; therefore give it me without more words, and save yourself a beating: do now; you had best.

Var. Well, sir, I may as well make a grace of necessity. There; I have acquitted my conscience, at the expense of five thousand pounds.

O'Fla. Five thousand pounds! Mercy upon me! When there are such temptations in the law, can we wonder if some of the corps are a disgrace to it?

Var. Well, you have got the paper; if you are an honest man, give it to Charles Dudley.

O'Fla. An honest man! look at me, friend, I am a soldier, this is not the livery of a knave; I am an Irishman, honey; mine is not the country of dishonour. Now, sirrah, be gone; if you enter these

doors, or give Lady Rusport the least item of what has passed, I will cut off both your ears, and rob the pillory of its due.

Var. I wish I was once fairly out of his sight.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*A Room in Stockwell's House.*

Enter STOCKWELL.

Stock. I must disclose myself to Belcour; this noble instance of his generosity, which old Dudley has been relating, allies me to him at once; concealment becomes too painful; I shall be proud to own him for my son: but see, he's here.

Enter BELCOUR.

Bel. O my cursed tropical constitution! 'Would to heaven I had been dropped upon the snows of Lapland, and never felt the blessed influence of the sun, so had I never burnt with these inflammatory passions.

Stock. So, so; you seem disordered, Mr. Belcour.

Bel. Disordered, sir! Why did I ever quit the soil in which I grew? what evil planet drew me from that warm, sunny region, where naked nature walks without disguise, into this cold, contriving, artificial country.

Stock. Come, sir, you've met a rascal; what o'that? General conclusions are illiberal.

Bel. No, sir, I have met reflection by the way; I have come from folly, noise, and fury, and met a silent monitor. Well, well, a villain! 'twas not to be pardoned; pray, never mind me, sir.

Stock. Alas! my heart bleeds for him. [*Aside.*]

Bel. And yet I might have heard him: now, plague upon that blundering Irishman, for coming in as he did; the hurry of the deed might palliate the event; deliberate execution has less to plead. Mr. Stockwell, I am bad company to you.

Stock. Oh, sir, make no excuse. I think you have not found me forward to pry into the secrets of your pleasures and pursuits; 'tis not my disposition; but there are times, when want of curiosity would be want of friendship.

Bel. Ah, sir, mine is a case wherein you and I shall never think alike.

Stock. 'Tis very well, sir; if you think I can render you any service, it may be worth your trial to confide in me; if not, your secret is safer in your own bosom.

Bel. That sentiment demands my confidence; pray, sit down by me. You must know, I have an affair of honour on my hands with young Dudley; and, though I put up with no man's insult, yet I wish to take away no man's life.

Stock. I know the young man, and am apprised of your generosity to his father; what can have bred a quarrel between you?

Bel. A foolish passion on my side, and a haughty provocation on his. There is a girl, Mr. Stockwell, whom I have unfortunately seen, of most uncommon beauty; she has withal an air of so much natural modesty, that, had I not had good assurance of her being an attainable wanton, I declare I should as soon have thought of attempting the chastity of Diana.

Enter a Servant.

Stock. Heyday! why do you interrupt us?

Serv. Sir, there's an Irish gentleman will take no denial; he says, he must see Mr. Belcour directly, upon business of the last consequence.

Bel. Admit him; 'tis the Irish officer that parted

us, and brings me young Dudley's challenge; I should have made a long story of it, and he'll tell you in three words.

Enter Major O'FLAHERTY.

O'Fla. 'Save you, my dear; and you, sir, I have a little bit of a word in private for you.

Bel. Pray, deliver your commands; this gentleman is my intimate friend.

O'Fla. Why, then, Ensign Dudley will be glad to measure swords with you yonder, at the London Tavern, in Bishopsgate-street, at nine o'clock; you know the place.

Bel. I do, and shall observe the appointment.

O'Fla. Will you be of the party, sir? we shall want a fourth hand.

Stock. Savage as the custom is, I close with your proposal; and though I am not fully informed of the occasion of your quarrel, I shall rely on Mr. Belcour's honour for the justice of it, and willingly stake my life in his defence.

O'Fla. Sir, you are a gentleman of honour, and I shall be glad of being better known to you. But, harkye, Belcour, I had like to have forgot part of my errand; there is the money you gave old Dudley: you may tell it over, 'faith; 'tis a receipt in full: now the lad can put you to death with a safe conscience; and when he has done that job for you, let it be a warning how you attempt the sister of a man of honour.

Bel. The sister!

O'Fla. Ay, the sister; 'tis English, is it not? Or Irish, 'tis all one; you understand me: his sister, or Louisa Dudley, that's her name, I think, call her which you will. By St. Patrick! 'tis a foolish piece of business, Belcour, to go about to take away a poor girl's virtue from her, when there are so many to be met with in this town, who have disposed of their's to your hands. [*Exit.*]

Stock. Why, I am thunderstruck! what is it you have done, and what is the shocking business in which I have engaged? If I understand him right, 'tis the sister of young Dudley you have been at tempting: you talked to me of a professed wanton; the girl he speaks of has beauty enough indeed to inflame your desires, but she has honour, innocence, and simplicity, to awe the most licentious passions; if you have done that, Mr. Belcour, I renounce you, I abandon you, I forswear all fellowship or friendship with you for ever.

Bel. Have patience for a moment; we do indeed speak of the same person, but she is not innocent, she is not young Dudley's sister.

Stock. Astonishing, who told you this?

Bel. The woman where she lodges, the person who put me on the pursuit, and contrived our meetings.

Stock. What woman? What person?

Bel. Fulmer her name is; I warrant you, I did not proceed without good ground.

Stock. Fulmer, Fulmer! Who waits?

Enter a Servant.

Send Mr. Stukely hither directly; [*Exit Servant.*] I begin to see my way into this dark transaction. Mr. Belcour, Mr. Belcour, you are no match for the cunning and contrivances of this intriguing town.

Enter STUKELY.

Pr'ythee, Stukely, what is the name of the woman and her husband, who were stopped upon suspicion of selling stolen diamonds at our next-door neighbour's, the jeweller?

Stuke. Fulmer.

Stock. So!

Bel. Can you procure me a sight of those diamonds?

Stuke. They are now in my hand, I was desired to shew them to Mr. Stockwell.

Stock. Give them to me. What do I see? As I live, the very diamonds Miss Rusport sent hither, and which I entrusted to you to return.

Bel. Yes, but I betrayed that trust, and gave them Mrs. Fulmer, to present to Miss Dudley.

Stock. With a view, no doubt, to bribe her to compliance?

Bel. I own it.

Stock. For shame, for shame; and 'twas this woman's intelligence, you relied upon for Miss Dudley's character.

Bel. I thought she knew her. By heaven! I would have died, sooner than have insulted a woman of virtue, or a man of honour.

Stock. I think you would; but mark the danger of licentious courses: you are betrayed, robbed, abused, and, but for this providential discovery, in a fair way of being sent out of the world, with all your follies on your head. Dear Stukely, go to my neighbour, tell him, I have an owner for the jewels; and beg him to carry the people under custody to the London Tavern, and wait for me there. [*Exit STUKELY.*] I see it was a trap laid for you, which you have narrowly escaped: you addressed a woman of honour with all the loose incense of a profane admirer; and you have drawn upon you the resentment of a man of honour, who thinks himself bound to protect her. Well, sir, you must atone for this mistake.

Bel. To the lady the most penitent submission I can make is justly due; but in the execution of an act of justice, it never shall be said my soul was swayed by the least particle of fear. I have received a challenge from her brother: now, though I would give my fortune, almost my life itself, to purchase her happiness, yet, I cannot abate her one scruple of my honour; I have been branded with the name of villain.

Stock. Ay, sir, you mistook her character, and he mistook your's; error begets error.

Bel. Villain, Mr. Stockwell, is a harsh word.

Stock. It is a harsh word, and should be unsaid.

Bel. Come, come, it shall be unsaid.

Stock. Or else, what follows? Why, the sword is drawn; and to heal the wrongs you have done to the reputation of the sister, you make an honourable amends by murdering the brother.

Bel. Murdering!

Stock. 'Tis thus religion writes and speaks the word; in the vocabulary of modern honour, there is no such term. But, come, I don't despair of satisfying the one, without alarming the other; that done, I have a discovery to unfold, that you will then, I hope, be fitted to receive. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT V

SCENE I.—Stockwell's House.

Enter CAPTAIN DUDLEY LOUISA, and STUKELY.

Dud. And are those wretches, Fulmer and his wife, in safe custody?

Stuke. They are in good hands; I accompanied them to the tavern, where your son was to be, and

then went in search of you. You may be sure, Mr. Stockwell will enforce the law against them as far as it will go.

Dud. What mischief might their cursed machinations have produced, but for this timely discovery!

Lou. Still I am terrified; I tremble with apprehension.

Stuke. Mr. Stockwell is with them, madam, and you have nothing to fear; you may expect them every minute; and see, madam, agreeably to your wish, they are here. [*Exit.*]

Enter CHARLES: afterwards STOCKWELL, and O'FLAHERTY.

Lou. O Charles, O brother! how could you serve me so? how could you tell me you was going to Lady Rusport's, and then set out on a design of fighting Mr. Belcour? But where is he; where is your antagonist?

Stock. Captain, I am proud to see you; and you, Miss Dudley, do me particular honour. We have been adjusting, sir, a very extraordinary and dangerous mistake, which, I take for granted, my friend Stukely has explained to you.

Dud. He has. I have too good an opinion of Mr. Belcour, to believe he could be guilty of a designed affront to an innocent girl; and I am much too well acquainted with your character, to suppose you could abet him in such design; I have no doubt, therefore, all things will be set to rights in a very few words, when we have the pleasure of seeing Mr. Belcour.

Stock. He has only stepped into the counting-house, and will wait upon you directly. You will not be over strict, madam, in weighing Mr. Belcour's conduct to the minutest scruple; his manners, passions, and opinions, are not as yet assimilated to this climate; he comes amongst you a new character, an inhabitant of a new world; and both hospitality, as well as pity, recommend him to our indulgence.

Enter BELCOUR.

Bel. I am happy, and ashamed, to see you; no man in his senses would offend you; I have forfeited mine, and erred against the light of the sun, when I overlooked your virtues; but your beauty was predominant, and hid them from my sight; I now perceive, I was the dupe of a most improbable report, and humbly entreat your pardon.

Lou. Think no more of it; 'twas a mistake.

Bel. My life has been composed of little else; 'twas founded in mystery, and has continued in error: I was once given to hope, Mr. Stockwell, that you was to have delivered me from these difficulties; but either I do not deserve your confidence, or I was deceived in my expectations.

Stock. When this lady has confirmed your pardon, I shall hold you deserving of my confidence.

Lou. That was granted the moment it was asked.

Bel. To prove my title to his confidence, honour me so far with yours, as to allow me a few minutes' conversation in private with you.

[*She turns to her Father.*]

Dud. By all means, Louisa [*They retire.*] Come, Mr. Stockwell, let us go into another room.

Charles. And now, Major O'Flaherty, I claim your promise, of a sight of the paper, that is to unravel this conspiracy of my aunt Rusport's. I think I have waited with great patience.

O'Fla. I have been endeavouring to call to mind what it was I overheard; I have got the paper, and

will give you the best account I can of the whole transaction. [*Exeunt all but LOUISA and BELCOUR.*]

Bel. Miss Dudley, I have solicited this audience, to repeat to you my penitence and confusion. How shall I atone? What reparation can I make to you and virtue?

Lou. To me there's nothing due, nor anything demanded of you but your more favourable opinion for the future, if you should chance to think of me. Upon the part of virtue, I am not empowered to speak; but if hereafter, as you range through life, you should surprise her in the person of some wretched female, poor as myself, and not so well protected, enforce not your advantage, complete not your licentious triumph; but raise her, rescue her from shame and sorrow, and reconcile her to herself again.

Bel. I will, I will; by bearing your idea ever present in my thoughts, virtue shall keep an advocate within me: but tell me, loveliest, when you pardon the offence, can you, all perfect as you are, approve of the offender? As I now cease to view you in that false light I lately did, can you, and in the fullness of your bounty will you, cease also to reflect upon the libertine addresses I have paid you, and look upon me as your reformed, your rational admirer?

Lou. Are sudden reformatations apt to last? and how can I be sure the first fair face you meet will not ensnare affections so unsteady, and that I shall not lose you lightly as I gained you?

Bel. I know I am not worthy your regard; but there's a healing virtue in your eyes, that makes recovery certain; I cannot be a villain in your arms.

Lou. That you can never be: whomsoever you shall honour with your choice, my life upon't, that woman will be happy.

Bel. I see, Miss Dudley, I've not yet obtained your pardon.

Lou. Nay, that you are in full possession of.

Bel. Oh, seal it with your hand, then, loveliest of women, confirm it with your heart: make me honourably happy, and crown your penitent, not with your pardon only, but your love.

Lou. My love!

Enter O'FLAHERTY; afterwards DUDLEY and CHARLES, with STOCKWELL.

O'Fla. Joy, joy! sing, dance, leap, laugh for joy. Ha! done making love, and fall down on your knees to every saint in the calendar, for they are all on your side, and honest St. Patrick at the head of them.

Charles. O Louisa, such an event! By the luckiest chance in life, we have discovered a will of my grandfather's, made in his last illness, by which he cuts off my aunt Rusport with a small annuity, and leaves me heir to his whole estate, with a fortune of fifteen thousand pounds to yourself.

Lou. What is it you tell me? O, sir, instruct me how to support this unexpected turn of fortune.

[*To her Father.*]

Dud. Name not fortune: 'tis the work of Providence; 'tis the justice of heaven, that would not suffer innocence to be oppressed, nor your base aunt to prosper in her cruelty and cunning.

[*A Servant whispers BELCOUR, and he goes out.*]

O'Fla. You shall pardon me, Captain Dudley, but you must not overlook St. Patrick neither; for, by my soul, if he had not put it into my head to slip behind the screen, when your righteous aunt and

the lawyer were plotting together, I don't see how you would ever have come at the paper there, that Master Stockwell is reading.

Dud. True, my good friend, you are the father of this discovery; but how did you contrive to get this will from the lawyer?

O'Fla. By force, my dear; the only way of getting anything from the lawyer's clutches.

Stock. Well, Major, when he brings his action of assault and battery against you, the least Dudley can do is to defend you with all the weapons you have put into his hands.

Charles. That I am bound to do; and after the happiness I shall have in sheltering a father's age from the vicissitudes of life, my next delight will be in offering you an asylum in the bosom of your country.

O'Fla. And upon my soul, my dear, 'tis high time I was there, for 'tis now thirty long years since I sat foot in my native country, and by the power of St. Patrick I swear I think it's worth all the rest of the world put together.

Dud. Ay, Major, much about that time have I been beating the round of service, and 'twere well for us both to give over; we have stood many a tough gale, and abundance of hard blows, but Charles shall lay us up in a little private, but safe harbour, where we'll rest from our labour, and peacefully wind up the remainder of our days.

O'Fla. Agreed; and you may take it as a proof of my esteem, young man, that Major O'Flaherty accepts a favour at your hands; for, by heaven, I'd sooner starve than say "I thank you" to the man I despise: but I believe you are an honest lad, and I'm glad you've trounced the old cat; for on my conscience, I believe I must otherwise have married her myself, to have let you in for a share of her fortune.

Stock. Hey-day! what's become of Belcour?

Lou. One of your servants called him out just now, and seemingly on some earnest occasion.

Stock. I hope, Miss Dudley, he has atoned to you as a gentleman ought.

Lou. Mr. Belcour, sir, will always do what a gentleman ought, and in my case, I fear only you will think he has done too much.

Stock. What has he done? and what can be too much? Pray heaven, it may be as I wish! [*Aside.*]

Dud. Let us hear it, child.

Lou. With confusion for my own unworthiness, I confess to you he has offered me—

Stock. Himself.

Lou. 'Tis true.

Stock. Then I am happy; all my doubts, my cares, are over, and I may owe him for my son. [*Aside.*] Why, these are joyful tidings! Come, my good friend, assist me in disposing your lovely daughter to accept this returning prodigal; he is no unprincipled, no hardened libertine: his love for you and virtue is the same.

Dud. 'Twere vile ingratitude in me to doubt his merit. What says my child?

O'Fla. Begging your pardon now, 'tis a frivolous sort of a question, that of your's, for you may see plainly enough by the young lady's looks, that she says a great deal, though she speaks never a word.

Charles. Well, sister, I believe the Major has fairly interpreted the state of your heart.

Lou. I own it; and what must that heart be, which love, honour, and beneficence, like Mr. Belcour's, can make no impression on?

Stock. I thank you. What happiness has this hour brought to pass!

O'Fla. Why don't we all sit down to supper then, and make a night on't?

Enter BELCOUR, introducing Miss RUSPORT.

Bel. Mr. Dudley, here is a fair refugee, who properly comes under your protection; she is equipped for Scotland; but your good fortune, which I have related to her, seems inclined to save you both the journey. Nay, madam, never go back; you are amongst friends.

Charles. Charlotte!

Miss R. The same; that fond, officious girl, that haunts you everywhere: that persecuting spirit—

Charles. Say rather, that protecting angel; such you have been to me.

Miss R. O Charles, you have an honest, but proud heart.

Charles. Nay chide me not, dear Charlotte.

Bel. Seal up her lips, then; she is an adorable girl; her arms are open to you; and love and happiness are ready to receive you.

Charles. Thus, then, I claim my dear, my destined wife. [Embracing her.]

Enter Lady RUSPORT.

Lady R. Hey-day! mighty fine! wife, truly! mighty well! kissing, embracing; did ever anything equal this? Why, you shameless hussy! But I won't condescend to waste a word upon you. You, sir, you, Mr. Stockwell; you fine, sanctified, fair-dealing man of conscience; is this the principle you trade upon? Is this your neighbourly system, to keep a house of reception for runaway daughters, and young beggarly fortune-hunters?

O'Fla. Be advised now, and don't put yourself in such a passion: we were all very happy till you came.

Lady R. Stand away, sir; haven't I reason to be in a passion?

O'Fla. Indeed, honey, and you have, if you knew all.

Lady R. Come, madam, I have found out your haunts; dispose yourself to return home with me. Young man, let me never see you within my doors again: Mr. Stockwell, I shall report your behaviour, depend on it.

Stock. Hold, madam, I cannot consent to lose Miss Rusport's company this evening, and I am persuaded you won't insist upon it; 'tis an unmotherly action to interrupt your daughter's happiness in this manner, believe me it is.

Lady R. Her happiness truly! upon my word! and I suppose it's an unmotherly action to interrupt her ruin; for what but ruin must it be to marry a beggar? I think my sister had a proof of that, sir, when she made choice of you. [To Capt. DUDLEY.]

Dud. Don't be too lavish of your spirits, Lady Rusport.

O'Fla. By my soul, you'll have occasion for a sip of the cordial elixir by-and-by.

Stock. It don't appear to me, madam, that Mr. Dudley can be called a beggar.

Lady R. But it appears to me, Mr. Stockwell; I am apt to think a pair of colours cannot furnish a settlement quite sufficient for the heiress of Sir Stephen Rusport.

Miss R. But a good estate, in aid of a commission, may do something.

Lady R. A good estate, truly! where should he get a good estate, pray?

Stock. Why, suppose now, a worthy old gentleman, on his death-bed, should have taken it in mind to leave him one—

Lady R. Ha! what's that you say?

O'Fla. O ho! you begin to smell a plot, do you?

Stock. Suppose there should be a paper in the world, that runs thus—"I do hereby give and bequeath all my estates, real and personal, to Charles Dudley, son of my late daughter Louisa, &c. &c. &c."

O'Fla. There's a fine parcel of et ceteras for your ladyship.

Lady R. Why, I am thunderstruck! by what contrivance, what villainy, did you get possession of that paper?

Stock. There was no villainy, madam, in getting possession of it; the crime was in concealing it, none in bringing it to light.

Lady R. Oh, that cursed lawyer, Varland!

O'Fla. You may say that, 'faith; he is a cursed lawyer, and a cursed piece of work I had to get the paper from him; your ladyship now was to have paid him five thousand pounds for it: I forced him to give it me of his own accord, for nothing at all, at all!

Lady R. Is it you that have done this? Am I foiled by your blundering contrivances, after all?

O'Fla. 'Twas a blunder, 'faith, but as natural a one as if I had made it o'purpose.

Charles. Come, let us not oppress the fallen; do right even now, and you shall have no cause to complain.

Lady R. Am I become an object of your pity, then? Insufferable! Confusion light amongst you! marry, and be wretched: let me never see you more. [Exit.]

Miss R. She is outrageous; I suffer for her, and blush to see her thus exposed.

Charles. Come, Charlotte, don't let this angry woman disturb our happiness: we will save her, in spite of herself; your father's memory shall not be stained by the discredit of his second choice.

Miss R. I trust implicitly to your discretion, and am in all things your's.

Bel. Now, lovely, but obdurate, does not this example soften?

Lou. What can you ask for more? Accept my hand, accept my willing heart.

Bel. O, bliss unutterable! brother, father, friend, and you, the author of this general joy—

O'Fla. Blessing of St. Patrick upon us all! 'tis a night of wonderful and surprising ups and downs: I wish we were all fairly set down to supper, and there was an end on't.

Stock. Hold for a moment! I have yet one word to interpose. Entitled by my friendship to a voice in your disposal, I have approved your match; there yet remains a father's consent to be obtained.

Bel. Have I a father?

Stock. You have a father; did not I tell you I had a discovery to make? Compose yourself; you have a father, who observes, who knows, who loves you.

Bel. Keep me no longer in suspense: my heart is softened for the affecting discovery, and nature fits me to receive his blessing.

Stock. I am your father.

Bel. My father! Do I live?

Stock. I am your father

Bel. It is too much; my happiness overpowers me; to gain a friend, and find a father, is too much. I blush to think how little I deserve you.

Dud. See, children, how many new relations

spring from this night's unforeseen events, to endear us to each other.

O'Fla. O'my conscience, I think we shall be all related by-and-by

Stock. Yes, Belcour, I have watched you with a patient, but inquiring eye, and I have discovered through the veil of some irregularities, a heart beaming with benevolence and animated nature: fallible indeed, but not incorrigible; and your election of

this excellent young lady makes me glory in acknowledging you to be my son.

Bel. I thank you; and in my turn, glory in the father I have gained. Sensibly impressed with gratitude for such extraordinary dispensations, I beseech you, amiable Louisa, for the time to come, whenever you perceive me deviating into error or offence, bring only to my mind the providence of this night, and I will turn to reason and obey.

[*Exeunt.*]

THE JEW;

A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS;

BY RICHARD CUMBERLAND.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SIR STEPHEN BERTRAM
SHEVA
FREDERICK
CHARLES RATCLIFFE
SAUNDERS
JABAL.

MRS. RATCLIFFE
ELIZA RATCLIFFE
MRS. GOODISON
DORCAS.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in the House of Sir Stephen Bertram.*

Sir STEPHEN BERTRAM and FREDERICK.

Sir S. Why do you press me for reasons I'm not bound to give? If I choose to dismiss an assistant clerk from my counting-house, how does it concern you?

Fred. That clerk you took at my recommendation and request: I am therefore interested to hope you have no reasons for dismissing him, that affect his character.

Sir S. I am your father, sir, and in this house sole master: I have no partners to account to; nor will I brook any comments on my conduct from my son.

Fred. Yet, as your son, may I not, without risking your displeasure, offer one humble word upon the part of a defenceless, absent friend?

Sir S. A friend!

Fred. Yes, sir; I hope I need not blush to call Charles Ratcliffe friend. His virtues, his misfortunes, his integrity, (you'll undeceive me if I err,) have much endeared him to me.

Sir S. Say rather his connexions. Come, I see where all his friendship points—to folly, to disgrace—therefore, no more of it. Break off; new friendships will cost you dear; 'tis better you should cease to call him friend, than put it in his power to call you brother. In one word, Frederick, I never will accept of Ratcliffe's sister as my daughter-in-law; nor, if I can prevent it, shall you so far forget yourself as to make her your mistress.

Fred. Mistress! Good heaven!—But I'll restrain myself.—You never saw Miss Ratcliffe.

Sir S. I wish you never had.—But you have seen your last of her, or me—I leave it to your choice.

[*Exit.*]

Fred. I have no choice to make; she is my wife—and if to take beauty, virtue, and elegance, without fortune, when my father would have me take fortune without them, is a crime that merits disinheritance, I must meet my punishment as I can.

The only thing I dread is the severe but honourable reproach of my friend Ratcliffe, to whom this marriage is a secret, and whose disinterested resentment I know not how to face: I must dissemble with him still, for I am unprepared with my defence, and he is here.

Enter CHARLES RATCLIFFE.

Char. Well met, Frederick.

Fred. I wish I could say so.

Char. Why, what's the matter now

Fred. I have no good news to tell you.

Char. I don't expect it; you are not made to be the bearer of good news: knavery engrosses all fortune's favour, and fools run up and down with the tidings of it.

Fred. You are still a philosopher.

Char. I cannot tell that, till I am tried with prosperity: it is that which sets our failings in full view; adversity conceals them.—But come, discuss: tell me in what one part of my composition the ingenious cruelty of fortune can place another blow.

Fred. By my soul, Charles, I am ashamed to tell you, because the blow is now given by a hand I wish to reverence. You know the temper of Sir Stephen Bertram: he is my father, therefore I will not enlarge upon a subject that would be painful to us both. It is with infinite regret I have seen you (nobly descended, and still more nobly endowed,) earning a scanty maintenance at your desk in his counting-house: it is a slavery you are now released from.

Char. I understand you; Sir Stephen has no further commands for me. I will go to him and deliver up my keys.

[Going.]

Fred. Have patience for a moment. Do you guess his reasons for this hasty measure?

Char. What care I for his reasons, when I know they cannot touch my honour.

Fred. Oh! Charles, my heart is penetrated with your situation: what will become of those beloved objects?

Char. Why, what becomes of all the objects misery lays low? they shrink from sight and are forgotten.—You know I will not hear you on this subject; 'twas not with my consent you ever knew there were such objects in existence.

Fred. I own it; but in this extremity, methinks you might relax a little from that rigid honour.

Char. Never; but, as the body of a man is braced by winter, so is my resolution by adversity. On this point only we can differ. Why will my friend persist in urging it?

Fred. I have done. You have your way.

Char. Then, with your leave, I'll go to your father.

Fred. Hold! Here comes one that supersedes all other visitors—old Sheva, the rich Jew, the merest muckworm in the city of London. How the old Hebrew casts about for prodigals to snap at!—I'll throw him out a bait for sport.

Char. No, let him pass; what sport can his infirmities afford?

Enter SHEVA.

Sheva. The goot day to you, my young master! How is it with your health, I pray? Is your fader, Sir Stephen Bertram, and my very good patron, to be spoken with?

Fred. Yes, yes, he is at home, and to be spoken with under some precaution, Sheva: if you bring him money, you would be welcome.

Sheva. Ah! that is very goot. Monies is welcome every where.

Fred. Pass on, pass on! no more apologies. Good man of money, save your breath to count your guineas. [Exit SHEVA.] That fellow would not let his shadow fall upon the earth, if he could help it.

Char. You are too hard upon him. The thing is courteous.

Fred. Hang him! he'll bow for half-a-crown. His carcase and its covering would not coin into a ducat, yet he is a moving mine of wealth.

Char. You see these characters with indignation: I contemplate them with pity. I have a fellow-feeling for poor Sheva: he is as much in poverty as I am, only it is poverty of another species: he wants what he has; I have nothing, and want everything. Misers are not unuseful members of the community; they act like dams to rivers, hold up the stream that else would run to waste, and make deep water where there would be shallows.

Fred. I recollect you was his rescuer; I did not know you were his advocate.

Char. 'Tis true, I snatched him out of jeopardy. My countrymen, with all their natural humanity, have no objection to the hustling of a Jew. The poor old creature was most roughly handled.

Fred. What was the cause?

Char. I never asked the cause. There was a hundred upon one; that was cause enough for me to make myself a second to the party overmatched.—I got a few hard knocks, but I brought off my man.

Fred. The synagogue should canonize you for the deed.

Re-enter SHEVA.

Sheva. Aha! there is no business to be done; there is no talking to your fader. He is not just now in the sweetest of all possible tempers. Anything Mr. Bertram, wanted in my way?

Fred. Yes, Sheva, there is enough wanted in your way, but I doubt it is not in your will to do it.

Sheva. I do always do my utmost for my principals: I never spare my pains when business is going: be it ever such a trifle I am thankful. Every little helps a poor man like me.

Fred. You speak of your spirit, I suppose, when you call yourself a poor man. All the world knows you roll in riches.

Sheva. The world knows no great deal of me. I do not deny that my monies may roll a little, but for myself I do not roll at all. I live sparingly, and labour hard, therefore I am called a miser—I cannot help it; an uncharitable dog—I must endure it; a bloodsucker, an extortioner, a Shylock,—hard names, Mr. Frederick; but what can a poor Jew say in return, if a Christian chooses to abuse him?

Fred. Say nothing, but spend your money like a Christian.

Sheva. We have no abiding place on earth, no country, no home: everybody rails at us, everybody flouts us, everybody points us out for their maygame and their mockery. If your play-writers want a butt or a buffoon, or a knave to make sport of, out comes a Jew to be baited and buffeted through five long acts, for the amusement of all good Christians. Cruel sport!—merciless amusement! Hard dealings for a poor stray sheep of the scattered flock of Abraham! How can you expect us to shew kindness, when we receive none?

Char. [Advancing.] That is true, friend Sheva, I can witness: I am sorry to say there is too much justice in your complaint

Sheva. Bless this goot light! I did not see you—'tis my very goot friend, Mr. Ratcliffe, as I live.—Give me your pardon, I pray you, sir, give me your pardon. I should be sorry to say in your hearing, that there is no charity for the poor Jews. Truly, sir, I am under very great obligations to you for your generous protection t'other night, when I was mobbed and maltreated; and, for aught I can tell, should have been massacred, had not you stood forward in my defence. Truly, sir, I bear it very thankful in my remembrance; truly I do; yes, truly.

Fred. Leave me with him, Charles; I'll hold him in discourse whilst you go to my father.

[*Exit CHARLES.*]

Sheva. Oh! it was goot deed, very goot deed, to save a poor Jew from a pitiless mob; and I am very grateful to you, worthy Mr.—Ah! the gentleman is gone away; that is another thing.

Fred. It is so, but your gratitude need not go away at the same time; you are not bound to make good the old proverb—"Out of sight, out of mind."

Sheva. No, no, no; I am very much obliged to him, not only for my life, but for the monies and the valuables I had about me; I had been hustled out of them all but for him.

Fred. Well, then, having so much gratitude for his favours, you have now an opportunity of making some return to him.

Sheva. Yes, yes; and I do make him a return of my thanks and goot wishes very heartily. What can a poor Jew say more? I do wish him all goot things, and give him all goot words.

Fred. Good words, indeed! What are they to a man who is cast naked upon the wide world, with a widowed mother and a defenceless sister, who look up to him for their support?

Sheva. Good lack, good lack! I thought he was in occupations in your fader's counting-house.

Fred. He was; and from his scanty pittance, piously supported these poor destitutes: that source is now stopped, and as you, when in the midst of rioters, was in want of a protector, so is he, in the midst of his misfortunes, in want of some kind friend to rescue him.

Sheva. Oh dear, oh dear! this world is full of sadness and of sorrow; miseries upon miseries! unfortunates by hundreds and by thousands, and poor Sheva has but two weak eyes to find tears for them all.

Fred. Come, come, Sheva, pity will not feed the hungry, nor clothe the naked. Ratcliffe is the friend of my heart: I am helpless in myself; my father, though just, is austere in the extreme; I dare not resort to him for money, nor can I turn my thoughts to any other quarter for the loan of a small sum in this extremity, except to you.

Sheva. To me! good lack, to me! What will become of me? What will Sir Stephen say? He is full of monies; but then again, he is a close man, very austere, as you say, and very just, but not very generous.

Fred. Well, well, let me have your answer.

Sheva. Yes, yes; but my answer will not please you without the monies: I shall be a Jewish dog, a baboon, an imp of Beelzebub, if I don't find the monies; and when my monies is all gone, what shall I be then? An ass, a fool, a jack-a-dandy!—Oh dear! Oh dear! Well, there must be conditions, look you.

Fred. To be sure: security twice secured; premium and interest, and bond and judgment into the

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bargain. Only enable me to preserve my friend, give me that transport, and I care not what I pay for it.

Sheva. Mercy on your heart! what haste and hurry you are in! How much did you want? One hundred pounds, did you say?

Fred. More than one, more than one.

Sheva. Ah, poor Sheva! more than one hundred pounds; what! so much as two hundred? 'tis a great deal of monies.

Fred. Come, friend Sheva, at one word—three hundred pounds.

Sheva. Mercies defend me, what a sum!

Fred. Accommodate me with three hundred pounds; make your own terms; consult your conscience in the bargain, and I will say you are a good fellow. Oh Sheva! did you but know the luxury of relieving honour, innocence, and beauty, from distress!

Sheva. Oh! 'tis a great luxury, I dare say, else you would not buy it at so high a price. Well, well! I have thought a little, and if you will come to my poor cabin in Duke's Place, you shall have the monies.

Fred. Well said, my gallant Sheva! Shall I bring a bond with me to fill up?

Sheva. No, no, no; we have all those in my shop. *Fred.* I do not doubt it: all the apparatus of an usurer. [*Aside.*] Farewell, Sheva! be ready with your instruments, I care not what they are: only let me have the money, and you may proceed to dissection as soon after as you please. [*Exit.*]

Sheva. Heigho! I cannot choose but weep. Sheva, thou art a fool. Three hundred pounds, by the day, how much is that in the year?—Oh dear, oh dear! I shall be ruined, starved, wasted to a watch light. Bowels, you shall pinch for this: I'll not eat flesh this fortnight: I'll suck the air for nourishment: I'll feed upon the steam of an alderman's kitchen, as I put my nose down his area.—Well, well! but soft, a word, friend Sheva! Art thou not rich? monstrous rich, abominably rich? and yet thou livest on a crust. Be it so! thou dost stint thine appetites to pamper thine affections; thou dost make thyself to live in poverty, that the poor may live in plenty. Well, well! so long as thou art a miser only to thine own cost, thou mayest hug thyself in this poor habit, and set the world's contempt at naught.

Enter CHARLES RATCLIFFE, not noticing the Jew.

Char. Unfeeling, heartless man, I've done with you. I'll dig, beg, perish, rather than submit to such unnatural terms! I may remain: my mother and my sister must be banished to a distance. Why, this Jew, this usurer, this enemy to our faith, whose heart is in his bags, would not have used me thus—I'll question him. Sheva!

Sheva. What is your pleasure?

Char. I do not know the word.

Sheva. What is your will, then? speak it.

Char. Sheva!—You have been a son—you had a mother—dost remember her?

Sheva. Goot lack, goot lack! do I remember her!—

Char. Didst love her, cherish her, support her?

Sheva. Ah me! ah me! it is as much as my poor heart will bear to think of her. I would have died—

Char. Thou hast affections, feelings, charities—

Sheva. I am a man, sir, call me how you please.

Char. I'll call you Christian, then; and this proud merchant, Jew.

Sheva. I shall not thank you for that compliment. Char. And hadst thou not a sister too?

Sheva. No; no sister, no brother, no son, no daughter; I am a solitary being, a waif on the world's wide common.

Char. And thou hast hoarded wealth, till thou art sick with gold, even to plethora. Thy bags run over with the spoils of usury, thy veins are glutted with the blood of prodigals and gamblers.

Sheva. I have enough; something perhaps to spare.

Char. And I have nothing, nothing to spare, but miseries, with which my measure overflows. By heaven, it racks my soul, to think that those beloved sufferers should want, and this thing so abundant! [*Aside.*] Now, *Sheva*, now, if you and I were out of sight of man, benighted in some desert, wild as my thoughts, naked as my fortune, should you not tremble?

Sheva. What should I tremble for?—You could not harm a poor defenceless aged man.

Char. Indeed, indeed, I could not harm you, *Sheva*, whilst I retained my senses.

Sheva. Sorrow disturbs them: yes, yes, it is sorrow. Ah me! ah me! poor *Sheva* in his time has been driven mad with sorrow.—'Tis a hard world.

Char. Sir, I have done you wrong. You pity me, I'm sure you do: those tones could never proceed but from a feeling heart.

Sheva. Try me, touch me; I am not made of marble.

Char. No, on my life you are not.

Sheva. Nor yet of gold extorted from the prodigal: I am no shark to prey upon mankind. What I have got, I have got by little and little, working hard and pinching my own bowels.—I could say something: it is in my thoughts; but no, I will not say it here. This is the house of trade; that is not to my purpose. Come home with me, so please you; 'tis but a little walk, and you shall see what I have shown to no man—*Sheva's* real heart: I do not carry it in my hand. Come, I pray you, come along. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Mrs. Ratcliffe's Lodgings.*

Enter ELIZA RATCLIFFE.

Eliza. Oh, happy me! possessed of all my heart delights in; and miserable me, for having ruined what I love. Alas! poor *Bertram*, fond to desperation, generous to thy destruction!—Why then did I marry? Wherefore did I suffer him to be the victim of fatal passion? What power perverted understanding, heart, humanity? What power, but that which can do all things, good or ill, make virtue, and unmake it, animate our courage, and extinguish it?—Love is at once my crime and my excuse. Good heavens! my mother.

Enter MRS. RATCLIFFE.—*Eliza* takes her hand and kisses it.

Mrs. R. *Eliza*! child! what means this more than usual agitation?

Eliza. Is it then more than usual?

Mrs. R. You weep.

Eliza. Do I? 'Tis natural, when I contemplate a face so dear and so decayed, furrowed with cares

and sorrows for my sake.—Ah! my dear mother, you have loved me much too well.

Mrs. R. My darling, can that be, seeing I love your brother also? You share my heart between you.

Eliza. Give all to him; he has deserved it better.

Mrs. R. Heaven bless him in the extent of his deservings! On him rests all our hope; to him we cling, as to the last dear relic of our wrecked nobility. But he's a man, *Eliza*, and endowed with strength and fortitude to struggle in the storm; we are weak, helpless women, and can do no more than suffer and submit.

Eliza. True; but there is a part allotted to the weakest, even to me; an humble one indeed, and easily performed, since nothing is required but to obey, to love you, and to honour you.

Mrs. R. And you have done it faithfully, my child.

Eliza. You think so, my dear mother; but your praise is my reproach.—Oh! had I now a crime upon my conscience, and should I kneel thus, and beg for pardon at your feet, what would you say?

Mrs. R. Astonishment might keep me silent for a while, but my first words would be to pity and forgive you.

Eliza. That I can err, this guilty hand will witness. Well may you start. That hand is *Bertram's*; and that ring, pledged at the altar, was put on by him this very morning: I am *Bertram's* wife.

Mrs. R. Rise, quit this supplicating posture, till you find yourself in the presence of some person less disposed to pardon you than I am.

Eliza. How mild is that rebuke! how merciful! Your eye, like nature's, penetrates my heart; you see it weak as woman's resolution is—impassioned, not impure; conquered, but not corrupted.

Mrs. R. I see myself reflected in my child. Justice demands a censure; conscious recollection checks me from pronouncing it; but you have a brother, whose high soaring spirit will not brook clandestine marriages: your husband has a father of another spirit, as I fear. Alas! my child, betwixt the lofty and the low, you may steer well to keep a steady course.

Eliza. I see my danger; and though *Bertram's* ardour painted it in fainter colours than its true complexion may demand, yet I should hope the nature of a father cannot be so stern as never to forgive a choice that disappoints; but, let me hope, does not disgrace him.

Mrs. R. The name of *Ratcliffe* cannot. A daughter of your house, in better days, would hardly have advanced his knighthood higher than her foot-cloth.

Eliza. Ay, madam; but the pride of birth does but add stings to poverty. We must forget those days.

Mrs. R. Your father did not.

Eliza. Ah! my father!—

Mrs. R. Your brother never will.

Eliza. Yet he is humble for our sakes. Think what he does. Good heavens, my husband's father's clerk! Dear madam, tell me why he did not rather go where his courage called him, where his person would have graced the colours that he carried?

Mrs. R. Child, child, what colours? Surely you forget the interdiction of a father barred him from that service.

Eliza. Alas, alas!

Mrs. R. The bread would choke him that he earned under a father's curse.

Eliza. We have bled for our opinions, and we have starved for them; the axe, the sword, and poverty, have made sad havoc with our family: 'tis time we were at peace. The world is now before us: on this hour depends the fate of all perhaps that are to come. Frederick is with his father; he is determined to avow his marriage, and to meet the consequences. I never saw Sir Stephen, and have nothing but conjecture to direct me; I tremble for the event.

Mrs. R. 'Tis a distressful interim; and it is now the hour when I expect your brother.

Eliza. Oh! that is worse than all; for pity's sake hide me from him till Frederick returns: let me retire.

Mrs. R. Come, then, my child! I know not what it is, but something whispers me, that all will yet be well.

Eliza. Ten thousand blessings on you for that cheering hope: how my heart bounds to embrace it! 'Tis an auspicious omen, and I hail it like the voice of inspiration. *[Exit.]*

SCENE II.—Sheva's House.

Enter DORCAS.

Dor. Why, Jabal! I say, Jabal! Where are you, sluggard?

Enter JABAL.

Jabal. Here am I, Mother Dorcas! Oh! what a starving star was I born under, to be the rich Jew's poor servant. No rest, no peace, whilst you are awake. Lud-a-mercy! if you did but know how your pipe echoes in this empty house!

Dor. Child! child! you must not think to be idle here.

Jabal. What would you have me do? Brush the bare walls for a breakfast? A spider could not make a meal upon them.

Dor. I warrant thou hast filled thy belly, cormorant.

Jabal. I have not had a bellyful since I belonged to you. You take care there shall be no fire in the kitchen; master provides no prog upon the shelf; so, between you both, I have plenty of nothing but cold and hunger.

Dor. Hunger, indeed! How should thy stomach ever be filled, when there is no bottom to it? 'tis like the Dead Sea, fathomless.

Jabal. 'Tis like the Dead Sea so far, that neither fish nor flesh are to be found within it.

Dor. Sirrah! you have a better master than you think for. It is unknown the charities he gives away.

Jabal. You're right, it is unknown; at least I never found the secret out. If it is charity to keep an empty cupboard, he has that to boast of: the very rats would run away from such a caterer. If it is charity to clothe the naked, here is a sample of it; examine this old drab; you may count the threads without spectacles; a spider's web is a warm blanket to it. If it is charity to feed the hungry, I have an empty stomach at his service to which his charity, at this present moment, would be very seasonable.

Dor. You must mortify your carnal appetites; how often shall I teach you that lesson?

Jabal. Every time I set eyes upon you.

Dor. Haven't you the credit of belonging to one of the richest men in the city of London?

Jabal. I wish I was turnspit to the poorest cook's-shop instead. Oh! if my master had but fixed his

abode at Pye-Corner or Pudding-Laue, or Fish-Street-Hill, or any of those savoury places! What am I the fatter for the empty dignity of Duke's-Place? I had rather be a miser's heir than a miser's servant.

Dor. And who knows what may happen? Master has not a relation I ever heard of in the universal world.

Jabal. No, he has starved them all out. A chameleon could not live with him: he would grudge him even the air he feeds on.

Dor. For shame, slanderer! His good deeds will shine out in time.

Jabal. I sha'n't stand in their light; they may shine through me, for I am grown transparent in his service. Had not he like to have been torn to pieces 't'other day by the mob, for whipping a starved cat out of his area.

Dor. And whose fault was that but thine, ungracious boy, for putting it there? I am sure I have cause to bless the gentleman that saved him. But, hush! here comes my good master; and, as I live, the very gentleman with him. Ah! then I guess what is going forward.

Enter SHEVA and CHARLES RATCLIFFE.

Sheva. So, so, so! What's here to do with you? Why are you not both at your work?—Dorcas, a cup of cold water—I am very thirsty. *[Exit DORCAS.]*

Jabal. Are you not rather hungry too, sir?

Sheva. Hold your tongue, puppy! Get about your business: and, here; take my hat, clean it carefully; but mind you do not brush it; that will wear off the nap.

Jabal. The nap, indeed! There is no shelter for a flea. *[Exit.]*

Sheva. Aha! I am tired. I beg your pardon, Mr. Ratcliffe. I am an old man. Sit you down, I pray you, sit you down, and we will talk a little. *[DORCAS brings a glass of water.]* So, so, that is right. Water is good.—Fie upon you, Dorcas; why do you not offer the glass to my guest before me?

Dor. Lord love him! I'd give him wine, if I had it.

Sheva. No, no, it is good water; it is better than wine: wine is heating, water is cooling; wine costs monies, water comes for nothing. Your good health, sir. Oh! 'tis delicious, it is satisfying: I was very empty before; my stomach was craving, now I am quite content. Go your ways, Dorcas; go your ways. *[Exit DORCAS.]* Sir, I have nothing to ask you to but that water, which you would not drink: 'twas very good water, notwithstanding. Ah! Mr. Ratcliffe, I must be very saving now: I must pinch close.

Char. For what? Are you not rich enough to allow yourself the common necessities of life?

Sheva. Oh, yes, oh, yes! I am rich to be sure. Mercy on me, what a world of monies should I now have, if I had no pity in my heart! But it melts and melts, or else—Oh! dear me, what a heap it would have been!

Char. Pardon me, sir, if I say there are some seeming contradictions in your character, which I cannot reconcile. You give away your money, it should seem, with the generosity of a prince, and I hear you lament over it in the language of a miser.

Sheva. That is true, that is very true: I love my monies, I do love them dearly; but I love my fellow-creatures a little better.

Char. Seeing you are so charitable to others, why then can you not spare a little for yourself?

Sheva. Because I am angry with myself for being such a baby, a child, a chicken. Your people do not love me, what business have I to love your people? I am a Jew; my fathers, up to Abraham, all were Jews. Merciless mankind, how you have persecuted them! My family is all gone, it is extinct, my very name will vanish out of memory when I am dead. I pray you pardon me! I'm very old, and apt to weep; I pray you pardon me.

Char. I am more disposed to subscribe to your tears than to find fault with them.

Sheva. Well, well, well! 'tis natural for me to weep, when I reflect upon their sufferings and my own. Sir, you shall know—but I won't tell you my sad story: you are young and tender-hearted. It is all written down—you shall find it with my papers at my death.

Char. Sir! at your death?

Sheva. Yes, sure, I must die some time or other: though you have saved my life once, you cannot save it always. I did tell you, Mr. Ratcliffe, I would shew you my heart. Sir, it is a heart to do you all possible good whilst I live, and to pay you the debt of gratitude when I die. I believe it is the only one I owe to the pure benevolence of my fellow-creatures.

Char. I am sorry you have found mankind so ungrateful.

Sheva. Not so, not so; I might, perhaps, have found them grateful, if I had let them know their benefactor. I did relieve their wants, but I did not court their thanks: they did eat my bread, and hooted at me for a miser.

Enter JABAL.

Jabal. A gentleman, who says his name is Bertram, waits to speak with you. I fancy he comes to borrow money, for he looks wondrous melancholy.

Sheva. Hold your tongue, knave; what is it to you what he comes for?

Jabal. I am sure he does not come for a dinner, for he has not brought it with him.

Sheva. I pray you, Mr. Ratcliffe, pass out that way. I would not have you meet.—Admit Mr. Bertram. [*Exeunt JABAL and CHARLES.*]

Enter FREDERICK.

You are welcome, Mr. Bertram: our business may be quickly despatched. You want three hundred pounds: I have made shift to scrape that sum together, and it is ready for you.

Fred. Alas, *Sheva*! since last I saw you I am so totally undone, that it would now be a robbery to take your money. My father has expelled me from his house.

Sheva. Why? for what cause?

Fred. I have married—

Sheva. Well, that is natural enough.

Fred. Married without his knowledge.

Sheva. So did he without your's. What besides?

Fred. Married a wife without a farthing.

Sheva. Ah! that is very silly, I must say.

Fred. You could not say so, did you know the lady.

Sheva. That may be; but I do not know the lady: you have not named her to me.

Fred. The sister of Charles Ratcliffe.

Sheva. Ah! to Miss Ratcliffe? Is it so? And she is good and lovely, but she has no monies; and that has made your fader very angry with you?

Fred. Furious, irreconcilable.

Sheva. Why, truly, monies is a good thing; and

your fader is not the only man in England that does think so. I confess I'm very much of his mind in respect of monies.

Fred. I know you are; therefore keep your money, and good morning to you.

Sheva. Hold, be not so hasty! If I do love my monies, it may be because I have it in my power to tender them to you.

Fred. But I have said I never can repay you, whilst you are in this world.

Sheva. Perhaps I shall be content to be repaid when I am out of it. I believe I have a pretty many *post obits* of that sort upon the file.

Fred. I do not rightly understand you.

Sheva. Then, pray you, have a little patience till I'm better understood.—Sir Stephen had a match for you in view?

Fred. He had.

Sheva. What was the lady's fortune?

Fred. Ten thousand pounds.

Sheva. That's a good round sum; but you did not love her, and you do love your wife?

Fred. As dearly as you love your money.

Sheva. A little better, we will hope; for I do lend my monies to my friend. For instance, take these bills; three hundred pounds. What ails you?—They are good bills, they are bank—oh! that I had a sack full of them! Come, come, I pray you, take them. They will hire you very pretty lodging, and you will be very happy with your pretty wife—I pray you take them. Why will you be so hard with a poor Jew, as to refuse him a good bargain, when you know he loves to lay his monies out to profit and advantage?

Fred. Are you in earnest? You astonish me.

Sheva. I am a little astonished too, for I did never see a man so backward to take money: you are not like your fader. I am afraid you are a little proud.

Fred. You shall not say so: I accept your generous tender.

Sheva. I wish it was ten thousand pounds, then your good fader would be well content.

Fred. Yes; of two equal fortunes, I believe he would be good enough to let me take my choice.

Sheva. Oh! that is very kind: he would give you the preference when he had none himself.

Fred. Just so; but what acknowledgment shall I give you for these bills?

Sheva. None, none; I do acknowledge them myself with very great pleasure in serving you, and no small pains in parting from them. I pray you, make yourself and pretty wife comfortable with the monies, and I will comfort myself, as well as I can, without them. Ah! poor *Sheva*! when thou art a beggar-man, who will take pity of thee?—Well, well, no matter! Now I must take a little walk about my business—I pray you pardon my unpoliteness.

Fred. No apology: I am gone. Farewell, *Sheva*! Thou a miser! thou art a prince!

Sheva. *Jabal*! open the door.

Enter JABAL.

Jabal. 'Tis done, sir.

Sheva. How now, sirrah! You was listening at the key-hole?

Jabal. Not I, sir; I was only oiling the lock: you love to have your bolts slip easily.

Sheva. You are a jackanapes; I shall slip you out of my door, by-and-by. [*Exit.*]

Jabal. You may slip me through the crack of it, if I staid much longer with you.—But, to be sure, I

did listen, that is the truth of it. Hip! Holloa! Mother Dorcas!

Enter DORCAS.

Oh! I am glad you are in the way. Lend me your one ear, and I'll tell you a secret.

Dor. Let us hear it, Jabal, I love a secret. Come on this side of me.

Jabal. That's true; your left ear. Well, do you hear me? I have made a discovery.

Dor. I have no objection to a discovery. Out with it.

Jabal. Mother Dorcas, I have discovered that our old master is no more a miser than I am.

Dor. I told you so.

Jabal. So you did, but that's not all: I have found out, besides, that he is no Hebrew, no more a Jew than Julius Cæsar; for to my certain knowledge he gives away his money by handfuls to the consumers of hog's flesh.

Dor. He is merciful to all mankind.

Jabal. Yes, and to all sheep and oxen, lambs, and calves; for he will not suffer us to touch a morsel of their flesh. Now, because he lives without food, that's no reason I should starve for want of eating.—Oh, Mother Dorcas! 'tis untold what terrible and abominable temptations I struggle with.

Dor. How are you tempted, child? Tell me what it is that moves you.

Jabal. Why, 'tis the devil himself, in the shape of a Bologna sausage. Gracious! how my mouth did water, as I saw a string of them dangling from the pent-house of an oilman's shop! The fellow would have persuaded me they were made of asses' flesh.—Oh! if I could have believed him!

Dor. Oh! horrible! you must not touch the unclean beast.

Jabal. No, to be sure; our people have never tasted bacon, since they came out of the land of Ham.

Dor. Jabal, Jabal, what an escape you have had.

Jabal. So had the sausages, for my teeth quivered to be at them.

Dor. Come, my good lad, thou shalt be recompensed for thy self-denial: I have an egg for thee in the kitchen.

Jabal. I hope it is an ostrich's, for I am mortally sharp set. Oh! mother, I have a thought in my head—I will give old master warning, and seek my fortune elsewhere.

Dor. Where will you seek it?

Jabal. Where there is plenty of prog, be assured.—I will go upon the stage and turn actor; there is a great many eating parts, and I hope to fill them all. I spent sixpence to'other night upon a farce, when there was a notable fine leg of lamb served up before the audience. Oh, how I did long to be the attorney! I won't say so many good things would have come out of my mouth, but a pretty many more would have gone into it.

Dor. How you ramble, sirrah! What meagrimms you have in your head!

Jabal. Emptiness breeds them.—Mercy, how glad I should be, to see it written down in my part—"Enter Jabal with a roast chicken."

Dor. Come, come; homelier fare must content you.—Let us light the lamp, and boil our egg.

Jabal. What! is it between us? One egg, and two to eat it!

Dor. Well, I care not if I spend sixpence for a treat, so thou wilt be sociable and merry when it is over.

Jabal. Agreed:—only give me good cheer for my dinner, and we will have good humour for the desert. *[Exit.]*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—Mrs. Ratcliffe's Lodgings.

Enter Mrs. RATCLIFFE and FREDERICK.

Fred. Can you forgive me? Has my lovely advocate sued out my pardon, and may I now invoke a blessing on my love and me?

Mrs. R. Heaven in its bounty bless you both!—May all good fortune follow you, all comforts light upon you, and love and happiness ever subsist between you!

Fred. Such piety can never pray in vain. Where is Eliza?

Mrs. R. She does not know you are here: shall I call her?

Fred. Not yet. I have a little sum, and you must be our banker: Charles is too proud to touch it: his spirit is of a pitch too high to stoop to worldly matters. We have been warm and cordial friends; how we may fare as brothers, heaven only knows: I have some fears.

Mrs. R. Eliza is impressed with the same apprehensions; but if Sir Stephen acquiesce, all will be well. I hope this money is a token of his forgiveness.

Fred. 'Twill serve to set us out. I have provided lodgings more commodious. I hope you will permit Eliza to remove; and I make further suit, that you will have the goodness to accompany her.

Mrs. R. Well; but you do not answer to my question of the money. Haven't you seen your father?

Fred. I have seen him.

Mrs. R. And explained to him—

Fred. I have.

Mrs. R. Well, what says he?

Fred. If he had said what would have done him honour, and given ease to my Eliza's mother, I should not have waited for your question. But nature must have time to work: I have only stirred the dregs. May I now see Eliza? There is a cloud on my heart, also, which only her bright presence can dispel.

Mrs. R. Ah, sir! she can be only bright henceforward by reflection; her sunshine must be caught from yours? However, I will send her to you. *[Exit.]*

Fred. Oh! that my father was now standing by me to behold her, and confess how irresistible she is!

Enter ELIZA.

Oh! my soul's joy, my treasure, my Eliza!

[Embracing her.]

Eliza. Frederick, what tidings?

Fred. None but of love, increasing with each moment; glowing with every beam that those soft eyes diffuse, and heightened into rapture by those charms, those graces, that each look, word, motion, spread around you.

Eliza. These are fond, flattering words, but where's the consolation that you would have given me, had you brought back a pardon from your father? This ardour only proves, that you had too much love, and I too little generosity

Fred. Take courage, Eliza! I have not lost the field, only prolonged the fight: I have but skirmished with him yet; he has not felt my strength. Let me set you in sight, and if there is a callous in his heart, (which I won't say there is,) your eyes, my charmer, will refine and melt it.

Eliza. My eyes have injured him too much already. Oh! you rash man, why did you take such pains to be undone? Why lull me into dreams of happiness, till I forgot that I was poor and wretched? Deceiver of yourself and me, I thought we trod on flowers, and never spied the precipice behind you.

Fred. I see no precipice: I fear none.

Eliza. Hear me, my Frederick; let love stand off a while, and give your ear to reason. 'Tis fit, that you should know the heart for which you have risked so much. Our marriage was a rash one; be that my witness how I loved you, for never till this day, had I the recollection of one act that weighed upon my conscience, or reproached me with the sin of disobedience in the slightest instance. But, though I wanted firmness to oppose your love, I am not void of courage to prevent your ruin. Have patience! hear me out. Sir Stephen Bertram wished for money; I have none to give him. The fortune of my house is crushed, the spirit yet survives, even in me, the weakest, and, perhaps, the humblest of the name: but I resist contempt, and if he spurns my poverty, I have a sure resource that shall compel him to applaud my spirit.

Fred. What do you mean? Your looks, your language terrify me.

Eliza. Oh! I have loved you far too well to trifle. I will convince the world 'twas not by interest my heart was gained. 'Twas not to keep off want, to live at ease, and make the noble relics of my family retainers of his charity, I married to Sir Stephen Bertram's son; it was with worthier, purer views, to share his thoughts, unite my heart to his, and make his happiness my own. These sentiments are my inheritance; if these will not suffice for his ambition, they will teach me how to act becoming of my birth, under the imputation of his son's seducer.

Fred. Hence with that word! it is a profanation to your lips. Was ever man so blessed, so honoured, so exalted, as I am! If pride will not see it, if avarice cannot feel it, is that a reason why humility and gratitude should not be blest with enjoyment of it!

Re-enter Mrs. RATCLIFFE.

Mrs. R. Eliza, your brother is come.

Eliza. Leave me, I beseech you, Frederick; leave me! Let me confer with him alone; there's no way else to pacify him.

Mrs. R. Come, let us yield to her request: I do believe she's right.

[Exeunt Mrs. RATCLIFFE and FREDERICK.]

Enter CHARLES.

Char. Alone! How is my dear Eliza? You look pale, my love. Have you been out, or are you going out? Has anything occurred? You are more dressed than usual.

Eliza. Am I? No, sure; you have seen this dress before. I have nothing new.

Char. I can't say quite as much, for I have a new livelihood to seek. Sir Stephen has discharged me.

Eliza. Oh! lie upon him!

Char. No, no! the man is worldly wise; no

more. He has a son, Eliza; and he has found out I have a sister. Who can blame him? Beauty is a dangerous thing when honour does not guard it. But I know what my Eliza is; and, therefore, to confute suspicion, and put this careful merchant at his ease, we will cut short the question, and retire from London.

Eliza. Where must we go?

Char. Far enough off for his repose, be sure. I am sorry on account of Frederick, for I love him; but he has been too frequent in his visits here, and he knows I think so. He will be happier for our parting.

Eliza. I doubt that. Is your resolution taken?

Char. Irrecoverable. Northward is my point.—Where is my mother? I would speak with her.

Eliza. Stay! Hear your sister first.

Char. What ails you? What is coming? Why do you tremble?

Eliza. Oh, Charles! *[Weeps and hides her face]*

Char. What is it? speak!

Eliza. I am the wife of Frederick.

Char. Heaven and good angels forbid it!

Eliza. Heaven and good angels, as I hope, have witnessed it.

Char. Rash girl! you have undone him. Torn asunder nature's strongest tie; set father against son. When was the name of Ratcliffe dishonoured until now? I've done with you.

Eliza. Charles! Brother! Benefactor! Is there yet a name more tender, an appeal more sacred? Did hard fortune leave me only one protector, one dear friend! and will not he forgive me? Take me, then, and hurl me to the ground, as one not worth preserving. *[Throws herself on his neck.]*

Char. Wretched Eliza! did I ever till this moment meet your embrace with coldness? Have I not loved you, heaven and earth how much! How then have I deserved to be dishonoured by you, and to have my name stamped as the joint seducer of a fond, weak youth, who will have cause to execrate the hour when first he called me friend?

Eliza. Strike me not to the heart with your reproaches, but in pity hear me. I am not lightly-minded, not ignobly taught how to distinguish honour, for I am your sister, and have a saint that does not blush to call me daughter: she has pronounced my pardon.

Char. She is all pity: sorrow has melted her fond heart to weakness.

Eliza. And can you find no excuse for mine? What have I known but sorrow, except gratitude to you, and love to Frederick? Cannot you allow for a fond, sorrow-melted heart in me as well as in my mother? You said but now, that as a friend you loved him: I love him as a friend; but woman's friendship to your sex, when years, affections, sentiments so harmonize, as Frederick's with mine, how long will it retain its station in two hearts before it draws them closer, and unites them as you see!

Char. We'll have no more of this, Eliza. There is a weakness lurking at my heart, that warns me how I trust myself too far: you have made wreck of your own honour, wretched girl; I may still rescue mine. *[Exit.]*

Enter FREDERICK and Mrs. RATCLIFFE.

Mrs. R. Eliza! my dear child! how has it passed?

Fred. It is too plain how it has passed. She is in tears, pale, and trembling. By my soul, it is too much!

Eliza. Hush! hush! be still.

Fred. She'll faint; by heavens, she'll faint. Oh! monstrous cruelty; why did I leave her? why did you persuade me?

Eliza. Give me your arm. Lead me into the other room; I shall recover there, if you will be patient.
[*Ereunt.*]

SCENE II.—Sir Stephen Bertram's House.

Enter Sir STEPHEN BERTRAM and SAUNDERS.

Sir S. Well, Saunders, what news have you been able to collect of my undutiful son?

Saun. I have not seen Mr. Bertram, but I am told he has settled himself in very handsome lodgings, and is gone to remove his lady to them.

Sir S. His lady, do you call her? Can you find no fitter term? Where should he get the means to settle? He was not furnished with them by me; who else will do it? If he attempts to raise money upon expectancies, be it at their peril who are fools enough to trust him: no prudent man will be his bubble. If I were sure that was his practice, I should hold it matter of conscience to advertise against his debts.

Saun. Perhaps there may be some persons in the world, who think you will not always hold out against an only son.

Sir S. Then let those persons smart for their opinion. They little know the feelings of an injured father; they cannot calculate my hopes, my disappointments, my regret? He might have had a lady with an ample fortune. A wife without a shilling is—but what avails complaint? Could you learn nothing further, who supplies him, who holds him up?

Saun. I hear that he had money of your broker, Sheva.

Sir S. That must be false intelligence. He will as soon make gold by transmutation, as wring it from the gripe of that old usurer. No, no; Sheva is too wary, too much a Jew, to help him with a shilling.

Saun. Yet I was so informed by his own servant, Jabal. He says Mr. Bertram came to old Sheva's house by appointment; that he overheard their whole conversation, in which your son very honourably stated* the utter ruin your displeasure had brought upon him, and would have refused the money, but that old Sheva forced it upon him.

Sir S. It mocks all belief; it only proves, that Sheva, the most inveterate miser in existence, has a fellow Jew for his servant, one of the completest liars in creation.

Saun. I am apt to give him credit for the fact, notwithstanding.

Sir S. Then give me leave to say, you have more faith than most men living. Was I to give so much credit, Mr. Saunders, I should soon stop.

Saun. I am not quite so fixed in my persuasion of old Sheva's character as you are. In his dealings, all the world knows he is punctually honest; no man's character stands higher in the Alley; and his servant tells me, though he starves himself, he is secretly very charitable to others.

Sir S. Yes, this you may believe, if you are disposed to take one Jew's word for another Jew's character. I am obstinate against both; and if he has supplied the money, as I am sure it must be on usurious principles, as soon as ever I have the old miser in my reach, I will wring either the truth from his lips, or the life out of his carcase.

Enter SHEVA.

Sheva. How does my worthy master? I am your very humble servant, goot Sir Stephen Bertram. I have a little private business to impart to you, with your goot leave, and if your leisure serves.

Sir S. Leave us, if you please. [*Exit SAUNDERS.*]

Sheva. Aha! I am very much fatigued. There is great thong and press in the offices at the Bank, and I am aged and feeble.

Sir S. Hold, sir! Before I welcome you within these doors, or suffer you to sit down in my presence, I demand to know, explicitly, and without prevarication, if you have furnished my son with money secretly, and without my leave?

Sheva. If I do lend, ought not I to lend it in secret? If I do not ask your leave, Sir Stephen, may I not dispose of my own monies according to my own liking? But if it is a crime, I do wish to ask you who is my accuser; that, I believe, is justice everywhere; and in your happy country I do think it is law likewise.

Sir S. Very well, sir; you shall have both law and justice. The information comes from your own servant, Jabal. Can you controvert it?

Sheva. I do presume to say, my servant ought not to report his master's secrets; but I will not say he has not spoken the truth.

Sir S. Then you confess the fact.

Sheva. I humbly think there is no call for that: you have the information from my footboy. I do not deny it.

Sir S. And the sum—

Sheva. I do not talk of the sum, Sir Stephen; that is not my practice: neither, under favour, is my footboy my cashier. If he be a knave, and listen at my key-hole, the more shame his; I am not in the fault.

Sir S. Not in the fault! Wretch, miser, usurer! You never yet let loose a single guinea from your gripe, but with a view of doubling it at the return. I know what you are.

Sheva. Indeed! 'tis more than I will say of myself. I pray you, goot Sir Stephen, take a little time to know my heart before you rob me of my reputation. I am a Jew, a poor defenceless Jew; that is enough to make me miser, usurer. Alas! I cannot help it.

Sir S. No matter: you are caught in your own trap. I tell you now, my son is ruined, disinherited, undone. One consolation is, that you have lost your money.

Sheva. If that be a consolation you are very welcome to it. If my monies is lost, my motives are not.

Sir S. I'll never pay one farthing of his debts. He has offended me for life; refused a lady with ten thousand pounds, and married a poor miss without a doit.

Sheva. Yes, I do understand your son is married.

Sir S. Do you so? By the same token I understand you to be a villain.

Sheva. Aha! that is a very bad word. Villain! I did never think to hear that word from one who says he knows me. I pray you, now, permit me to speak to you a word or two in my own defence. I have done a great deal of business for you, Sir Stephen; have put a pretty deal of monies in your pocket by my pains and labours; I did never wrong you of one sixpence in my life; I was content with my lawful commission; how can I be a villain?

Sir S. Do you not uphold the son against the father?

Sheva. I do uphold the son, but not against the fader: it is not natural to suppose the oppressor and fader one and the same person. I did see your son struck down to the ground with sorrow, cut to the heart: I did not stop to ask whose hand had laid him low; I gave him mine, and raised him up.

Sir S. You! you to talk of charity?

Sheva. I do not talk of it: I feel it.

Sir S. What claim have you to generosity, humanity, or any manly virtue? Which of your money-making tribe ever had sense of pity? Shew me the terms on which you have lent this money, if you dare! Exhibit the dark deed, by which you have meshed your victim in the snares of usury; but be assured, I'll drag you to the light, and publish your base dealings to the world.

[Catches him by the sleeve.]

Sheva. Take your hand from my coat; my coat and I are very old, and pretty well worn out together. There, there! be patient. Moderate your passions, and you shall see my terms: they are in little compass: fair dealings may be comprised in few words.

Sir S. If they are fair, produce them.

Sheva. Let me see, let me see! Ah! poor Sheva! I do so tremble, I can hardly hold my papers. So, so! Now I am right. Ah! here it is.

Sir S. Let me see it.

Sheva. Take it. [Gives a paper.] Do you not see it now? Have you cast your eye over it? Is it not right? I am no more than broker, look you. If there is a mistake, point it out, and I will correct it.

Sir S. [Reads.] Ten thousand pounds, invested in the three per cents, money of Eliza, late Ratcliffe, now Bertram.

Sheva. Even so. A pretty tolerable fortune for a poor disinherited son, not worth one penny.

Sir S. I'm thunderstruck!

Sheva. Are you so? I was struck too, but not by thunder. And what has Sheva done to be called villain? I am a Jew, what then? Is that a reason none of my tribe should have a sense of pity? You have no great deal of pity yourself, but I do know many noble British merchants that abound in pity, therefore I do not abuse your tribe.

Sir S. I am confounded and ashamed; I see my fault, and most sincerely ask your pardon.

Sheva. Goot lack, goot lack! that is too much. I pray you, goot Sir Stephen, say no more; you'll bring the blush upon my cheek, if you demean yourself so far to a poor Jew, who is your very humble servant to command.

Sir S. Did my son know Miss Ratcliffe had this fortune?

Sheva. When ladies are so handsome, and so goot, no generous man will ask about their fortune.

Sir S. 'Tis plain I was not that generous man.

Sheva. No, no; you did ask about nothing else.

Sir S. But how, in the name of wonder, did she come by it?

Sheva. If you did give me money to buy stock, would you not be much offended were I to ask you how you came by it?

Sir S. Her brother was my clerk. I did not think he had a shilling in the world.

Sheva. And yet you turned him upon the world, where he has found a great many shillings. The world, you see, was the better master of the two. Well, Sir Stephen, I will humbly take my leave.

You wished your son to marry a lady with ten thousand pounds; he has exactly fulfilled your wishes: I do presume you will not think it necessary to turn him out of doors, and disinherit him for that.

Sir S. Go on, I merit your reproof. I shall henceforward be ashamed to look you or my son in the face.

Sheva. To look me in the face is to see nothing of my heart; to look upon your son, and not to love him, I should have thought had been impossible. Sir Stephen, I am your very humble servant.

Sir S. Farewell, friend Sheva! Can you forgive me?

Sheva. I can forgive my enemy; much more my friend. [Exeunt.]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Chamber.

Enter Sir STEPHEN BERTRAM and SAUNDERS.

Sir S. I am wrong, Saunders, totally wrong, in the manner I have resented my son's marriage.

Saun. I am happy to hear you say so. I flattered myself you would not hold out long against a worthy son. It is not in the nature of a father to resent so deeply.

Sir S. Very true, Saunders, very true; my heart is not a hard one; but the lady he has married has ten thousand pounds for her fortune.

Saun. Oh! that indeed makes all the difference in life. This is a mollifying circumstance, I confess.

Sir S. I know not how she came by it. It seems to be the work of magic; but so it surely is; I saw the stock in Sheva's hands.

Saun. Well, sir, you could not have it from better hands than from the author himself.

Sir S. How! What! from Sheva! Impossible! Ratcliffe is of a great family. Some sudden wind-fall; some relation dead. You'll see him in mourning the next time you meet.

Saun. He has not put it on yet, for I left him this minute in the counting-house: he is waiting to speak with you.

Sir S. So, so, so! Now then the news will come out. But, pr'ythee, don't let the gentleman wait. We must make up for past slights by double civility. Pray inform Mr. Ratcliffe I shall be most happy to receive his commands.

Saun. O, money! money! what a qualifier thou art! [Exit.]

Sir S. Now I shall be curious to see how this young man will carry himself in prosperity. Had I but staid one day longer without discharging him, I could have met him with a better face.

Enter CHARLES RATCLIFFE.

Char. Sir Stephen Bertram, I shall not engross much of your time. My business will be despatched in a very few words.

Sir S. Whatever commands you may have for me, Mr. Ratcliffe, I am perfectly at your service.

Char. I don't doubt it, sir; but I shall not put your spirit to any great trial. My explanation will not be a hostile one, unless you choose to understand it as such.

Sir S. Far be it from me to wish it. Good terms

between near connexions, you know, sir, should always be cultivated

Char. You are pleased to be facetious; but your irony will not put me by from telling you, that your son's connexion with my family is no match of my making. If my sister has dishonoured herself, it behoves me to say, and to say it on my solemn word, that the whole transaction was kept perfectly secret from me, and has received every mark of my displeasure and resentment that I, as yet, had an opportunity to give it.

Sir S. Proud as Lucifer himself! [*Aside.*] Well, sir, if you are dissatisfied with the match, I can only say I am not in the fault of it: but when you say your sister is dishonoured, I protest I do not perfectly understand you; nor did I quite expect such an expression from you.

Char. Probably you did not; your studies, perhaps, have laid more in the book of accounts than in the book of honour.

Sir S. You are very high, sir; I am afraid your unexpected good fortune has rather intoxicated you.

Char. No, sir; the best good fortune I have known this day, that which discharged me from your connexion; not this which unwillingly imposes it upon me.

Sir S. Very well, Mr. Ratcliffe. It was not with this sort of conversation I was prepared to entertain you; the sooner we put an end to it the better: only this I must take leave to tell you, that the fortune of the family into which your sister has married, is by no means overbalanced by the fortune she has brought into it.

Char. Ay, now your heart's come out: that mercenary taunt is all you have to say. But had my wish prevailed, you never should have had it in your power to utter Ratcliffe's name, without a blush for your unwarranted suspicions of his honour.

[*Erit.*]

Sir S. He's mad; his head is turned: prosperity has overset him. If the sister of the same blood is provided with no better brains, poor Frederick has made a precious bargain. We shall breed candidates for Bedlam.

[*Erit.*]

SCENE II.—Sheva's House.

Enter SHEVA.

Sheva. Aha! Very goot! very goot! I am at home. Now I will sit down in my own parlour, and not ask leave of anybody. I did not think I could have given so large a sum away, and yet outlived it; but I am pretty well. There is but one man in the world poorer than he was, and he is going out of it: and there is a couple, at least, a great deal happier, and they are coming into it. Well, well! that is two for one,—cent per cent, so I have made a pretty goot bargain. Now I will ring my bell, and order my dinner: yes, yes, I will eat my dinner, for I am hungry. [*Sits.—Rings.*]

Enter JABAL.

Oh! you knave! Oh! you picklock! how dare you listen at my door, and hear my secrets? Sirrah, I will have your ears nailed to it!—Don't you speak, don't you speak: you will make me angry, and that will spoil my appetite. What have you got in the house for my repast?

Jabal. Plenty, as good luck will have it.

Sheva. Plenty, say you! What is it? Let me hear.

Jabal. One egg-shell, and the skins of three pota-

toes: shall I serve them up at once, or make two courses of them?

Sheva. How now, you jackanapes? One egg-shell is not thing goot for a hungry man. Have you left some of the potatoes in the skins?

Jabal. Not an atom; you may have the broth they were boiled in.

Sheva. You are a saucy knave, to make a joke of your master. Do you think I will keep a jack-pudding in my house like you, to listen at my key-hole, and betray my conversation? Why did you say I gave away my monies?

Jabal. What harm hid I do? Nobody, believed me.

Sheva. Go your ways, go your ways; you are not for my purpose—you are not fit to be trusted: you do let your idle tongue run away with you.

Jabal. That is because you won't employ my teeth.

Sheva. You do prate too much; you do chatter, and bring your poor master into great straits: I have been much maltreated and abused.

Jabal. Have you so? I wish to goodness I had been by.

Sheva. Sirrah! you wish you had been by, to hear your master abused!

Jabal. Yes; for I would have dealt the fellow that abused you, such a recompense in the fifth button, that my friend Mendoza should not have placed it better. D—n it! do you think I would stand by, and hear my master abused?

Sheva. Don't you swear, don't you swear? that is goot lad, but don't you swear.

Jabal. No, by the living —! though I may be starved in your service, I will die in your defence.

Sheva. Well, well; you are a merry knave. But my eyes do water a little: the air is sharp, and they are weak. Go your ways, go your ways;—send Dorcas to me. [*Erit JABAL.*] I cannot tell what ails my heart all this day long, it is so troublesome. I have spent ten thousand pounds to make it quiet; but there must be a little fraction more; I must give the poor knave something for his goodwill. Oh dear, oh dear! what will become of me?

Enter DORCAS.

So, so! Come hither, Dorcas. Why do you look sad? What ails you, girl? Why do you cry?

Dor. Because you are going to turn away Jabal. He is the kindest, willingest, good-naturedest soul alive; the house will be a dungeon without Jabal.

Sheva. Then tell him, 'tis at your request I let him stay in this dungeon. Say, that I was very angry with him, but that you pacified my anger.

Dor. Lord love your heart! that is so like you.

Sheva. Hark you, Dorcas; I will give you this piece of money to make the poor knave merry; but mind that you bestow it on him as your own little present, and promise not to say it comes from me.

Dor. Well; to be sure you do not give your money like other people. If ever I do a good turn, I take care the person I favour should know from whence it comes, that so he may have the pleasure of returning it.

Sheva. Well, Dorcas, you take your course, and I take mine. Now I will go and beg a bit of dinner of a friend. You are a very good housewife, Dorcas; you do keep an empty kitchen and a clean cupboard.

Dor. And whose fault is that? How many people are feasting abroad at your cost, whilst you have a famine at home?—But here comes your friend and neighbour, Mrs. Goodison; she will take care of you. [*Erit.*]

Enter Mrs. Goodison.

Mrs. G. Ah! my good sir, I perceive you are at your old sport; no smoke in your chimney—no cloth upon your table—full coffers, and an empty cupboard.

Sheva. No, no; my coffers are not full; I am very poor just now.

Mrs. G. Come, then, and partake with one whom your bounty has made rich.

Sheva. Do not talk of my bounty; I do never give away for bounty's sake. If pity wrings it from my heart, whether I will or not, then I do give: how can I help it?

Mrs. G. Well, sir, I can be silent, but I cannot forget. And now, if you will come and share my grateful meal, perhaps I can shew you one of the loveliest objects in creation—a beautiful and amiable young bride, who, with her husband and mother, is now my lodger. She was married this very morning to your friend, Sir Stephen Bertram's son, who, between you and me, has brought himself into sad trouble with his father by the match. But surely, if there is a woman upon earth worth a man's being ruined for, it must be this young creature.—So modest—so sweet-tempered—so engaging! Oh! that Sir Stephen had your heart!

Sheva. It might be inconvenient to him if he had: it is not kept for nothing, I assure you.

Mrs. G. You would not turn such a daughter-in-law from your doors.

Sheva. Nor will he, perhaps.

Mrs. G. Ah, sir! I know a little better: this poor young gentleman himself told me he was ruined. "But don't be afraid to take me into your house," added he, with a sigh that went to my heart; "I am provided with the means of doing justice to you, by a generous friend," shewing me a bank bill of one hundred pounds. Heaven bless the generous friend! quoth I; and at that moment I thought of you, my good Mr. Sheva, who rescued me from the like distress when my poor husband died.

Sheva. You may think of me, Mrs. Goodison; but I beg you will not speak of me in the hearing of your lodgers.

Mrs. G. Well, well, sir; if I must not speak, I must not. Yet a stranger thing came out in conversation with the mother of the bride, a very excellent lady, from whom I found out that she is the widow of that very gentleman we knew at Cadiz, by the name of Don Carlos only, and to whom, I believe, you think yourself under some obligations in your escape from that country.

Sheva. Mercies upon his heart! he was the preserver of my life! but for his charitable succour, this poor body would have fed the fires of an *Auto da fe*. Is it possible Mrs. Ratcliffe is the widow of my benefactor?

Mrs. G. Most certain that she is, which you may soon be convinced of; but I perceive you know the lady's name.

Sheva. Did you not name the lady yourself?

Mrs. G. No, on my word. Ah, sir! you are fairly caught; you have betrayed yourself. Ill deeds, they say, will come to light, and so will good ones, it should seem.

Sheva. Hold your tongue, hold your tongue; you forget that I am fasting, and without a dinner. Go your ways, and I will follow; you are nimble, I am slow: you will be shamed with your lodgers, if they see you with a poor old Jew like me.

Mrs. G. Ah! You are cunning in your charities;

but I'll do as you would have me, and be ready at the door, to receive and welcome you. *[Exit.]*

Sheva. The widow of my preserver from the inquisitors of Cadiz, and the mother of my rescuer from the mob of London! Dear me, dear me! How Providence disposes all things! The friend that's dead wants nothing; the friend that is alive shall likewise want nothing that I can give him: for I will die quickly myself and give him all.—Goot lack! goot lack! when I did heap up monies with such pains and labour, I did always think that I should find a use for them at last. *[Exit.]*

SCENE III.—Mrs. Goodison's House.

MRS. RATCLIFFE, ELIZA, and CHARLES.

Char. I have cleared myself to his father, and I'll clear myself to all the world. No man shall say I lay traps for heirs.

Mrs. R. Charles, Charles, you soar too high.

Char. Madam, madam, you stoop too low.

Mrs. R. How is your honour slighted, when your friend did not even consult his father?

Char. He knew his father's mind too well.

Mrs. R. And what would you have done?

Char. I would have saved my friend.

Eliza. And sacrificed your sister. That, let me say, is a high strain of friendship, but no great proof of brotherly affection.

Char. Sister, there is more peace of mind sacrificed by indulging in an act to be repented of, than by foregoing a dishonourable propensity. The woman without fortune, that consents to a clandestine marriage with a man whose whole dependance is upon an unforgiving father, never can be justified.

Eliza. You argue from the unforgiving nature of Sir Stephen Bertram: you had experience of it, I had none.

Char. You might have had, by an appeal to his consent before you gave your own.

Mrs. R. You bear too hard upon your sister. You forget her sex, her situation, your own tenderness, and the affection you have ever borne her.

Char. No, madam; if I could forget how proudly I have thought of her, I should not be so humbled by her conduct as I am. I own I stand in amazement at your indifference. You think I am too sensitive—too proud: you tell me, that I soar too high. How was it when I was this Bertram's clerk? I bore my lot with patience; I submitted without murmuring to poverty: I cannot brook disgrace.

Eliza. Well, Charles, if you could love me only whilst you thought me faultless, I must wonder how it was that we were friends so long: and now you have said all that rigid justice can enforce against me; had you said less, I should have felt it more.

Enter FREDERICK.

*Fred. Charles—Brother—Friend!—*Will you not give me joy? Come, man, shake off this cloud, and smile upon my happiness; we catch it but by gleams.

Char. Yes, sir, we sometimes catch it by surprise and stealth; we catch it by a breach of promise and good faith: then to congratulate a man on such a catch, in my sense of the word, would be to libel him.

Fred. I have frequently seen cause to applaud your philosophy, Charles; now I must think you carry it too far.

Char. It touches you too near; therefore, you like it not.

Fred. To that remark I should return an answer, were not these dear pledges present, that might a little ruffle your philosophy, perhaps, but it would fully vindicate my principle.

Char. Postpone it then, but don't forget it.

Fred. When friends fall into altercation on such points as these, there should be none to witness their folly.

Char. Folly!

Mrs. R. Son, son, no more of this.

Eliza. Stop, I conjure you both! Charles! Charles! if you have love or pity left, let this dissension go no further. And you, Frederick—husband!—You, whose generous heart has put to hazard every hope for me, add yet another proof of love, by suffering these rebukes with patience: they are but flashes of a temper warm in friendship, glowing with honour, impatient of neglect. Perhaps my brother thinks ambition, meanness, artifice, might have some part,—some influence in moving me to what I've done. I spurn such motives—disavow them all. Were I in Frederick's place, and he in mine, I should have done as he did; I should have thought no sacrifice too great to have secured a lasting interest in a heart like his.

Char. This had been only ruin to yourself, and would have had the plea of spirit, therefore more excusable: but this no man of honour would have suffered; therefore 'tis only said, not done.

Fred. Whatever my Eliza says is done; her actions verify her words; and he, that doubts them, would dispute against the light of heaven. 'Tis I that am advanced, she is abased; 'tis I that am enriched, Eliza is impoverished. I only risk a few sharp words from an ungentle father; she suffers keen reproaches, undeserved, from an injurious brother.

Char. Urge me no further; I can bear no more.

Eliza. Oh! my dear mother, save me.

[*Falls into her arms.*]

Fred. There! there! you've struck her to the heart, and that's a coward's blow. [*Apart to CHARLES, in an under voice.*] My life, my soul! look up! Dear madam, take her hence.

[*Mrs. RATCLIFFE takes ELIZA out.*]
Char. A coward's blow! you recollect those words; and know their meaning, I suppose.

Fred. Yes; and will meet your comment when you will, and where you will.

Char. Then follow me, and we'll adjust that matter speedily.

Fred. I will but drop a tear upon the ruin you have made, and then be with you.

Char. I'll wait for you below.

[*Erit.*]

Enter ELIZA, hastily.

Eliza. Where are you both, rash men? Ah, Frederick! alone! What is become of Charles? Why is he gone away? What have you said to him? I did not hear it, I was lost in terror. I am sure you have quarrelled.

Fred. No, no, not quarrelled—only jarred, as friends will sometimes do; all will be set to rights.

Eliza. How? when? why not this moment, in my hearing? I shall be happy to make peace between you.

Fred. Peace will be made, assure yourself, sweet love; these little heats are easily adjusted.

Eliza. But I could do it best; you are too hot, both, both too hot and fiery.

Fred. We shall be cooler soon: such heats soon spend themselves, and then the heart is laid to rest.

Eliza. Heaven grant such rest to yours!

Fred. Indeed!

Eliza. What says my Frederick? You are still discomposed. Your colour comes and goes. Oh, that my arms could give you rest!—Nay, what now, my Frederick? you struggle to get loose!—Are these soft toils uneasy to you? will not your proud, swelling heart endure such gentle, fond imprisonment?

Fred. Oh, thou angelic virtue!—soul-dissolving softness! would I might thus expire, enfolded in these arms! Love, I conjure thee to bear up! I am sure my father will take pity, and be kind to thee: I shall assail his feelings in a manner that no parent can resist. I am going now to put it to the proof. Farewell!

Eliza. Why in such haste? Stay yet a little while. If you depart so soon, you'll meet with Charles again; and then—

Fred. What then?

Eliza. Some fatal accident will be the issue of it. Alas! you know not what his passions are when once inflamed: let them burn out, and then he's as calm as water.

Fred. Where does this tend? You would not make a coward of your husband?

Eliza. No: nor would you make a distracted wretch of your poor Eliza; therefore, I will not let you loose, till you have promised me not to provoke him to more violence: promise me this, and you shall go.

Fred. Well, then, if that will set your mind at rest, I promise you I'll have no further altercation with him, not another word to gall him.

Eliza. You'll not renew your quarrel?

Fred. No, my Eliza; we will end it, and dismiss it.

Eliza. And this you promise on your honour?

Fred. Yes, I do promise.

Eliza. Then all my fears are over. Now you may go.—Well! what withholds you? What more do you wish than freedom and release from my fond arms?

Fred. To snatch one last, dear moment; and then die within them. Oh! my soul's better part! may heaven preserve and bless you! [*Erit.*]

Eliza. Now I am happy, now I am secure: this breach once healed, I can face all alarms. [*Erit.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Tavern.

Enter FREDERICK, attended by a Waiter.

Fred. Is the porter returned who went with my message to Mr. Saunders, at Sir Stephen Bertram's?

Wait. He is, sir; the gentleman will be with you presently.

Fred. Shew him up as soon as he comes. There will be another gentleman call; I believe you know Mr. Ratcliffe?

Wait. Yes, we know Mr. Ratcliffe very well.

Fred. If he comes while Mr. Saunders is with me, request him to wait a few minutes till he is gone.

Wait. I shall, sir; any other commands?

Fred. None. [*Erit Waiter.*] I scarce know what I've written to my father; yet, perhaps, these few unstudied lines, dictated in such a moment, may dispose him to protect the widow, if fate will have it so, of a discarded son.—Now I am ready for this

angry champion; and since he is resolved to vindicate his courage by his sword, let him produce his weapons when he will, I'll not refuse the satisfaction he demands.

Enter JABAL, hastily.

Jabal. Oh! sir, sir! I'm overjoyed to find you. Come, I pray you; come away to my old master, who is pining till he sees you.

Fred. Who is your master, and who are you?

Jabal. As if you did not know Jabal, who lives—No, hold there, who does not live, but starves with your old friend, in Duke's Place. Why, lud-a-mercy! I knew your honour at the length of the street, and saw you turn into this tavern; the puppy waiter would have stopped me from coming up to you.

Fred. I wish you had taken his advice.

Jabal. That would not be your wish, if you knew all. Sure enough I must hunt up Mr. Ratcliffe also: for there is an iron in the fire for each of you. Master is making his will. Lawyer Dash is at his elbow.

Fred. If the devil was at his elbow, I cannot come to him.

Jabal. Oh! the living! I would not carry such a message back for all the world. Why, when Lawyer Dash has pen and ink in hand, and a will under his thumb, he'll dash you in, or dash you out, in a crack.

Fred. Then temper the apology to your taste; only let your master know I cannot come.

Jabal. I'll tell him, then, you are married; that will be a silencer at once.

Fred. Begone! make haste! [*Erit JABAL.*]—Married! how cutting is that recollection! Joy's just in sight, shewn only to be snatched away. Dear, lost, undone Eliza! But I won't think, for that is madness,—inexorable honour must be obeyed.

Enter Mr. SAUNDERS.

Saun. Mr. Bertram, I came to you the first moment I could get away; for I longed to give you joy.

Fred. Joy! name it not.

Saun. Well, if your joy was somewhat damped at first, you may now take it without any drawback.

Fred. I know not what you mean, nor do I wish to inquire; be silent on that subject, I conjure you. The favour I have to ask you is simply this: here is a letter for my father; deliver it to him with your own hands. You seem surprised.

Saun. I am indeed. The impatience of your look; the hurry of your speech; the place in which I meet you—

Fred. The letter will explain all that; I could not give it you in presence of my—Well, no matter, I take you for a man of honour, and my friend. Will you give the letter?

Saun. Assuredly; but, if I am a man of honour, and your friend, why will you not let me stay with you? In truth, dear Frederick, I am a friend that, if you want him, will not flinch.

Fred. The friend I want, is one that will not force his services upon me when I can't accept of them; but take my word at once, and leave me.

Saun. Enough! I am gone. [*Erit.*]

Fred. I have been harsh with that good man; but this suspense is terrible.

Enter Waiter.

Wait. Mr. Ratcliffe desires to know if you are at leisure.

Fred. Perfectly; let him know I'm at his service.

[*Erit Waiter.*]

Enter CHARLES RATCLIFFE.

Char. I have brought my sword; compare it with your own, and, if you have a preference, make your choice. I presume you have no objection to the weapon?

Fred. None on my own account; a little, perhaps, on the score of vanity, as thinking I have some advantage over you in point of skill and practice.

Char. As far as that opinion goes, you are welcome to all the advantage it gives you. Oh! sir, this is a sorry business. Will nothing else convince you I am incapable of giving a coward's blow?

Fred. You have offered nothing else: it is a mode of your own choosing.

Char. Your language forced it on me; you have touched my feelings to the quick. Words, such as you made use of, cannot be passed over without absolute disgrace, unless you will revoke them by apology.

Fred. You may well conceive, Mr. Ratcliffe, with what repugnance I oppose myself to you on this occasion. Whether the event be fatal to you or to myself, small consolation will be left for the survivor. The course you take is warranted by every rule of honour, and you act no otherwise than as I expected; but, as my expression justifies your challenge, so did your provocation justify my expression; and your language being addressed to a lady, whom I have the honour to protect, it is not in my power to retract one tittle of what I said; for was you to repeat the same insult, I should follow it with the same retort.

Char. If you hold to the words, I know not how we can adjust it amicably.

Fred. There is a way; you must find it out.

Char. Suppose, then, that my language had been addressed to any other person than Eliza, would you in that case have apologized for your expression?

Fred. I will speak plainly to you, and the rather as I am now, perhaps, speaking to you for the last time. Admitted by your sister's favour into a family, whose representative resents her conduct, I will not so disgrace her choice in your eyes, who have opposed it, as to submit, in the first instance, to the most distant hint at an apology.

Char. I understand you now; you would have it spring from me.—Impossible!

Fred. Then, no more is to be said.

Char. No more—defend yourself. [*They fight.*]

Fred. What's that? I've wounded you!

Char. No.

Fred. Yes; I'm sure of it. 'Tis in your arm; you cannot poise your sword.

[*CHARLES drops his sword.*]

Char. It is too true: your point has hit me through the guard: I'm at your mercy.

Fred. I am at yours, dear Charles, for pardon and forgiveness; now I retract my words, and blush for having used them. Let me bind up your wrist: here is a handkerchief. Shall I call for assistance?

Char. No, no: a scratch; 'tis nothing. It scarce bleeds. Hark! somebody is at the door; take up the swords.

Sheva. [*Without.*] Let me in; I pray you, gentlemen, let me in. I am Sheva, your friend.

Char. Open the door, Frederick.

Enter SHEVA.

Sheva. Dear me! dear me! what have you been

about? Do you come into a public tavern, and lock yourselves up to be private?

Char. Perhaps we did not wish the world to know the silly business we have been engaged in.

Sheva. Goodness defend me! is it come to this? Have I been studying how to make you happy, whilst you were striving how to make me wretched? What a strange world is this? Are you not friends? Are you not brothers? Is that a reason you should quarrel? And if you differ, must you fight? Can your swords argue better than their masters? You call that an affair of honour, I suppose; under your favour, I do not think it a very honourable affair; 'tis only giving a fine name to a foul deed.

Fred. Custom has glossed it over, and we are slaves to custom.

Sheva. I ask your pardon; I am only a poor Jew, a stranger in your country, and have not yet been taught to reverence all your customs. Goot lack, goot lack! what is the matter with your wrist?

Char. Nothing to signify: a trifling scratch.

Sheva. A scratch you call it! That is a wound in common language. I pray you come to my poor house, and let that scratch be healed; you had great care for me, let me have some for you: that is my sense of an affair of honour; to pay the debt that I do owe to you, and to your father, who preserved my life in Spain, that is my point of honour. Come, come, let us depart: this is no place to talk in; take up your swords, I hope we have no further use for them. [*Ereunt.*]

SCENE II.—Mrs. Goodison's.

Sir STEPHEN BERTRAM and Mrs. GOODISON.

Mrs. G. Your son is not at home, Sir Stephen, but Mrs. Bertram is; and if you will allow me to call her down, I'm sure she will be happy to pay her duty to you.

Sir S. A moment's patience, Mrs. Goodison.—You seem much interested for this young bride, your lodger.

Mrs. G. It is impossible to be otherwise. She has beauty to engage the eye, and manners to interest the heart.

Sir S. Some pride of family about her, I should guess: a little of her brother's vivacity, perhaps.

Mrs. G. None that appears: mildness, and modesty, and every gentle grace, seem inherently her own.

Sir S. Be pleased to tell her I attend to pay my compliments; and, as young ladies' characters are not so easily developed in the company of their mothers, I should be glad she would allow me to confer with her alone. [*Exit Mrs. Goodison.*] Now I shall have this mystery unravelled. Saunders's notion, that the fortune comes from Sheva, is romantic in the extreme. Why should he portion her? She has no Jew's blood in her veins, we'll hope; and, as to a deception, that he dares not practise. She comes.—By heavens, a lovely creature!

Enter ELIZA.

Eliza. You honour me most highly, sir.

Sir S. Not so, madam; the honour is conferred on me.

Eliza. How have I merited this condescension?

Sir S. Call it not condescension; it is no more than is due from one who is proud to embrace the title you have allowed him to assume.

Eliza. This is beyond my hopes. Will you per-

mit me, then, to call myself your daughter, and entreat a blessing and a pardon on my knees?

Sir S. Not for the world in that submissive posture. All you can ask is granted, with acknowledgments on my part for the happiness you have bestowed upon my son. Had certain circumstances occurred before your marriage, that have since turned up, I presume you would not have precipitated matters, at least not in the secret manner they were carried.

Eliza. What circumstances, sir, may you allude to?

Sir S. The death, as I suppose, in your family.

Eliza. Good heaven forbid! What death? my brother?

Sir S. No; your brother, madam! no! Pray be not thus alarmed. I know your brother's circumstances too well, to suppose your sudden fortune could proceed from him—Perhaps some distant relation, or some friend, may have bequeathed—

Eliza. What? let me ask. I know of no bequest.

Sir S. Call it a gift, then, a donation on your marriage; it must have been an agreeable surprise to my son, to have been presented with a fortune so unexpectedly.

Eliza. I am loth to think Sir Stephen Bertram can descend to ridicule my poverty. That I should be regarded by you as an unwelcome intruder upon your family, I can well believe: that you would point your whole resentment against me alone, and spare your son, is all that I dare wish at present: my future hope aspires no higher than by perseverance in my duty as a wife to merit your opinion, so as, in time, you may acknowledge me as your daughter. Conscious that I have incurred your displeasure, I shall patiently endeavour to soften it by submission and obedience.

Sir S. Madam, that answer is at once so pacifying and so candid, that if the information I have had of your being possessed of ten thousand pounds for your fortune, be false, though I thought I had pretty strong evidence of it—

Eliza. Impossible!—I'm sure your son, I'm sure my brother, never told you this?

Sir S. I cannot say they did.

Eliza. No, I'll engage for them, they would disdain so gross and palpable a deceit.

Sir S. Well, be it as it may, with or without a fortune, portioned or penniless, I feel myself so irresistibly impelled to open my arms to you as a father, that, whether Sheva has or has not deceived me, I here deposit my resentment; and, by what I experience of your power over my heart, most thoroughly acquit my son for having surrendered his.

Eliza. It is the impulse of your own generosity, not any impression of my giving, that moves your heart to pity and forgiveness.—But who is Sheva, that you seem to point at as the author of this falsehood?

Sir S. Sheva, the Jew: surely you know the man?

Eliza. Thank heaven! I do not; I can safely say I never, to my recollection, heard his name before. Some vile impostor, I suppose.

Sir S. Not quite that, though had enough to be so treated, if he has practised this deceit on me. Sheva is my broker; your husband knows him well; a miserly, methodical, old Alley-drudge, who shewed me what I believed a true receipt for ten thousand pounds, vested in your name, in the funds. One of my people would have persuaded me it was his own voluntary benefaction; but if you don't know him,

never saw him, never heard his name, the thing's impossible.

Eliza. Totally so, without one ray of probability; the man is either mad or mischievous. No Jew of that, or any other name, do I know; nay, I question if ever I exchanged a word with any one of the nation in my life.

Sir S. Your merit, then, and not your fortune, shall endear you to me. I will strike out ten thousand pounds that I perceive you are not possessed of, and write in ten thousand graces, which I perceive you are possessed of, and so balance the account. Now, Saunders, what's the matter?

Enter SAUNDERS.

Saun. Your son requested me to give this letter into your hands.

Sir S. No, no; there needs no letter. Tell him it is done; say, that you found me conquered in less time than he was. Bid him make haste hither in person, before I run away with his wife; and let him write no more letters, for I won't read a word of them.

[*Exit SAUNDERS.*]

Eliza. Won't you be pleased to open your letter?
Sir S. Positively I will not read it, because Frederick shall not have to say that his rhetoric had any share in making me a convert. If it is, as I suppose, a recital of your graces and good qualities, I do not want his description to assist my sense of what I see; but if you have a wish to see your own fair person painted by his hand, you are welcome to indulge it. [*Takes the letter and gives it to ELIZA.*]
Break the seal.

Eliza. 'Tis short; I'll read it to you—"I am this instant summoned by Charles Ratcliffe, on a point of honour, sword to sword"—Oh! heavens! I can no more—

[*Drops the letter.*]

Sir S. What is it? What alarms you?

Eliza. Oh! that letter! that letter!—My husband and my brother!—One or both have fallen!

Sir S. Merciful powers forbid it!

[*Takes up the letter.*]

Eliza. Stop not to read it! Fly! and take me with you—plant me between them; I am the cause of quarrel. Let the sword that aims to pierce a heart dearer than my own, lodge in my guilty bosom.

Sir S. Oh! horrible to thought! Hark, who is coming?

Eliza. The messenger of death; let him not speak; his very look will kill me.

Enter FREDERICK, followed by CHARLES.

Fred. My love, my life, my ever dear Eliza.

Eliza. Where is your wound? Are you not dying? What is become of Charles?

Char. Here is your happy brother—all is well.

Fred. We are both here with friendly hearts, and joyful news, to greet you.

Eliza. Don't speak of joy too soon; 'twill overthrow my senses. Let me survey you both. Don't deceive me; you have wounds about you.—Ah! Charles, what's this?

Char. The least, but luckiest wound that ever man received. This little glance of your brave husband's sword disarmed me of my weapon, and both our rash hearts of their anger. Now lay aside your fears, and prepare yourselves for wonders.

Fred. Oh! sir, I have offended you; but—

Sir S. But what? You have an advocate, that makes all hearts her own. Spare your appeal; you will but waste your words.

Char. Here comes my mother: bear up, Eliza; say not a word of what has passed.

Enter Mrs. RATCLIFFE.

Eliza. Oh, my dear madam! I have joy to give you; let me present you to my Frederick's father.

Sir S. Yes, madam; and the greatest joy that son ever conferred upon me, is the title he has given me, to claim a father's share with you in this angel of a daughter.

Mrs. R. Such she has been to me. I am blest to hear you say that you approve her.

Sir S. Frederick, give me your hand. If you had brought me half the Indies with a wife, I should not have joined your hand to her's with such sincere delight.

Fred. How generous is that declaration! Now, Charles, 'tis time to introduce our friend.

[*Exit CHARLES.*]

Mrs. R. What does he mean, Eliza?

Eliza. I know no more than you: some new wonder, I suppose.

Sir S. Ha! Sheva here? This is indeed a wonder.

Re-enter CHARLES, with SHEVA.

Char. This is the man. My benefactor; yours, Eliza; Frederick's; yours, dear mother! all mankind's. The widow's friend, the orphan's father, the poor man's protector, the universal philanthropist.

Sheva. Hush, hush! you make me hide my face.

[*Covers his face with his hands.*]

Char. Ah, sir! 'tis now too late to cover your good deeds. You have long masked your charities beneath this humble seeming, and shrunk back from actions princes might have gloried in. You must now face the world, and transfer the blush from your own cheeks to theirs, whom prejudice had taught to scorn you. For your single sake, we must reform our hearts, and inspire them with candour towards your whole nation.

Sheva. Enough! Enough! more than enough! I pray you spare me: I am not used to hear the voice of praise, and it oppresses me: I should not know myself if you were to describe me: I have a register within, in which these merits are not noted. Simply, I am an honest man, no more; fair in my dealings, as my good patron here, I hope, can witness.—That lady, I believe, is Mrs. Ratcliffe: she does not know me; I will not touch upon a melancholy subject, else I could tell a story—Merciful heaven! what horrors was I snatched from by her husband, now, alas! no more.

Mrs. R. Oh, gracious powers! The Jew of Cadiz.

Sheva. The very same. Your debtor in no less a sum than all I possess; the earnings of a life preserved, first by your husband, and now again by your son. Why am I praised, then, if I am merely honest, and discharge my debts?

Sir S. Ah! now the mystery's solved. The ten thousand pounds were yours; give them to Ratcliffe; I will have nothing from fortune where nature gives so much.

Sheva. That is a noble speech; but monies does not lessen merit, at least not always, as I hope, for Mr. Ratcliffe's sake, for he is heir of all that I possess.

Mrs. R. What can I say? My heart's too full for utterance.—O, Charles, the fortunes of your house revive! Surely the blessed spirit of your departed father now sympathises in our joy. Remember, son, to whom you owe this happiness, and emulate his virtues.

Char. If I forget to treat my fortune as becomes

the son of such a father, and the heir of such a benefactor, your warning will be my condemnation.

Fred. That will never be : the treasure, that integrity has collected, cannot be better lodged than in the hands of honour.

Sir S. It is a mine of wealth.

Sheva. Excuse me, good Sir Stephen; it is not

a mine, for it was never out of sight of those who searched for it. The poor man did not dig to find it; and where I now bestow it, it will be found by him again. I do not bury it in a synagogue, or any other pile; I do not waste it upon vanity, or public works; I leave it to a charitable heir, and build my hospital in the human heart. [*Exeunt.*]

THE CASTLE OF SORRENTO;

A MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT, IN TWO ACTS;

BY HENRY HEARTWELL.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

COUNT MURVILLE
GOVERNOR OF SORRENTO
BLINVAL
GERMAIN
Officer
Corporal
Footman.

MRS. BELMONT
ROSINA.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—On the right hand, one of the towers of the Castle of Sorrento; a ditch and parapet-wall dividing it from a large house placed on the left, with a latticed window over the door opening to a balcony. In the tower, a grated window about the height of the balcony. A picturesque view of the country in the distance, mountainous, and with vineyards.

ROSINA appears at the latticed window.

SONG.—ROSINA.

*Evening's shadows now appear,
All is hush'd and calm around—
Hark! his well-known voice I hear;
Let me fly to catch the sound*

*No; 'tis past, and silence reigns;
Pensive, still, I mourn his fate:
In his tower he still remains;
Here, alas! in vain I wait.
Evening's shadows now appear,
All is hush'd and calm around—
Hark! again his voice I hear;
Yes, I've caught the well-known sound.*

BLINVAL, in a red hussar jacket, his hair dishevelled, and his whole appearance neglected, appears at the grated window of the prison.

DUET.—BLINVAL and ROSINA.

*Blin. Hark! again that heavenly voice.
Ros. Yes, 'tis he; why throbs my heart?
By turns I sigh, by turns rejoice;
I'm fix'd, though reason says depart.
Blin. Oh! what joy, what bliss I feel!
Ros. Ah! could my prayers your anguish heal?
Blin. Sweet, heavenly maid, my griefs are past,
My prison now a palace seems;
Speak, will the pleasing vision last?
Or are my raptures fleeting dreams?
Ros. Ah! could Rosina's prayers avail,
How soon those heavy bars should fall!
Ah! could Rosina's tears prevail,
How swift you'd pass the hated wall!
Blin. Ye gods, I'm bless'd; what rapture's mine!
Forgive that late I dar'd repine.
Ros. Compassion's tear—
Blin. The joys I feel,—*

Ros. *Bedews my cheek.*
 Blin. *No words reveal.*
 Ros. *Alas! poor youth,—*
 Blin. *How bless'd my lot!—*
 Ros. *How hard your fate!*
 Blin. *My grief's forgot.*
I'm bless'd beyond what mortals know,
Though fate has mark'd the world my foe;
That cheering glance, that heavenly smile,
Would ev'ry human care beguile.
 Ros. *Alas! how hard the prisoner's lot!*
Forsaken, by the world forgot.
 Blin. *What joys I feel!*
 Ros. *How hard his lot!—*
 Blin. *I'm bless'd, indeed.*
 Ros. *By all forgot.*
 Blin. *My griefs are past.*
 Ros. *Compassion's tear—*
 Blin. *Transporting sounds!*
 Ros. *Your woes shall cheer.*
Ah! would my fervent prayers ascend,
Your painful sufferings soon should end.
 Blin. *The prayers of virtue swift ascend,*
I feel my sufferings soon must end.
 [BLINVAL retires.]

Ros. Heigho! he sings no more. No, he is gone, and I am still left in incertitude. It's very wicked of the Governor to keep so sweet a man cooped up in that huge ugly tower.

Enter GERMAIN with a portmanteau and hat-box.

Ger. [Knocks and calls at the door of the house.]

Hallo, ho, ho! Within there, ho!

Ros. What can that be?

Ger. Are you all dead? Rub down my hack, and let me have a spanking supper, for I'm confoundedly sharp set.

Ros. Pray, where do you suppose yourself, that you're so much at home? This is no inn.

Ger. [Looking up and taking off his hat.] Bumpers and Burgundy! there's a rogue's eye! [Aside.] Inn! Oh! no; Lord love your pretty face! the Widow Belmont would be quite shocked if I went to an inn.

Ros. Indeed! And who are you?

Ger. One of king Cupid's corps diplomatique; ambassador of love; courier of Hymen; the faithful follower, though I precede my master, of Count Murville, captain in the death's head hussars, *et cetera*—Germain, at your service. [Bowling.]

Ros. Oh! from our cousin Murville. Well, I'll inform mamma. Provoking puppy!—at this moment—he has chosen this time. [Aside, and exit.]

Ger. She might as well have asked me to walk in. Mighty pleasant, no doubt, this *al fresco*, to those who relish it; but for a gentleman who does Count Murville, captain in the death's head hussars, *et cetera*, the honour to adjust his mustachios, and to adorn his head, why, it's d—d scurvy treatment. Hip, hallo! house! within there!

[Knocks at the door.]

Enter Footman, from the house.

Foot. Hallo! Who thunders so loudly?

Ger. Why, me, to be sure.

Foot. You! and who the devil are you?

Ger. Is that your respect to a valet-de-chambre? Here, take my baggage, and know your distance.

[Snatches up the portmanteau and hat-box, places them on the Footman's shoulders, pushes him in, and follows.]

SCENE II.—A Drawing-room at the Widow Belmont's.

Enter the Footman and GERMAIN.

Foot. My mistress is at the Governor's, and you must wait. She will speak with you here. [Going.]

Ger. But, sir, respected sir, [bowing] if you are pleased to take your own sweet company away, can't you send me an omelet and a salad, with a few of your half-emptied flasks? You understand! and I don't think, without offence, I should lament your absence.

Foot. Oh! sir, your most obedient. But I am never purveyor except where I'm a guest: you understand? [Exit.]

Ger. Well, now, as I'm a Christian sinner, that fellow deserves the gallies. I wish my master would appear. Somehow, I'm never respected but for his sake. What can detain him at Naples? Oh! I have it: the imprisonment of his young friend Blinval; that fire-eating, mad rattlecap, who had nearly sabred his own colonel. What a cursed scrape! Death by the articles of war. But he performed such prodigies in the last battle, and saved Count Murville's life, so he'll move heaven, earth, and the minister for his release. Oh! now I recollect, he is in this district, close prisoner in the old castle of Sorrento: if I could speak to him—No, no, poor devil, he is trapped like a rat and can only be peeped at through his gratings.

Enter BLINVAL, in the red hussar's jacket, without a sword.

Blin. [Looking about, but not perceiving GERMAIN.] This apartment excels the last; am I awake, or is it all a dream?

Ger. [Not seeing him.] He is as wild as a young Tartar, as obstinate as a young devil, but as sound-hearted as a young Englishman. Oh! a fine fellow that Blinval.

Blin. [Turning quick round.] Blinval! who calls me?

Ger. [Starting.] Eh! what? No, sure—yes, but it is; it is our mad lieutenant.

[Runs and leaps on his neck.]

Blin. Germain! Not hanged yet, but don't strangle me, man. I'm here, you see, in spite of our old fusty colonel, safe, sound, and hearty, boy.

Ger. But by what miracle? I thought you snug in one of the four towers of that d—d castle.

Blin. So thinks the governor, heaven help him, at this hour. But tell me, whose is this house?

Ger. The Widow Belmont's.

Blin. Has she a daughter?

Ger. Rosina; a great beauty; fresh, blooming, and sixteen.

Blin. Huzza! Then I shall bless the day I heard the rusty hinges of Sorrento creak.

Ger. And were I in your place I should curse it most furiously. But what with hunger, thirst, and curiosity, I'm in a desperate case; pity me, sir, I have a craving appetite for your adventures.

Blin. Shut up in the south tower, I one day saw the daughter of this house at a latticed balcony; woodbines and jessamines were round the wall, but they weren't half so fresh as the sweet little creature who eclipsed them.

Ger. Oh Lord! oh Lord! I'm likely to be famished still, if we're to creep through the woodbines.

Blin. To the point, then: she kept her eyes long fixed on me; I tried to move her by croaking in my

d—d hoarse voice, some melancholy ditties about captivity and so on. Every day fresh attentions, fresh songs. This very evening my gaoler called me from a charming interview. I thrust him out, and, in a moment of passion, dashed an old wardrobe in a dark corner of my room to atoms. A folded paper caught my eye, I seized it eagerly, it was directed—

Ger. How?

Blin. "To the unfortunate who succeeds me."

Ger. And the contents?

Blin. A legacy from my poor devil of a predecessor: he had been shut up in the same part of the tower ten years; but love had softened the hardships of his captivity. In short, the paper marked a secret avenue leading to the next house. I descended, crept through a subterraneous passage, climbed a cork-screw stair-case, reached a small door, and, upon pressing back a spring, jumped into that bed-room.

Ger. And the entrance—

Blin. Is concealed by that looking-glass. But tell me now, what brings your rogue's face to Sorrento?

Ger. Marriage. Your friend Murville is cousin to the Widow; they have been long involved in a law-suit, and were compelled to correspond: the first letters were cold, the second more civil, the third touched on arrangements, and in the last they settled it, to wind up all in the old-fashioned way, by a marriage.

Blin. Excellent! When will they solemnize?

Ger. The day's not fixed, for they have never met.

Blin. Not seen each other! Then I'm established in the house.

Ger. Eh! how do you make that out?

Blin. Dolt, dunderhead! I shall pass for Murville; the Widow Belmont will receive, caress, feed, lodge, and—

Ger. Marry you?

Blin. No, no; but I'll obtain an interview with my Rosina; speak to her frequently, and breathe my vows of love and constancy in a purer air.

Ger. In the meantime, they'll visit the south tower, find the bird flown, and send him back to whistle his soft notes in a foul air and a close cage.

Blin. They visit me but twice a day; and till tomorrow's noon I'm safe

Ger. Granted; but will that *negligée* suit the lover?

Blin. Oh! let me see. [*Pauses.*] I have been stopped by a banditti.

Ger. Ha, ha, ha! You're never at a loss; always a tale at your tongue's end. But my scruples—

Blin. Have, like all other things, their price. [*Shaking a purse.*] Fifty louis for their repose.

Ger. They're hushed. [*Taking the purse.*]

Blin. But if I appear in this identical dress, I shall be known instantly by Rosina, and it would not be prudent to discover myself, even to her, too soon.

Ger. What say you to my master's riding-coat and military hat?

Blin. The very thing; run and fetch them; quick, quick.

[*GERMAIN runs out and returns with them immediately.*]

Ger. [*Helping BLINVAL on with his hat and coat.*] So. And here comes the Widow, too, most opportune.

Blin. Attention, then, and to our posts. Remember, I have been robbed.

ACT. DRAMA.—NOS. 97 & 98.

Enter Mrs. BELMONT.

Mrs. B. [*TO GERMAIN.*] Is it you, sir, who wish to speak with me?

Ger. Yes, madam, it was I who galloped on joyfully to announce Count Murville, but—oh, heavens!—

Mrs. B. You alarm me. What has befallen him?

Ger. Oh! bitter news! Speak, sir, yourself, for I want words, and—impudence. [*Aside.*]

Mrs. B. What, is it you, cousin?

Blin. As you perceive, and in no better plight.

[*Looking at his dress.*]

Mrs. B. What has happened?

Blin. Friendship, love, and anxiety, all urged me to hasten here; unfortunately, a banditti—

Mrs. B. Robbers?

Blin. Stopped me some leagues from this.

Ger. Five minutes later, and I had shared his fate. Oh, terrible!

Mrs. B. Robbers!

TRIO.—BLINVAL, GERMAIN, and Mrs. BELMONT.

Blin. Affection induced me all dangers to brave,

I mounted my horse in the dead of the night.

Ger. This love had nigh shewn him the way to his grave;

When you hear his escape, you'll be seiz'd with affright.

Mrs. B. Such a hazard was wrong.

Ger. But his reasons were strong.

Blin. From the forest they rush'd, full a score at the least—

Ger. How he brags, how he lies! [*Aside.*]

Blin. Taken thus by surprise—

Mrs. B. Alas! all my fears, my alarms are increas'd.

Blin. With my back to a tree,

At one thrust despatch'd three;

Seventeen with drawn swords remain'd circling me round—

Ger. Seventeen with drawn swords remain'd circling him round.

Mrs. B. Alas! could no aid, could no succour be found?

Such a risk, such a state!

'Faith! his perils were great.

Blin. The blood of six others soon redd'n'd my sword—

Ger. What a bounce, what a lie! [*Aside.*]

Blin. Not a creature came by—

Mrs. B. Alas! sure, such numbers at last overpower'd.

Blin. With ten wounds gaping wide,

And six thrusts in the side,

I fought till my blood in a torrent was pour'd.

Ger. He fought till his blood in a torrent was pour'd.

Blin. Then faintly I sank, by such odds overpower'd.

Mrs. B. Alas! what a state, by such odds overpower'd!

Blin. Stretched on the ground for dead, the cowards rifled me, but fled on the approach of travellers, who, coming up, gave me every assistance in their power.

Mrs. B. Good heavens! I fear you must have suffered much from the wounds you received. Have you kept your chamber long?

Blin. Hum! I have been a good while confined; haven't I, Germain?

Ger. That you have; I can prove it.

Blin. But, excepting a weakness, no inconvenience follows.

Mrs. B. He is younger than I conceived, well made, and elegant. [*Aside.*] My last letter must have convinced you I was desirous to have all points explained.

Blin. Oh! we'll explain ourselves off hand. Germain, endeavour to get me some decent clothes; I am ashamed to see myself; I have the appearance—

Ger. Of a mountebank, precisely. [Exit.]

Mrs. B. Now we're alone, we can discourse on business.

Blin. Certainly; but at this moment, I'm so confused; the blows those rascals dealt, have made me so light-headed, so absent—

Mrs. B. Only one thing: it will be right to send a settlement to an attorney's.

Blin. Why, yes, it will be certainly quite right and necessary.

Mrs. B. You consent, then, to keep the farm?

Blin. The farm! Oh! decided. Yes, yes, we'll keep the farm.

Mrs. B. But we must recollect my daughter: she has just claims.

Blin. The greatest possible. She is so beautiful! such a soft, tender air! so interesting, so charming!

Mrs. B. Really! How can you tell all this? Have you seen her?

Blin. Seen her! Yes, I—Oh! no; but I speak from report which is loud in her praise; so, oblige me, and drop the suit.

Mrs. B. Why, you forget—you drop the suit.

Blin. Do I? True, true; but my head's so confused, I can think only of our approaching happiness.

Mrs. B. But I expected, I confess, a man of middle age, and you appear quite young.

Blin. True; I have ever been thought young, and surely, cousin, that's no misfortune.

Mrs. B. No; but as reason and friendship form the basis of our union, though tempted to regard it as a defect, I am willing to hope we shall be both happy. I shall now leave you to give directions for your comfort and accommodation.

Enter GERMAIN.

Germain, that room will be your master's. [Pointing.] *Blin.* [Aside.] By all that's fortunate, the secret door.

Mrs. B. I'll prepare my daughter to receive you immediately; but recollect, a father-in-law should be grave and sedate. Adieu! [Exit.]

Blin. Allons, Germain! the day's our own. Victory, my boy! I'm grown so grave and steady, they'll not suspect I could invent this trick.

Ger. Steady, with a vengeance! Ah! if you're other than Blinval, I shall look out for the world's end.

Blin. But I'm determined to reform.

Ger. Which way?

Blin. By marrying.

Ger. Why, faith! if anything can tame a man, I believe that may.

Blin. My stars all shine propitious; and every time my presence is required, I'll lock my door, glide to my prison, and whip back, no one the wiser.

Ger. But my master, in the meantime, appears; off goes my livery, and I'm cooped up in your agreeable south tower, for having touched upon the secret spring.

Blin. I shall rejoice in such good company. But see, the sun peeps forth; fogs, mists, and vapours fly: here comes Rosina.

Ger. Then you'll dispense with me; so I'll escape to the more foggy regions, where savoury fumes exhale from the stew-pans, and the jolly butler distributes his rich gifts from the Widow's cellar.

[Exit.]

Enter ROSINA.

Ros. [Aside.] This, then, is my step-father; and I must be respectful, and so forth: so says mamma Heigho!

Blin. [Aside.] She'll be astonished when she perceives the prisoner. [Going towards her.]

Ros. [Starting.] Oh, heavens! Can I believe my eyes? His very features!

Blin. What startles you, my little cousin? have I already the misfortune to displease?

Ros. No, sir; no, certainly not that: but I was struck with the resemblance to a friend; yes, sir, an absent friend, too little known, and, alas! too unfortunate. Pardon me, sir, but my tongue falters, my heart throbs, and my face burns. I must beg to retire. [Going.]

Blin. Don't leave me, coz. [Taking her hand.] Why withdraw your hand? You would not be so coy to my resemblance.

Ros. Oh! yes, I should, because I ought to be so.

Blin. But I shall be your father-in-law soon.

Ros. True; but you are so like this friend, I should think still of him.

Blin. You tremble. Happy Blinval! [Aside.] *Ros.* Yes, and my heart beats quick, just as it does when I see him.

Blin. And mine just as it does when I see you—I mean your mother. She is like you.

Ros. My mother! Ah! you are as young as your likeness.

Blin. Looks are deceitful. But, Rosina, you must love me, if not for my own sake, for the sake of my likeness.

Ros. Ah! but I don't love him; he is unfortunate, and I feel interested in his fate, that's all.

Blin. You pity him! I'll avow myself at once, and—[Aside.] Dearest Rosina, I—I—[A footstep is heard.] Oh! here's this teasing, amorous Widow; she haunts me. [Aside, and walking about.]

Enter Mrs. BELMONT, with an unfolded note.

Mrs. B. We shall have an addition to our party. Cousin, you'll not object to an old friend of mine, whom I prepare you to esteem.

Blin. A friend of your's? I shall be happy to see him. I wish him at the devil with all my heart. [Aside.]

Mrs. B. An honest, plain, rough Irishman. The laws of his country forbade him, as a catholic, serving in the armies of his own monarch, whom he adores as the father of a great, free, and happy people.

Blin. We have many brave Irish with our troops, all much esteemed: but who is your friend?

Mrs. B. A singular character; eccentric, and, at times, warm to a degree. His employment gives him an appearance of harsh authority, while, in reality, he is mild and humane. After this sketch, you will allow for a rough diamond. He wishes to be introduced to a soldier of your merit, and being within five minutes walk, comes without form—the Governor of the castle.

Blin. [Starting.] Eh! who? the Governor? [Walks about agitated.] All my unlucky planets must have joined. [Aside.]

Mrs. B. Run, haste, Rosina, give directions that the supper suit our guests. [ROSINA, with her eyes fixed on BLINVAL, does not attend.] Why aren't you gone?

Ros. Oh! the resemblance is astonishing.

[Aside, and exit.]

Mrs B. How kind of our good friend, the very first hour you arrive.

Blin. *[Still walking about.]* Oh, kind! Yes, yes—d—d kind! *[Aside.]*—kind to a degree; but I'm so dreadfully fatigued after fighting with the robbers, that I feel oppressed with sleep.

Mrs. B. Well, we'll sup early, then.

Blin. But can't we sup alone? On the footing we stand, a third is the devil.

Mrs. B. *[Smiling.]* We shall have opportunities enough of being tête-à-tête.

Blin. We have so much to say; the farm, the settlements, the attorney, the suit—

Mrs. B. But your head is so confused. However, there is no help, for he is already on the stairs.

Gov. *[Without.]* Easy, friend, easy; 'sblood! you'll have arm and all; there, hang up my roquelaure, and let the sergeant wait.

Blin. *[Aside.]* Now impudence stand my ally. There's no alternative.

[Turns on one side, draws up the collar of his coat round his face, pulls his hat over his eyes, and stands with his arms folded.]

Enter the GOVERNOR OF SORRENTO.

Gov. *[Speaking as he enters.]* If they ask for me here, tell 'em, remember, I'm just gone there, honey. Well, here and I'm come, quicker than my billet which got here first. 'Faith! and the captain will rejoice to be made known to an old veteran who has had some hard knocks to secure him a snug retreat, and a good flask of lachrymæ christi to fight his battles over. Be introducing us, Widow; I must tell him about my last campaign.

Mrs. B. Cousin: our friend, the Governor, cousin. Count Murville! the Governor of the castle.

Blin. *[Still with his back to them.]* Three thousand, and the enemy thought five, with the advantage of a wood, but his right flank left in the air.

Gov. Eh! what? By Saint Patrick, the most extraordinary fellow! how long will he keep in the air? Hallo! Count Murville, here's our old O'Rourke O'Donnel, Governor of Sorrento, and—wheh! *[Whistling.]* 'Sblood! he's as deaf as my invalid sergeant of artillery. Och! and you'll have a nice husband.

Blin. *[Aside.]* Psha! 'tis absurd, and I'll e'en brave the storm.

Mrs. B. Cousin, cousin! our friend, the Governor. How provoking!

Blin. Eh! who? Oh! I beg pardon; I was absorbed in a dull calculation.

Gov. *[Advancing.]* No excuses, jewel, to our old O'Donnel. *[Starts back on seeing his face.]* Och! what?—devil burn me!—yet, how could he get from the south tower? the strongest part of the whole castle, sure! Och! it's impossible! haven't I had the keys all under locks in my own room?

Blin. *[All this time looks the Governor full in the face, and turns occasionally, with affected surprise, to Mrs. BELMONT.]* I'm fortunate in attracting your notice. Pr'ythee, Widow, what can this mean!

Gov. That Count Murville! Hubaboo! Botheration! 'Faith! it's a young wild devil of the death's heads, I have now snug enough there, between four walls, not a stone's throw from us. *[Strutting up to him.]* Sir, let me tell you, sir, that while O'Rourke O'Donnel governs the castle, he will govern and keep his prisoners safe, though they do break out.

Blin. Ha, ha, ha! Widow, is your friend often

thus? What upon earth have I to say to your prisoner? Here I'm Count Murville.

Gov. No, sir—'sblood! here you are—zounds! here you are not Count Murville. Widow, he is as like one of my prisoners as two drops of whisky.

Mrs. B. And this prisoner—

Gov. Is a wild rogue that found the world not wide enough for his mad pranks; and has the happiness of exercising them at his liberty, in a nice room, five yards by ten, in the south tower.

Blin. Ha, ha, ha! And you supposed he'd leaped your barrier, swam the wet ditch, and given your whiskered sentries sleeping draughts.

Gov. Och! he's as safe as bolts, walls, bars, and chains can keep him. Sure, I know that though he stands here just now.

Mrs. B. Ah! poor young man! you treat him too harshly.

Gov. 'Faith! my orders are positive. But I soften as much as possible. Humanity has a command over me strict as the king's, and I obey both masters with pleasure. But this Blinval—

Blin. Blinval! We served in the same corps, and were never asunder; he is as like me as if we'd been twins.

Gov. Twins! Zounds! he's yourself. Well, well, as it's explained, you can't be he, and you're well off: he's in a pretty mess.

Blin. I'm as much grieved and suffer as much as if I were in his place, we were such friends.

Gov. Were you so? 'Faith! I have a mind—but you must take your oath—No, no, I won't be satisfied with that; you must give me your honour.

Blin. What do you mean?

Gov. *[To Mrs. B.]* I can't be satisfied till I see them both in one spot, standing there, cheek by jowl, like two double cherries. He shall sup here.

Blin. Who?

Gov. Blinval.

Blin. Sup here! Blinval!

Mrs. B. It will be very kind.

Blin. You must not think of it. If it were known—his confinement's so strict—

Gov. 'Faith! and I run some risk; but to oblige a friend—Och! be easy, he shall sup here.

Blin. There will be bloodshed, then; we have quarrelled most furiously.

Gov. Quarrelled! Aha! that's the best news I have heard. It's the sure road to be as thick as mustard. You shall be friends.

Blin. I can never see him.

Gov. You shall be friends.

Blin. We two can't meet.

Gov. Och! be easy; I am the best hand in Italy at an accommodation. Didn't I make up the quarrel at Balmuddery, when honest Pat Holloway had put Captain Noraghan's nose clean out of joint.

Blin. And how had he done that?

Gov. 'Faith! he had squeezed it tight, between his finger and thumb a little.

SONG.—GOVERNOR.

Arrah! what a big nose had the bold Captain Noraghan!

Pat Holloway he pull'd it till he made him to roar again.

Whack fal de diddle! Shoot him through the middle.

Whack fal de diddle! Well-a-day!

Whack fal de diddle! Captain through the middle,

Och! shoot Paddy Holloway.

Both they chose me their seconds, and I gave my word to both;

For second man to two men, is one man that's third to both.

Whack fal de diddle! &c.

We met by a duck-pond; cries bold Captain Nora-ghan,

"Pat Holloway I'll shoot you, you never shall snore again."

Whack fal de diddle! &c.

The Captain miss'd Pat, for it was not a lucky shot, Pat Holloway fired next, and a very fine duck he shot.

Whack fal de diddle! &c.

Then I stepp'd in between 'em; 'twas full time to take it up;

For a duel now is one shot a-piece, and then make it up.

Whack fal de diddle! Shoot him through the middle.

Whack fal de diddle! Well-a-day!

Whack fal de raddle! Shake each other's daddle, And fast friends they walk'd away. [Exit.

Blin. [Aside.] I've no alternative; back to my prison.

Mrs. B. How happy this will make poor Blinval! Come, you must oblige me and be reconciled; it is my first request, and I insist on your compliance.

Blin. Insist, madam! My injured honour brooks no interference. Seek not to thwart me; some dreadful consequences might ensue, some consequences you cannot foresee. Insist, madam! I wish you a good night. [Rushes into the bed-chamber, and locks the door.]

Mrs. B. What madness and rudeness! I thought in Murville to have found mildness and sensibility. Oh! man, man! tax us not with deceit, when in your own proud sex there's such a proof of the wide difference between professions and actions.

Enter ROSINA.

Ros. Alone, madam! where is your company?

Mrs. B. Oh! Count Murville has retired to his apartment for the night.

Ros. He is unwell, then; poor young man!

Mrs. B. No, no; he is quite well; but he chose to retire.

Ros. Sure, that's a little ungallant. Then our nice supper's of no use.

Mrs. B. His place will be supplied. The Governor conceives there's a resemblance between Murville and one of his prisoners, and is gone for the captive.

Ros. What, the gay prisoner in the tower? Oh! there's a great resemblance; so striking! there's no mistaking it.

Mrs. B. Indeed! Pray, Rosina, how came you to remark it?

Ros. [Embarrassed.] I heard it. Ah! dear madam, I'll tell you all: every evening I've seen the prisoner from the staircase balcony. I have sat there whole hours to hear him sing. He bewails his captivity. Complains that all the world forsakes him, except me. Could I hear this and not be sorry for his fate?

Mrs. B. Rosina, your simplicity affects me; to pity him in his distress is amiable; but to love him would be imprudent. Be cautious, then, Rosina; nor sully with a fault one of the heart's best virtues—compassion for the unfortunate.

SONG.—MRS. BELMONT.

*From pity's power thou need'st not fly;
The tear she sheds adorns the eye;
And when down beauty's cheek it flows,
More bright its radiant crimson glows.*

*But there's a sigh, and there's a tear,
That bids youth's roses disappear;
Beware lest thine their influence prove,
Beware lest pity turn to love.*

*That tear is love's, and love's that sigh;
They fade the cheek, they dim the eye.*

*Ah! let not, then, thy artless bloom
In sighs and tears so dire consume.*

*Then, if thy heart tumultuous beat
Whene'er thine eyes yon captive's meet,
Away, nor more such danger prove,
For soon thy pity would be love.*

[Exeunt.]

SCENE III.—Blinval's Room in the Prison. A large stone seen rolled from one corner of a trap-door, and open opposite to it; the ordinary prison door closed and secured by iron plates, large nails, &c. The tables and chairs in confusion, a bureau overturned and broken.

Enter BLINVAL by the trap-door. He hurries in, rolls the stone back, and puts the tables and chairs in their places.

Blin. There, then, I'm safe. Now, Mr. Governor, one instant to derange this mad head, and I'm at your service. [Pulls his hair out of form, and gives as much disorder as he can to his appearance. A clanking heard of a chain.] Hark! Oh! my old buck, I must have had a few dips in the Shannon, too, not to outwit your excellence.

[Walks about in a melancholy manner with his arms crossed.]

Enter the GOVERNOR OF SORRENTO.

Gov. Och! and you're there. Well, then, I'm an old blockhead, and that's all. You may go back. [To the Guard outside.] Ah! what, my little Kill Colonel! Well, but what makes you so dismal? Don't be faint-hearted, boy; joy sometimes penetrates even the walls of a prison.

Blin. Joy! You are too generous, too much a man of honour, to add the pangs of railleury to my distress. Am I released?

Gov. 'Faith! and who told it you? Fair and softly; only six months, and tired so soon! That's no great compliment I must confess.

Blin. Psha! why, then, am I thus teased.

[Dashes down one of the chairs in a passion.]

Gov. And is there any other part of the king's furniture you would like to destroy? Pray, make as free as with your own.

Blin. I beg pardon; you've been very kind to me, Governor; you've been very kind.

Gov. Och! my dear boy, not a word more, I would attend you to the scaffold with the greatest pleasure imaginable; only don't break the furniture, that's all. But I've some pleasure in reserve: there's an old friend hard by, though you've quarrelled, and you shall sup with him to-night; I am determined you shall be reconciled; and, though Murville—

Blin. [With affected surprise.] Murville! I esteem him more than I can express; but I cannot forget having cheated him out of a fine girl. It was my fault; we are so alike, I easily passed in his place.

Gov. Like! 'Slife! but you had the same father. How it happened that's not my business, but you're brothers, or I'm not governor. Come, shall we march?

Blin. Willingly; and if you bring us together, you will have worked a miracle.

Gov. Hubaboo! honey, leave all to me. 'Faith! I'll not rest till you are face to face.

Blin. Then your rest's gone in this world, take my word.

Gov. *Allons, donc. Nous verrons.* [Exeunt.]

SCENE IV.—Mrs. Belmont's.

Enter Mrs. BELMONT and ROSINA, GERMAIN following.

Mrs. B. Acquaint your master, Count Murville, and from me, that the sooner he attends to his affairs elsewhere, the better. It must be equally unpleasant to us both while he remains.

Ger. Dear, dear! was there ever such an unlucky son of Adam? [Aside.]—Most honoured madam, my master would break my head if I were so impertinent; and you yourself—Lovers' quarrels are, you know, madam—[goes to the bed-room, and tries the door]—Lord! it's no use; I could as soon get at—even the prisoner in the south tower.

Mrs. B. Well, when the Governor comes, we shall see.

Ger. [Alarmed.] The—the—the what, ma'am? Didn't you say the Governor?

Mrs. B. Certainly. What can that be to you?

Ger. Oh! nothing, ma'am; nothing to me.—[Aside.] Here's a cursed scrape—But I have such a kind of a sort of a dread of a prison ever since an old hag of a gipsy told me I should live to be hanged.—[Aside.] And, if I could make him hear—And, madam, the very name [loud] of a Governor makes my teeth chatter, madam.

Mrs. B. Well, well, you may retire. Desire my people to take care of you; and, when your master chooses to appear, you shall be called.

Ger. Truly, most benevolent lady, I most punctually obey your orders. What, ho! Gaspard, Diego, Jaufrou! here, you must take care of me.

[Gets near the bed-room door, and calls loudly, "The Governor's coming. Some more champagne."—As he goes out, he meets BLINVAL and the GOVERNOR OF SORRENTO entering: BLINVAL in his hussar jacket. GERMAIN starts back, and BLINVAL catches his arm, and threatens him.

Blin. [Speaking as he enters.] Ah! my head's giddy with confinement. I feel oppressed with the pure air.

Ros. It is the prisoner.

Mrs. B. The resemblance is striking.

Ger. [Aside.] The resemblance! then all is safe. [Advancing to BLINVAL.] Ah! sir, I am glad to see you.

Gov. [Putting him back.] And who the devil told you to be glad? Arrah! stand back, or I'll—stand back, I say! Ladies, I bring you a recluse, who, for some time, has virtuously renounced the fickle vanities and false allurements of this life; and, like most penitents, per force.

Blin. Past troubles are but as dreams, and this blessed moment [looking at ROSINA] cheaply purchased by ages of captivity.

Gov. But where's Muirville? Surely, he's not obstinate still.

Blin. I was in hopes a difference in our youth—

Gov. 'Slife! and my government. Scarcely an hour passes without such disputes at a mess dinner; 'faith, and they're commoner than toasts, ay, and pass off as quickly.

Mrs. B. He refuses all overtures.

[The GOVERNOR and Mrs. B. talk apart.

Blin. I lament it; but my misfortunes and my acknowledgments must, in the end, prevail.

Ros. [Aside.] Charming young man! What a good heart.—[To BLINVAL, first in a fluttering voice, then more firmly.] I really tremble when I reflect, sir, how you have suffered in that ugly tower.

Blin. My captivity would have been insupportable, but I was soothed by such an agreeable object.

Ros. [Aside.] Heigho! I hope that agreeable object presented itself from my balcony.

Gov. [Advancing with Mrs. B.] Shut up! But it sha'n't be; I am determined to see whether they be the same person, as they stand separately face to face.

Mrs. B. [Smiling.] Your prisoner appears younger.

Ros. He has a softer voice.

Gov. 'Faith! and I see no difference. But I'll not stir till he comes out; and, if he won't capitulate, by your leave, Widow, we must proceed to storm.

QUARTETTO.—MRS. BELMONT, BLINVAL, and ROSINA.

Gov. Knock, knock, knock;

Knock at his door. Knock, thunder away!

[They all knock loudly at the door.

The Governor commands, his voice obey.

Blin. I doubt him much, but soon you'll see
He'll ne'er come face to face with me;
Yet on the watch he's forc'd to keep,
While Blinval wakes—he'll never sleep.

Gov. A headstrong devil, won't he stir?

[Knocking]
High time, I swear, this strife to close!
Peep from your covert, surely—
The Governor must interpose.

[Knocking.]

Ros. & Our joint endeavours must prevail,

Mrs. B. When we request, he can't refuse;
Their enmity's of no avail;

They must be friends, they can't but choose.

Blin. Be silent, friends, his voice I hear.

All. He answers—listen, listen—so.

Be silent! draw, with caution, near.

Be silent—

Blin. Hark! He answers—No.

Ros. He doesn't stir—I'm sure 'tis so.

Blin. Be satisfied, he answers—No.

Ros. Did you hear him? [To Mrs. BELMONT.]

Mrs. B. No. Did you hear him?

Gov. No. Did you hear him?

Blin. No.

Ros. He didn't stir—I'm sure 'tis so.

Blin. Be satisfied, he answers—No.

Mrs. B.

Gov. } He didn't stir—I'm sure 'tis so.

Ros.

Blin. Be satisfied, he answers—No.

[Exeunt.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment at Mrs. Belmont's. A table spread with wines and a dessert.*

The GOVERNOR, Mrs. BELMONT, ROSINA, and BLINVAL in his own character, seated at supper.

Gov. 'Faith, and upon my honour, but it's the most extraordinary thing I ever saw, either in England, Ireland, or all Italy. Such an obstinate mule! Oh! if I had him for a few weeks in the castle!

Blin. Things more unlikely have happened

Gov. Well, let me catch him there, and he shall be in charity with all mankind before I let him loose. There's nothing on the whole earth so bad as obstinacy! I'm resolved never to quit this spot till he comes from that room. If I give up this point, it will be for the first time since I was christened by my surname O'Flagherty.

Blin. He will no more come from that room than I shall—who sit here.

Gov. Then, by your leave, Widow, here I'm posted. He shall come out, by the god of war!

Enter the Corporal of the Guard.

Now what the devil brings your impudence into this house?

Corp. Governor, a stranger's arrived, and brings orders about the prisoner Blinval.

Gov. Ah! this looks serious. [*They all rise.*] 'Faith, my young gentleman, I am concerned; but you must make up your mind to the worst; and, for the present, back to the south tower.

Ros. I'm distressed at this cross accident.

Blin. Indeed! then I'm happy.—Blinval is not indifferent. [*Aside.*]

Gov. Come, come, this is all very pleasant; but we've no time to lose. You must give up the ladies for the corporal.

Mrs. B. Through the indulgence of the Governor, we shall soon meet.

Gov. Oh! I'll be as indulgent as you please. Corporal, conduct the prisoner to the guard-room, and bid your officer lodge him safe in the south tower, and post a sentry at his door. I'll follow presently. [*Exit BLINVAL and Corporal.*]

It's a bad business, I'm afraid. Drawn on his Colonel! breach of subordination. Charge upon charge! These young fellows are so hot-brained, they think a dash of bravery comprises all military duties; it's the least part. Who obeys best, best commands, too; that is the soldier's creed. But this Murville—I'm resolved to keep up the blockade: here I'm posted.

Ros. Heigho!

Gov. 'Sblood! my fair violet, what makes you say "heigho!" Oh! if I could but knock off thirty of these hard years, 'faith, I'd soon change your note.

Mrs. B. [*Smiling.*] You'd have no chance.

Gov. No chance! 'Slife! but an honest Irish heart is worth the conquest. [*ROSINA shakes her head, and sighs.*] Again! Widow, the little blind urchin has been at work. Come, child, confess what happy name would have been wafted on that deep-drawn sigh: make me your confidant, and you'll find me a good ally.

Mrs. B. Rosina, child, the Governor is an old friend; your confidence will be well placed.—

[*During the end of this dialogue, the bed-room door opens, and BLINVAL with the great-coat*

on, disguised as MURVILLE, peeps through, stealing in quietly, and unperceived by any of the party.

Gov. And has this lover of your's, my little dear, no name?

Blin. Oh! yes, yes, yes: he has a name, and I know it. [*They all turn round towards BLINVAL.*]

Gov. Och! Are you there at last, Mr. Murville? Come, if you please; you shall just step with me to the castle, where you shall shake hands with my prisoner; and let me see you both in the same person, and together, and then I will believe you are not him. [*BLINVAL creeps back to the bed-chamber, and nearly gains the door, when the GOVERNOR perceiving his intention, catches his arm, and brings him back.*]—No, honey, no! not quite so young. You must come fairly, or I shall call the guard.

Blin. [*Struggling.*] Sir, do you know, I am—

Gov. [*Holding him.*] Och! now be asy, friend, it is to know whether you are my prisoner or yourself; and to make you both come together, while you are separate, that I oblige you with my company to the south tower. So, now be asy, or I must call the guard. Come, come—och! to be sure, now, and you're not friends.

Blin. Well, sir—[*Aside.*] Zounds! what shall I hit on now?—Well, sir, I'll attend you; I'll follow—follow you presently.

Gov. Follow! 'Faith, in my country, friends always link themselves so doatingly—so, if you please, I must desire your arm.

[*Keeps hold of BLINVAL, and drags him off.*]

Mrs. B. [*Having been previously talking apart with ROSINA.*] Rosina, I must now have some serious talk with you. Follow me to my dressing-room, and look for the indulgence of a fond mother, if I experience the candour and truth of a dutiful child. [*Exit.*]

Ros. Ah! my heart beats so quick! If I could steal for an instant to my balcony, and catch one good, fair view—But my mamma needn't mind poor Blinval, he will soon be removed.—These despatches make me tremble. Oh! if I could but steal him fairly from that ugly tower, they should never see him again.

SONG.—ROSINA.

Together, then, we'd fondly stray,
O'er meadows green, thro' woodlands deep,
Rejoicing view the lambskins play,
And in the gurgling streamlet peep:
No cankering cares our sleep molest,
No frowning gaoler part;
Above the world, supremely blest,
His throne Rosina's heart.
From haunts of surly man we'd fly,
My pris'ner safe I'd guard;
Secure from envy's prying eye,
And love our bright reward.
For him I'd cull Pomona's store,
Nor from his side depart;
Thus bless'd, could Blinval ask for more?
His throne Rosina's heart. [*Erit.*]

SCENE II.—*Blinval's Apartment in the prison. The stone is so removed as just to admit of the possibility of his passing. A lamp burning on the table. The camp bed, near the secret avenue. Curtains drawn close and opposite to the common entrance.*

Gov. [*Without.*] Well, well! I shall be satisfied in a moment. Sentry, your prisoner's safe?

Sent. [Without.] All's well!

Gov. Safe, you say; all's well? Corporal, post your guard on the stairs, and let nobody pass.

[The keys are heard turning, the bars removing and the chains falling, &c.]

Enter the GOVERNOR OF SORRENTO holding BLINVAL, who is wrapped in his surtout.

Come, Come—'Faith! and you've been more tractable than I had hoped—But what makes you tremble? [BLINVAL appears smothering a laugh.] Oh! he's a mighty, pretty, well-behaved, civil spoken fellow, and will make you any apology you please.—[Looking round.] Hallo! Why, 'sblood and ouns! where has he hidden himself? Zounds! is it possible? Oh! no, no, no; he must be gone to bed. Stand here a moment, Count, while I wake him. [Goes towards the bed. BLINVAL watches his opportunity; and, at the instant the GOVERNOR has reached the bed, whips off the great-coat, throws it into the opening behind the stone, which he moves back to its right place, concealing the trap-door, and slips behind the bed, and into it.]—Ay, ay, poor devil! he has just laid down to take a comfortable bit of a nap. Blinval, Blinval! 'Faith, he sleeps like a top! Who'd think a man could sleep sound in misfortune? Blinval! [Throwing open the curtains.]

Blin. [Putting his head from the bed.] What do you want?

Gov. Och! and you're there! Well, and why did you not spake out, when you first saw my voice in your sleep?

Blin. [Coming forward.] What can this mean? Governor, let me tell you, your behaviour, to a man in distress, is inexcusable. Why am I thus tormented, sir? Leave me this instant, I insist!

Gov. Leave you! Faith and be asy, boy! Haven't I brought Murville? You shall be friends—[Turning to the spot where he had left BLINVAL.] Why, zounds! how! that other fellow is off!—There, I see him! Hallo! Sentry, sergeant, corporal! bring him back here.

Enter Corporal.

Why did you let that fellow pass, and not shoot him for forcing you? You a soldier! I'll have you all at the halberts, or I am not Governor, by St Patrick!

Cor. Governor, no one passed us.

Gov. [Raising his cane.] Ah! and get out with your d—d lies! Didn't I see him here, through my own eyes? And didn't I see the tail of his brown coat, as he skipped through the door? Make yourself scarce, or I shall break my cane over your d—d thick head. [Advances on the Corporal, who runs off.] Well, well, you shall meet yet; I'll not be treated so by any Count in the kingdom! I'll after him this instant; ay, and he shall give me the satisfaction of a gentleman, when he has made friends with you, which shall be here, here, and before you're shot. Erit.

Blin. Governor! Governor! [Following him.] Huzza! I'm safe again. Love is like hunger, and will break through stone walls.

[Watches the GOVERNOR fairly out. When the prison door closes, listens a moment, then runs to the moveable stone, pulls it away, and exit through the trap door.]

SCENE III.—A Grove leading to the Castle.

Enter GERMAIN, stealing along in silence and alarmed.

Ger Oh, dear! oh, dear! All must out now, and

the reward of my labour will be bestowed with interest. Germain, thou art a fool; and a court-martial would decide it, and I'll prove it. "Gentlemen, the prisoner was a free man; and, for fifty louis, he abetted, assisted, connived at, and advised Lieutenant Blinval, of the death's-head hussars, then and there prisoner in the castle—[Starting, and looking round.]—to represent the Count Murville"—Oh, lord! oh, lord! Talk of the devil, and he's at your elbow. [Exit.]

SCENE IV.—The outside of the Castle; an antique building, with four towers, enclosed by a wet ditch. A draw-bridge up; cannon mounted, &c. A view across the Bay of Naples, Mount Vesuvius in the distance. The scene is by moonlight, and the reflection thrown upon the water. A Sentinel placed upon the ramparts.

Enter Count MURVILLE in the same uniform as BLINVAL's, the dress jacket of an hussar officer, and the cloak on the shoulder. He views the castle with attention, and then comes forward.

Mur. Here, then, I am at last; and with the pardon I had despaired of obtaining. His warm temper hurried Blinval into an act, which, though excusable in a young man, is death to a soldier. I can, in my turn, now give life. Yes, to the generous feelings of a monarch I am indebted for success, when interest and court favour failed. Blinval, how rich the gift! First, I'll embrace my friend; see him at liberty; then fly to my cousin, and seek that settled happiness her character bids me expect.

Enter GERMAIN.

Ger. [Aside, stealing forward.] Not quite so fast, or I'm ruined.—[To MURVILLE.] Sir, you're welcome. I have obeyed all your orders; nay, sir, exceeded them, in my impatience to oblige—[Aside.] myself: no lie there.

Mur. Germain, I have no doubt of your fidelity. I am expected, then?

Ger. No, sir, not yet; and if you could delay your visit for a short time, all things would be better arranged; at present, sir, the apartment, which has been occupied, is not ready; and—and—in short, sir, you are not expected yet.

Mur. This appears strange.—However, I have more serious business at present. Attend me here; I shall despatch you with a message in a few moments.

Ger. [Aside.] Serious business! Dear, dear! that's so lucky! If I can keep him at an inn all night, there will be time for invention.

Mur. [Pulling out his watch.] This loitering Governor! Could I impart to him my feeling and anxiety, he would be swift, indeed; but the scenes that he is accustomed to, deaden his sensibility.—[The drawbridge is lowered.] Hark! the bridge lowers; then there are some hopes.

Ger. [Aside.] Hopes! Oh! that I could but creep into a snail's house to escape. He'll have discovered all, and I shall live to see the gipsy's prophecy fulfilled—I shall be hanged!

Enter the GOVERNOR OF SORRENTO from the Castle, followed by the Lieutenant and an Officer; when they are on the bridge, the GOVERNOR directs the Officer to return to the Castle; the bridge is again raised, and the GOVERNOR and the Lieutenant come forward to MURVILLE.

Mur. I presume, sir, the Governor?

Gov 'Faith, sir, you have guessed right. I am

O'Rourke O'Flagherty of the kingdom, and, as you say, governor of the castle. You have despatches from Naples.

Mur. For the release of one of your state prisoners: I have the packet in my hand.

Gov. Welcome, sir, to Sorrento. I am seldom so pleased as when I wish my old acquaintances a good journey; though they are never grateful enough to wish to pay me a second visit.

Mur. I'm impatient to afford you that enjoyment. Here are my orders; inspect them. Here's the king's seal; they are correct.

[Delivering despatches.

Gov. [Reading.] "*Blinval!*"—Och! I am rejoiced—But we lose time. Lower the bridge!—Come, sir; a man's liberty must not be trifled with.

Ger. [Who has been skulking about with signs of fear.—Aside.] Oh! then, all's safe.—[Runs up to the bridge.] Hallo! within! Are you all deaf? Lower the bridge.

TRIO AND CHORUS.—The GOVERNOR, MURVILLE, and GERMAIN.

Lower the bridge, what hoa! attend.

Lower the bridge—

Officer. Who's there?

Gov. & Ger. } A friend

[The bridge is lowered again.

Gov. The strictest discipline, you see,
Within Sorrento's castle reigns:
My rule is—regularity,
And I'm rewarded for my pains.

[When the bridge is down, a guard comes from the Castle, leaving a sentinel at the other side of the bridge, and returns again into the Castle.

Officer. Advance! The countersign!

[The GOVERNOR makes signs to MURVILLE and GERMAIN to remain still.

Gov. Rochelle!

[Going to the Officer.

Officer. Correct! Pass friends, and all is well.

Gov. Lieutenant, hasten, *Blinval's* free.

[Giving the keys to the Lieutenant.

Mur. & Gov. } Fly! soothe his anxious mind to peace.

Gov. Roar like a lion—liberty!

Mur. & Gov. } Fly, quick, and hasten his release!

Mur. Tell him a friend, whose life he sav'd,
Has joyous tidings to impart.

Gov. Tell him he's been so well behav'd,
He's my permission to depart.

[Exit the Lieutenant over the bridge into the Castle, ordering the Officer from the ramparts to follow him.

Gov. Och! honey sweet, what joys we feel—

Mur. Transporting moment! yes, I feel—

Ger. I'm glad he's free, but still I feel—

Gov. When gratitude the bosom warms.

Mur. A generous act the bosom warms.

Ger. Some symptoms strong of fierce alarms.

Gov. Its glowing ardour you reveal.

Mur. Ah! could my tongue my joys reveal—

Ger. Ah! could my tongue my fears reveal—

Gov. Humanity, how bright thy charms!

Mur. & Ger. } 'Twould soon destroy those fancied charms.

Enter the Officer from the Castle.

Officer. Escap'd, escap'd! the pris'ner's fled!

[Exit GERMAIN, hastily.

The southern tower we've search'd in vain.

Gov. Oh, heaven! am I alive or dead?

Mur. Some mystery—

Gov. Some trick, 'tis plain!

To arms, to arms! Post sentries round!

[An alarm, flourish of drums, &c.

Officer. Each avenue, each opening guard!

Gov. Alive or dead, I'll have him found.

His slippery tricks I'll soon reward.

Enter Soldiers from the Castle.

To arms, to arms! the pris'ner's fled!

He must be found, alive or dead!

[All the Soldiers go off; but one party returns, bringing in GERMAIN.

Chorus. As now we search'd the castle round,

This fellow lurking near we found:

His guilty looks declare that he

Has help'd to set our pris'ner free.

Ger. I nothing know—in truth, 'tis so!

If he got free,

What's that to me?

I'm innocent, so let me go.

Chorus. March! The dungeon straight prepare:

He, for life, shall languish there.

Treachery was his intent;

Now he meets his punishment.

Ger. Oh! dear, good Mr. Governor, don't cram me into that abominable black castle, and I'll confess all.

Gov. Confess! Oh, ho! Then you begin to squeak, do you?

Mur. Scoundrel! And have you been accessory to his escape?

Ger. Why, lord, sir, he had escaped before I had any hand in the business.

Mur. Explain.

Ger. Why, you must know, then, that there's a secret communication between his prison and the Widow Belmont's. He has been burrowing under ground, and playing at bo-peep between the two buildings like a rabbit in a warren.

Gov. Has he so? 'Faith, then, I'll have my ferrets after him, and they'll soon bring him out. Corporal, take a guard, and go to the Widow Belmont's, and recover the prisoner.—[Exit Corporal with Guards.]—So, then, this singular gentleman has been cutting himself in half, and has been a double man after all. Then it was him I saw at the Widow's, and not Count Murville.

Mur. You certainly never saw Count Murville there; for I am he, and never yet entered her doors; but his reason for personating me I am at a loss to guess.

Ger. Love was his reason, sir. Love, you know, sir, will change a man into anything; and if Miss Rosina be not as much inclined to the prisoner as the prisoner is to her, I know nothing of the tender passion.

Gov. Och! then, the little blind boy, Master Cupid, has been at work with them.

Enter Mrs. BELMONT and ROSINA.

Mrs. B. Governor, what is all this? The confusion in my house—your guard—the—

Gov. Be aisy, Widow, be aisy! Here comes one that will clear up all.

Enter BLINVAL, guarded.

So, Mr. Proteus! 'Faith, and you're trapped! What, then, you put the Governor, and all his chains, bolts, bars, and sentries, at defiance. Eh! here you have this pickle, your cousin; but, give me leave, I must make known the real Murville. [*Presents him to Mrs. BELMONT.*] And that whipstart is my recluse of the south tower. Pretty, sweet innocent! see how demure he seems.

Ros. [*Advancing.*] Blinval! Oh! I'm so glad!

Mur. My dear Blinval! give me your hand, and let me give you joy of the pardon which I have obtained for you, and just delivered to the Governor.

Blin. My pardon! Huzza! My dear friend! I will, then, confess that—

Mur. You may spare yourself that trouble, for Germain has told us all. Cousin, my friend Blinval has had the ingenuity to find a secret communication from his prison to that apartment; and I believe your fair daughter made him explore it. The state is benefitted by the discovery; but he deserves to be made prisoner for life. Will you consent? Rosina has forged them, and he is, I dare be sworn, ready to hug his chains.

Mrs. B. I have had proofs of my daughter's attachment, and if she'll venture on such a prison-breaker—She's her own mistress. [*BLINVAL goes up to ROSINA, who retires bashfully to Mrs. BELMONT.*]

Nay, my child, you have my consent. Lock up his heart; and, like the Governor, temper your sway with gentleness.

FINALE.

Blin. *From Sorrento's prison free,
Prisoner here for life, I'll be!
Let not foes our bliss annoy,
Smile, good friends, and wish us joy.*

Chorus. *Let not foes our bliss annoy, &c.*

Ros. *Cupid's captives, void of pain,
Willing wear the marriage chain;
Hymen's fetters pleasing prove,
When the links are forg'd by love.*

Chorus. *Let not foes, &c.*

Gov. *Here has been a fine to-do!
One has all this while been two:
When the parson's work is done,
Two will certainly be one.*

Chorus. *When the parson's work is done,
Two will certainly be one.*

*From Sorrento's prison free,
Pris'ner here for life he'll be:
Let not foes our bliss annoy,
Smile, good friends, and wish us joy.*

[*Exeunt.*]

THE CONTRIVANCES;

A BALLAD OPERA, IN ONE ACT;

BY HENRY CAREY.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ROVEWELL
ARGUS
HEARTY
ROBIN.

ARETHUSA
BETTY.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—Rovewell's Lodgings.

ROBIN discovered.

Robin. Well, though pimping is the most honourable and profitable of all professions, it is certainly the most dangerous and fatiguing; but of all fatigues there's none like following a virtuous mistress. There's not one letter I carry, but I run the risk of kicking, caning, or pumping; nay, often hanging.

Let me see: I have committed three burglaries to get one letter to her. Now, if my master should not get the gipseys at last, I have ventured my sweet person to a fair purpose. But, basta! here comes my master and his friend Mr. Hearty. I must hasten and get our disguises,

*And if dame Fortune fail us now to win her,
Oh! all ye gods above! the devil's in her.* [Exit.]

Enter ROVEWELL and HEARTY.

Hearty. Why so melancholy, Captain? Come, come, a man of your gaiety and courage should never take a disappointment so much to heart.

Rove. 'Sdeath! to be prevented when I had brought my design so near perfection!

Hearty. Were you less open and daring in your attempts, you might hope to succeed. The old gentleman, you know, is cautious to a degree; his daughter is under a strict confinement: would you use more of the fox than the lion, fortune, perhaps, might throw an opportunity in your way. But you must have patience.

Rove. Who can have patience when danger is so near? Read this letter, and then tell me what room there is for patience.

Hearty. [Reads.] "*To-morrow will prevent all our vain struggles to get to each other. I am then to be married to my eternal aversion; you know the fop, 'tis Cuckoo, who, having a large estate, is forced upon me; but my heart can be none but Rowewell's. Immediately after the receipt of this, meet Betty at the old place; there is yet one invention left; if you pursue it closely, you may, perhaps, release her who would be your—Arethusa.*"

Rove. Yes, Arethusa, I will release thee, or die in the attempt. Dear friend, excuse my rudeness; you know the reason.

AIR.—ROVEWELL.

*I'll face ev'ry danger
To rescue my dear,
For fear is a stranger
Where love is sincere.
Repulses but fire us,
Despair we despise,
If beauty inspire us
To pant for the prize.* [Exit.]

Hearty. Well, go thy way, and get her; for thou deservest her, o'my conscience. How have I been deceived in this boy! I find him the very reverse of what his step-mother represented him; and am now sensible it was only her ill usage that forced my child away. His not having seen me since he was five years old, renders me a perfect stranger to him: under that pretence I have got into his acquaintance, and find him all I wish. If this plot of his fail, I believe my money must buy him the girl at last. [Exit.]

SCENE II.—A Chamber in Argus's House.

ARETHUSA discovered.

AIR.—ARETHUSA.

*See, the radiant queen of night
Sheds on all her kindly beams;
Gilds the plains with cheerful light,
And sparkles in the silver streams.
Smiles adorn the face of nature,
Tasteless all things yet appear,
Unto me a hopeless creature,
In the absence of my dear.*

Enter ARGUS.

Argus. Pray, daughter, what lingo is that same you chant and sputter out at this rate?

Are. English, sir.

Argus. English, quotha! adod! I took it to be nonsense.

Are. 'Tis a hymn to the moon.

Argus. A hymn to the moon! I'll have none of your hymns in my house. Give me the book, housewife.

Are. I hope, sir, there is no crime in reading a harmless poem.

Argus. Give me the book, I say: poems, with a plague! what are they good for, but to blow up the fire of love, and make young wenches wanton? But I have taken care of you, mistress; for to-morrow you shall have a husband to stay your stomach, and no less a person than 'Squire Cuckoo.

Are. You will not, surely, be so cruel as to marry me to a man I cannot love.

Argus. Why, what sort of a man would you have, Mrs. Minx?

AIR.—ARETHUSA.

*Genteel in personage,
Conduct, and equipage,
Noble by heritage,
Generous and free.
Brave, not romantic;
Learn'd, not pedantic;
Frolic, not frantic;
This must be he.*

*Honour maintaining,
Meanness disdainings,
Still entertaining,
Engaging, and new.
Neat, but not finical;
Sage, but not cynical;
Never tyrannical;
But ever true.*

Argus. Why, is not Mr. Cuckoo all this? Adod! he's a brisk young fellow, and a little feather-bed doctrine will soon put the Captain out of your head; and to put you out of his power, you shall be given over to the 'squire to-morrow.

Are. Surely, sir, you will, at least, defer it one day.

Argus. No, nor one hour. To-morrow morning, at eight of the clock, precisely. In the meantime, take notice, the 'squire's sister is hourly expected; so, pray, do you be civil and sociable with her, and let me have none of your pouts and glouts, as you tender my displeasure. [Exit.]

Are. To-morrow is short warning; but we may be too cunning for you yet, old gentleman.

Enter BETTY.

Oh! Betty, welcome a thousand times! What news? have you seen the Captain?

Betty. Yes, madam; and if you were to see him in his new rigging, you'd split your sides with laughing. Such a hoyden! such a piece of country stuff, you never set your eyes on! But the petticoats are soon thrown off; and if good luck attend us, you may easily conjure Miss Malkin, the 'squire's sister, into your own dear Captain.

Are. But when will they come?

Betty. Instantly, madam; he only stays to settle matters for our escape. He's in deep consultation with his privy-counsellor Robin, who is to attend him in the quality of a country put. They'll both

be here in a moment; so, let's in, and pack up the jewels, that we may be ready at once to leap into the saddle of liberty, and ride full speed to your desires.

Are. Dear Betty, let's make haste; I think every moment an age till I'm free from this bondage.

AIR.—ARETHUSA.

*When parents obstinate and cruel prove,
And force us to a man we cannot love,
'Tis fit we disappoint the sordid elves,
And wisely get us husbands for ourselves.*

[*A knocking without.*]

Betty. There they are; in, in. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter ARGUS.

Argus. You're woundy hasty, methinks, to knock at that rate. This is certainly some courtier come to borrow money; I know it by the saucy rapping of the footman. Who's at the door?

Robin. [*Without.*] Tummos.

Argus. Tummos! who's Tummos? Who would you speak with, friend?

Robin. [*Without.*] With young master's vather-in-law, that mun be, Master Hardguts.

Argus. And what's your business with Master Hardguts?

Robin. [*Without.*] Why, young mistress is come out o'the country to see brother's wife that mun be, that's all.

Argus. O!so! the 'squire's sister; I'm sorry I made her wait so long.

SCENE III.—A Chamber.

Enter ARGUS, introducing ROVEWELL, in woman's clothes, followed by ROBIN, as a clown.

Argus. Save you, fair lady, you're welcome to town. [*ROVEWELL curtsies.*] A very modest maiden, truly. How long have you been in town?

Robin. Why, an hour and a bit or so; we just put up horses at King's Arms yonder, and stayed a crum to zee poor things feed, for your London ostlers give little enough to poor beasts; an' you stond not by 'em yourzel, and zee 'em fed, as soon as your back's turned, adod! they'll cheat you afore your face.

Argus. Why, how now, Clodpate? are you to speak before your mistress, and with your hat on, too? Is that your country breeding?

Robin. Why, an' 'tis on, 'tis on; an' 'tis off, 'tis off: what cares Tummos for your false-hearted London compliments? An' you'd have an answer from young mistress, you mun look to Tummos; for she's so main bashful, she never speaks one word but her prayers, and thos'n so softly that nobody can hear her.

Argus. I like her the better for that; silence is a heavenly virtue in a woman, but very rare to be found in this wicked place. Have you seen your brother, pretty lady, since you came to town? [*ROVEWELL curtsies.*] Oh! miraculous modesty! would all women were thus! Can't you speak, madam?

[*ROVEWELL curtsies again.*]

Robin. An' you get a word from her, 'tis more nor she has spoken to us these fourscore and seven long miles; but young mistress will prate fast enough, an' you set her among your women folk.

Argus. Say'st thou so, honest fellow? I'll send her to those that have tongue enough, I'll warrant you. Here, Betty!

Enter BETTY.

Take this young lady to my daughter; 'tis 'Squire Cuckoo's sister; and, d'ye hear? make much of her, I charge you.

Betty. Yes, sir. Please to follow me, madam.

Rove. [*Aside to ROBIN.*] Now, you rogue, for a lie an hour and a half long, to keep the old fellow in suspense. [*Exit with BETTY.*]

Robin. Well, master, don't you think my mistress a dainty young woman? She's wonderfully benimred in our country for her shapes.

Argus. Oh! she's a fine creature, inaeed! But where's the 'squire, honest friend?

Robin. Why, one cannot find a man out in this same Londonshire, there are so many taverns and chocking-houses; you may as well seek a needle in a hay fardel, as they say'n i' the country. I was at 'squire's lodging yonder, and there was nobody but a prate-apace whoreson of a footboy, and he told me maister was at chocking-house, and all the while the vixen 'did nothing but tawnt and laugh at me: eood! I could have found in my heart to have gi'n him a good whirrit in the chops. So I went to one chocking-house, and t'other chocking-house, till I was quite weary; and I could see nothing but a many people supping hot suppings, and reading your gazing papers: we had much ado to find out your worship's house; the vixen boys set us o' thic side, and that side, till we were almost quite lost; an' it were not for an honest fellow that knowed your worship, and set us i' the right way.

Argus. 'Tis pity they should use strangers so; but as to your young mistress, does she never speak?

Robin. Adod! sir, never to a mon; why, she wo't not speak to her own father, she's so main bashful.

Argus. That's strange, indeed! But how does my friend, Sir Roger? he's well, I hope.

Robin. Hearty, still, sir. He has drunk down six fox-hunters sin last Lammass. He holds his old course still; twenty pipes a-day, a cup of mum in the morning, a tankard of ale at noon, and three bottles of stingo at night. The same mon now he was thirty years ago; and young 'Squire Yedward is just come from 'varsity: he's mainly growed sin you saw him; he's a fine, proper, tall gentleman now; why, he's near upon as tall as you or I, mun.

Argus. Good now, good now! But wouldst drink, honest friend?

Robin. I don't care an' I do, a bit or so; for, to say truth, I'm mortal dry.

Argus. Here, John!

Enter a Servant.

Take this honest fellow down, and make him welcome. When your mistress is ready to go, we'll call you.

Robin. Ah! pray, take care and make much of me, for I am a bitter honest fellow, and you did but know me.

[*Exit with Servant.*]
Argus. These country fellows are very blunt but very honest. I would fain hear his mistress talk. He said she'd find her tongue when she was once amongst those of her own sex. I'll go listen for once, and hear what the young tis have to say to one another.

[*Exit.*]

Enter ROVEWELL, ARETHUSA, and BETTY.

Rove. Dear Arethusa, delay not the time thus; your father will certainly come in and surprise us.

Betty. Let us make hay while the sun shines, madam: I long to be out of this prison.

Are. So do I; but not on the Captain's conditions, to be his prisoner for life.

Rove. I shall run mad if you trifle thus: name your conditions; I sign my consent before-hand.

[*Kisses her.*]

Are. Indeed, Captain, I'm afraid to trust you.

AIR.—ARETHUSA.

Cease to persuade,

Nor say you love sincerely;

When you've betray'd,

*You'll treat me most severely,
And fly what once you did pursue.*

Happy the fair

Who ne'er believes you;

But gives despair,

Or else deceives you,

And learns inconstancy from you.

Rove. Unkind Arethusa! I little expected this usage from you.

AIR.—ROVEWELL.

When did you see

Any falsehood in me,

That thus you unkindly suspect me?

Speak, speak your mind;

For I fear you're inclin'd,

In spite of my truth, to reject me.

If it must be so,

To the wars I will go,

Where danger my passion shall smother;

I'd rather perish there

Than linger in despair,

Or see you in the arms of another.

Enter ARGUS behind.

Argus. So, so; this is as it should be; they are as gracious as can be already. How the young tit smuggles her! Adod! she kisses with a hearty good will.

[*Aside.*]

Are. I must confess, Captain, I am half inclined to believe you.

Argus. Captain! how's this? bless my eyesight! I know the villain now; but I'll be even with him.

[*Aside.*]

Betty. Dear madam, don't trifle so; the parson's at the very next door, you'll be tacked together in an instant; and then I'll trust you to come back to your cage again, if you can do it with a safe conscience.

Argus. Here's a treacherous jade; but I'll do your business for you, Mrs. Jezabel.

[*Aside.*]

Betty. Consider, madam, what a life you lead here; what a jealous, ill-natured, watchful, covetous, barbarous, old cuff of a father you have to deal with! What a glorious opportunity this is, and what a sad, sad, very sad thing it is to die a maid!

Argus. If that jade die a maid, I'll die a martyr.

[*Aside.*]

Betty. In short, madam, if you stay much longer, you may repent it in every vein in your heart. The old hunk will undoubtedly pop in upon us and discover all, and then we're undone for ever.

Argus. You may go to the devil for ever, Mrs. Impudence.

[*Aside.*]

Are. Well, Captain, if you should deceive me—

Rove. If I do, may heaven—

Are. Nay, no swearing, Captain, for fear you should prove like the rest of your sex.

Rove. How can you doubt me, Arethusa, when you know how much I love you?

Argus. A wheedling dog! But I'll spoil his sport, anon.

[*Aside.*]

Betty. Come, come away, dear madam. I have the jewels: but stay, I'll go first and see if the coast be clear.

Argus. [*Meeting her.*] Where are you going, pretty maiden?

Betty. Only do—do—do—down stairs, sir.

Argus. And what hast thou got there, child?

Betty. Nothing but pi—pi—pi—pins, sir.

Argus. Here, give me the pins, and do you go to h—, Mrs. Minx, D'ye hear? out of my house this moment. [*Exit BETTY.*] These are your chamber jades, forsooth. *O tempora! O mores!* What an age is this! Get you in, forsooth; I'll talk with you anon. [*Exit ARETHUSA.*] So, Captain, are those your regimental clothes? I'll assure you they become you mightily. If you did but see yourself now, how much like a hero you look! *Ecce signum!* Ha, ha, ha!

Rove. Blood and fury! stop your grinning, or I'll stretch your mouth with a vengeance.

Argus. Nay, nay, Captain Belswagger, if you're so passionate, 'tis high time to call aid and assistance. Here, Richard, Thomas, John! help me to lay hold of this fellow. You have no sword now, Captain; no sword; d'ye mark me?

Enter Servants and ROBIN.

Robin. But I have a pistol, sir, at your service.

[*Pulls out a pistol.*]

Argus. Oh Lord! oh Lord!

Rove. And I'll unload it in your breast, if you stir one step after me.

Argus. A bloody-minded dog! But lay hold on that rogue there, that country cheat.

Robin. See here, gentlemen, are two little bulldogs of the same breed; [*presenting two pistols*] they are wonderful scourers of the brain; so that if you offer to molest or follow me—you understand me, gentlemen; you understand me.

[*Exit with ROVEWELL.*]

1 *Serv.* Yes, yes, we understand you, with a plague!

2 *Serv.* The devil go with 'em, I say.

Argus. Ay, ay, good b'ye to you, in the devil's name. A terrible dog! What a fright he has put me in! I sha'n't be myself this month. And you, ye cowardly rascals, to stand by and see my life in danger; get out, ye slaves; out of my house, I say. I'll put an end to all this; for I'll not have a servant in the house. I'll carry all the keys in my pocket, and never sleep more. What a murdering son of a w— this is! But I'll prevent him; for to-morrow she shall be married certainly, and then my furious gentleman can have no hopes left. A Jezabel! to have a red-coat without any money! Had he but money, if he want sense, manners, or even manhood itself, it mattered not a pin; but to want money is the devil. Well, I'll secure her under lock and key till to-morrow; and if her husband can't keep her from captain-hunting, e'en let her bring him home a fresh pair of horns every time she goes out upon the chace. [*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.—A Chamber

ARETHUSA discovered, sitting melancholy on a couch

AIR.—ARETHUSA.

Oh! leave me to complain

My loss of liberty;

I never more shall see my swain,

Nor ever more be free.

*Oh! cruel, cruel fate!
What joy can I receive,
When in the arms of one I hate,
I'm doom'd, alas! to live?
Ye pitying pow'rs above,
That see my soul's dismay,
Or bring me back the man I love,
Or take my life away.*

Enter ARGUS.

Argus. So, lady, you're welcome home! See, how the pretty turtle sits moaning the loss of her mate! What, not a word, Thusy? not a word, child? Come, come, don't be in the dumps now, and I'll fetch the captain, or the 'squire's sister; perhaps they may make it prattle a bit. Ah! ungracious girl! Is all my care come to this? Is this the gratitude you shew your uncle's memory, to throw away what he had bustling so hard for at so mad a rate? Did he leave you twelve thousand pounds, think you, to make you no better than a soldier's trull? to follow a camp? to carry a knapsack? This is what you'd have, mistress, is it not?

Are. This, and ten thousand times worse, were better with the man I love, than to be chained to the nauseous embraces of one I hate.

Argus. A very dutiful lady, indeed! I'll make you sing another song to-morrow; and till then, I'll leave you in *salva custodia*, to consider. B'ye, Thusy!

Are. How barbarous is the covetousness and caution of ill-natured parents! They toil for estates with a view to make posterity happy; and then, by a mistaken prudence, they match us to our aversion. But I am resolved not to suffer tamely, however: they shall see, though my body's weak, my resolution's strong, and I may yet find spirit enough to plague them.

AIR.—ARETHUSA.

*Sooner than I'll my love forego,
And lose the man I prize,
I'll bravely combat ev'ry woe,
Or full a sacrifice,
Nor bolts nor bars shall me control,
I death and danger dare;
Restraint but fires the active soul,
And urges fierce despair.
The window now shall be my gate,
I'll either fall or fly;
Before I'll live with him I hate,
For him I love I'll die.*

{Exit.

SCENE V.—The Street.

Enter ROVEWELL and Boy.

Boy. Sir, sir, I want to speak with you.

Rove. Is your mistress locked up, say you?

Boy. Yes, sir; and Betty's turned away, and all the men-servants; and there's no living soul in the house but our old cook-maid, and I, and my master, and Mrs. Thusy! and she cries, and cries her eyes out almost.

Rove. Oh! the tormenting news! But if the garrison be so weak, the castle may be the sooner stormed. How did you get out?

Boy. Through the kitchen-window, sir.

Rove. Shew me the window presently.

Boy. Alack-a-day! it won't do, sir. That plot won't take.

Rove. Why, sirrah?

Boy. You are something too big, sir.

Rove. I'll try that, however.

Boy. Indeed, sir, you can't get your leg in; but I could put you in a way.

Rove. How, dear boy?

Boy. I can lend you the key of Mrs. Thusy's chamber; if you can contrive to get into the house: but you must be sure to let my mistress out.

Rove. How couldst thou get it? This is almost a miracle.

Boy. I picked it out of my master's coat-pocket this morning, sir, as I was a-brushing him.

Rove. That's my boy! There's money for you. This child will come to good in time.

Boy. My master will miss me, sir; I must go; but I wish you good luck. *[Exit.*

ARETHUSA appears at the window above.

DUETT.—ROVEWELL and ARETHUSA.

Rov. Make haste and away, my only dear;

Make haste, and away, away!

For all at the gate,

Your true lover does wait,

And I pr'ythee, make no delay.

Are. Oh! how shall I steal away, my love?

Oh! how shall I steal away?

My daddy is near,

And I dare not, I fear;

Pray, come, then, another day.

Rov. Oh! this is the only day, my life;

Oh! this is the only day.

I'll draw him aside,

While you throw the gates wide,

And then you may steal away.

Are. Then, pr'ythee, make no delay, my dear,

Then, pr'ythee, make no delay:

We'll serve him a trick;

For I'll slip in the nick,

And with my true love away.

Cho. Oh! Cupid, befriend a loving pair;

Oh! Cupid, befriend us, we pray.

May our stratagem take,

For thine own sweet sake;

And, amen! let all true lovers say.

[Exit ARETHUSA]

Enter ROBIN, disguised as a Lawyer, and Soldiers.

Robin. So, my hearts of oak, are you all ready?

Sold. Yes, an't please your honour.

Rove. You know your cue, then; to your posts.

[They retire to a corner of the stage; ROBIN knocks smartly at the door.]

Robin. What, are you all asleep, or dead in the house, that you can't hear?

Enter ARGUS.

Argus. Sir, you are very hasty, methinks.

Robin. Sir, my business requires haste.

Argus. Sir, you had better make haste about it, for I know no business you have here.

Robin. Sir, I am come to talk with you on an affair of consequence.

Argus. Sir, I don't love talking; I know you not; and, consequently, can have no affairs with you.

Robin. Sir, not know me?

Argus. Sir, 'tis enough for me to know myself.

Robin. A d—d thwarting old dog this same.

[Aside.] Sir, I live but just in the next street.

Argus. Sir, if you lived at Jamaica, 'tis the same thing to me.

Robin. I find coaxing won't do. I must change my note, or I shall never unkenneel the old fox. *[Aside.]*

Well, Mr. Argus, there's no harm done, so take your leave of three thousand pounds. You have enough of your own already. *[Going.]*

Argus. How! three thousand pounds! I must inquire into this. *[Aside.]* Sir, a word with you.

Robin. Sir, I have nothing to say to you. I took you to be a prudent person, that knew the worth of money, and had to improve it; but I find I'm deceived.

Argus. Sir, I hope you'll excuse my rudeness; but, you know, a man cannot be too cautious.

Robin. Sir, that's true, and therefore I excuse you; but I'd take such treatment from no man in England besides yourself.

Argus. Sir, I beg your pardon; but to the business.

Robin. Why, thus it is: a spendthrift young fellow is galloping through a plentiful fortune; I have lent two thousand pounds upon it already; and if you'll advance an equivalent, we'll foreclose the whole estate, and share it between us; for I know he can never redeem it.

Argus. A very judicious man; I'm sorry I affronted him. *[Aside.]* But how is this to be done?

Robin. Very easily, sir. A word in your ear; a little more this way.

[DRAWS ARGUS aside; the Soldiers get between him and the door.]

Argus. But the title, sir, the title?

Robin. Do you doubt my veracity?

Argus. Not in the least, sir; but one cannot be too sure.

Robin. That's very true, sir; and, therefore, I'll make sure of you now I have you.

[ROBIN trips up his heels; the Soldiers blindfold and gag him, and stand over him; while ROSEWELL carries off ARETHUSA; after which they leave him, he making a great noise.]

Enter Mob.

All. What's the matter? what's the matter?

[They ungag him.]

Argus. Oh! neighbours, I'm robbed and murdered, ruined, and undone for ever.

1 Mob. Why, what's the matter, master?

Argus. There's a whole legion of thieves in the house; they gagged and blindfolded me, and offered forty naked swords at my breast. I beg of you to assist me, or they'll strip the house in a minute.

2 Mob. Forty drawn swords, say you, sir?

Argus. Ay, and more, I think, on my conscience.

2 Mob. Then look you, sir, I'm a married man, and have a large family, I would not venture amongst such a parcel of blood-thirsty rogues for the world; but, if you please, I'll run and call a constable.

All. Ay, ay; call a constable, call a constable.

Argus. I sha'n't have a penny left, if we stay for a constable. I am but one man, and, as old as I am, I'll lead the way, if you'll follow me. *[Exit.]*

All. Ay, ay; in, in; follow, follow; huzza!

1 Mob. Pr'ythee, Jack, do you go in, if you come to that.

4 Mob. I go in! what should I go in for? I have lost nothing.

Woman. What, nobody to help the poor old gentleman? odsbobs! if I were a man I'd follow him myself.

3 Mob. Why don't you, then? What occasion-ableness have I to be killed for him or you either?

Enter ROBIN, as Constable.

All. Here's Mr. Constable, here's Mr. Constable.

Robin. Silence, in the king's name.

All. Ay, silence, silence.

Robin. What's the meaning of this riot? Who makes all this disturbance?

1 Mob. I'll tell you, Mr. Constable—

3 Mob. An't please your worship, let me speak.

Robin. Ay, this man talks like a man of parts. What's the matter, friend?

3 Mob. An't please your noble worship's honour and glory, we are his majesty's liege subjects, and were terrified out of our habitations and dwelling-places, by a cry from abroad; which your noble worship must understand was occasionable by the gentleman of this house, who was so unfortunate as to be killed by thieves, who are now in his house to the numbering of above forty, an't please your worship, all completely armed with powder and ball, back-swords, pistols, bayonets, and blunderbusses.

Robin. But what is to be done in this case?

3 Mob. Why, an't please your worship, knowing your noble honour to be the king's majesty's noble officer of the peace, we thought 'twas best your honour should come and terrify these rogues away with your noble authority.

Robin. Well said, very well said, indeed. Gentlemen, I am the king's officer, and I command you, in the king's name, to aid and assist me to call those rogues out of the house. Who's within there? I charge you come out in the king's name, and commit yourselves to our royal authority.

2 Mob. This is the gentleman that was killed, an't please your worship.

Enter ARGUS.

Argus. Oh! neighbours, I'm ruined and undone for ever. They have taken away all that's dear to me in the world.

1 Mob. That's his money; 'tis a sad covetous dog.

Robin. Why, what's the matter? What have they done?

Argus. Oh! they have taken my child from me, my Thusy!

Robin. Good luck!

3 Mob. Marry come up, what valuation can she be? But have they taken nothing else?

Argus. Would they had stripped my house of every pennyworth, so they had left my child.

1 Mob. That's a lie, I believe; for he loves his money more than his soul, and would sooner part with that than a groat.

Argus. This is the Captain's doings; but I'll have him hanged.

Robin. But where are the thieves?

Argus. Gone, gone, beyond all hopes of pursuit.

2 Mob. What, are they gone? Then, come, neighbours, let's go in, and kill every mother's child of them.

Robin. Hold, I charge you to commit no murder; follow me, and we'll apprehend them.

Argus. Go, villains, cowards, scoundrels, or I shall suspect you are the thieves that mean to rob me of what is yet left. How brave you are, now all the danger's over! Oh! sirrah, you dog! *[Looking at ROBIN]* you are that rogue, Robin, the Captain's man. Seize him, neighbours, seize him!

Robin. *[Aside.]* I don't care what you do, for the job's over; I see my master coming.

Argus. Why don't you seize him, I say?

1 Mob. Not we, we have lost too much time about an old fool already.

2 *Mob.* Ay, the next time you are bound and gagged you shall lie and be d—d for me.

3 *Mob.* Ay, and me, too; come along, neighbours, come along. [*Exeunt Mob.*]

Enter ROVEWELL, HEARTY, ARETHUSA, and BETTY.

Argus. Bless me! who have we got here? Oh! Thus, Thus, I had rather never have seen thee again than have found you in such company.

Are. Sir, I hope my husband's company is not criminal.

Argus. Your husband! who's your husband, housewife? that scoundrel? Captain—Out of my sight, thou ungracious wretch! I'll go make my will this instant. And you, you villain, how dare you look me in the face after all this? I'll have you hanged, sirrah; I will so.

Hearty. Oh, fie! brother Argus, moderate your passion. It ill becomes the friendship you owe Ned Worthy, to vilify and affront his only child, and for no other crime than improving that friendship which has ever been between us.

Argus. Ha! my dear friend alive! I heard thou wert dead in the Indies. And is that thy son? and my godson, too, if I am not mistaken.

Hearty. The very same: the last and best remains of our family; forced by my wife's cruelty, and my absence, to the army. My wife is since dead, and the son she had by her former husband, who she intended to heir my estate; but fortune guided me by chance to my dear boy, who, after

twenty years' absence, and changing my name, knew me not, till I just now discovered myself to him and your fair daughter, who I will make him deserve by thirty thousand pounds, which I brought from India, besides what real estate I may leave at my death.

Argus. And to match that, old boy, my daughter shall have every penny of mine, besides her uncle's legacy. Ah! you young rogue, had I known you, I would not have used you so roughly. However, since you have won my girl so bravely, take her, and welcome. But you must excuse all faults: the old man meant all for the best: you must not be angry.

Rove. Sir, on the contrary, we ought to beg your pardon for the many disquiets we have given you; and with your pardon, we crave your blessing.

[*They kneel.*]

Argus. You have it, children, with all my heart. Adod! I am so transported, I don't know whether I walk or fly.

Are. May your joy be everlasting!

DUETT.—ROVEWELL and ARETHUSA.

Thus fondly caressing,

My idol, my treasure,

How great is the blessing!

How sweet is the pleasure!

With joy I behold thee,

And doat on thy charms;

Thus, while I enfold thee,

I've heaven in my arms.

[*Exeunt.*]

LOVE A LA MODE;

A FARCE, IN TWO ACTS;

BY CHARLES MACKLIN

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SIR THEODORE GOODCHILD
SIR ARCHY MACSARCASM
SIR CALLAGHAN O'BALLAGHAN
'SQUIRE GROOM
MR. MORDECAI.

CHARLOTTE.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment at Sir Theodore Goodchild's.*

Enter Sir THEODORE GOODCHILD and CHARLOTTE.

Char. Nay, there can be no harm in a little mirth, guardian; even those who happen to be the objects must approve the justice of it.

Sir T. But consider, Charlotte, what will the world say of me? Will it not be in every mouth, that Sir Theodore Goodchild was a very imprudent man, in combining with his ward to turn her lovers into ridicule?

Char. Not at all, sir; the world will applaud the mirth, especially when they know what kind of lovers they are; and that the sole motive of their addresses was the lady's fortune. Well, sure, since the days of giants and enchanted castles, no poor damsel has been besieged by such a group of odd mortals. Let me review my equipage of lovers: the first upon the list is a beau Jew, who, in spite of nature and education, sets up for a wit, a gentleman, and a man of taste.

Sir T. Ay, laugh at him as much as you will.

Char. The next is a downright English, New-market, stable-bred, gentleman-jockey; who, having ruined his finances by dogs, grooms, cocks, and horses, and such like company, now thinks to retrieve his affairs by a matrimonial match with a city fortune.

Sir T. Ha, ha, ha! I find, madam, you have perused the 'squire with great exactness.

Char. Pretty well, sir. To this Newmarket wight succeeds a proud, haughty, Caledonian knight; whose tongue, like the dart of death, spares neither sex nor age: all dread, and all feel it.

Sir T. Yes, yes; his insolence of family, and licentiousness of wit, have gained him the contempt and general toleration of mankind. But we must not look upon his spleen and ill-nature, my dear, as a national, but a personal vice.

Char. As such, sir, I always understand, and laugh at him. Well, of all my swains, he is the most whimsical; his passion is to turn every mortal into ridicule: even I, the object of his flame, cannot escape; for, while his avarice courts my fortune, his pride despises and sneers at my birth.

Sir T. That, Charlotte, is only to shew his wit.

Char. True, sir. The next in Cupid's train is your nephew, guardian; a wild Irish, Prussian, hard-headed soldier, whose military humour, and fondness for his profession, make me fancy, sometimes, that he was not only born in a siege, but that Bellona had been his nurse, Mars his schoolmaster, and the furies his playfellows. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir T. Ha, ha, ha! Oh, fie! Charlotte, how can you be so severe upon my poor nephew?

Char. Upon my honour, Sir Theodore, I don't mean to be severe, for I like his character extremely. Ha, ha!

Sir T. Well, well: notwithstanding your mirth, madam, I assure you, he has gained the highest esteem in his profession. But what can you expect, my dear, from a soldier, a mere rough-hewn soldier; who, at the age of fifteen, would leave Ireland and his friends? so that I don't suppose he has six ideas out of his profession: garrisons and camps have been the courts and academies that have formed him. But he ever had, from a child, a kind of military madness.

Char. Oh! I am in love with his warlike humour, I think it highly entertaining.

Sir T. As he has not made any direct addresses to you, Charlotte, let me inform him how improper such a step would be, and even let us leave him out of our scheme to-night.

Char. Oh! sir, impossible! our day's sport, our plot, our everything, would be imperfect without him, why, I intend him to be the leading instrument in the concert. One cannot possibly do with-

out Sir Callaghan Brall—Bra—Brall—Pray, guardian, teach me to pronounce my lover's name.

Sir T. Thou art a mad creature! Well, madam, I will indulge your wicked mirth: his name is Callaghan O'Brallaghan.

Char. Oh, shocking! Callaghan O'Brallaghan! Why, it is enough to choke one; and it is as difficult to be uttered as a Welch pedigree. Why, if the fates should bring us together, I shall be obliged to hire an Irish interpreter to go about with me, to teach the people to pronounce my name. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir T. You may laugh, madam, but he is as proud of that name as any of your lovers are of their titles. I suppose they all dine here.

Char. Certainly; all but 'Squire Groom.

Sir T. Oh! you must not expect him; he is at York; he was to ride his great match there yesterday. Let me see: what is it o'clock? almost three. I will but just step to Lincoln's-inn Hall, and see what they are doing in your cause; it is to be ended to-day. By the time I return, I suppose your company will be come. A good morning to you, Charlotte.

Char. Sir, a good morning.

[Exit Sir T.]

Morde. [Sings Italian without.]

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Mr. Mordecai, madam.

Char. Shew him in.

[Exit Serv.]

Enter MORDECAI.

Morde. [Singing an Italian air, and addressing CHARLOTTE fantastically.] Voi sete molto cortese! anima mia! Here let me kneel and pay my softest adoration; and thus, and thus, in amorous transport, breathe my last.

[Kisses her hand.]

Char. Ha, ha, ha! Softly, softly! You would not, surely, breathe your last yet, Mr. Mordecai?

Morde. Why, no, madam; I would live a little longer for your sake.

[Bowing very low.]

Char. Ha, ha, ha! You are infinitely polite! but a truce with your gallantry—why, you are as gay as the sun; I think I never saw anything better fancied than that suit of your's, Mr. Mordecai.

Morde. Ha, ha!—a—well enough; just as my tailor fancied. Ha, ha, ha! Do you like it, madam?

Char. Quite elegant! I don't know any one about town deserves the title of beau better than Mr. Mordecai.

Morde. Oh! dear madam, you are very obliging.

Char. I think you are called Beau Mordecai by everybody.

Morde. Yes, madam, they do distinguish me by that title, but I don't think I merit the honour.

Char. Nobody more; for I think you are always by far the finest man in town. But, do you know, that I have heard of your extraordinary court, the other night, at the opera, to Miss Sprightly?

Morde. Oh, heavens! madam, how can you be so evere? That the woman has designs, I steadfastly believe; but as to me—oh!

Char. Ha, ha, ha! Nay, nay, you must not deny it, for my intelligence is from very good hands.

Morde. Pray, who may that be?

Char. Sir Archy Macsarcasm.

Morde. Oh, shocking! the common Pasquin of the town: besides, madam, you know he's my rival, and not very remarkable for veracity in his narrations.

Char. Ha, ha, ha! I cannot say he's a religious observer of truth, but his humour always makes

amends for his invention. You must allow he has humour, Mr. Mordecai.

Morde. O cuor mio! How can you think so? Bating his scandal, dull, dull as an alderman after six pounds of turtle, four bottles of port, and twelve pipes of tobacco.

Char. Ha, ha, ha! Oh! surfeiting, surfeiting!

Morde. The man, indeed, has something droll, something ridiculous in him; his abominable Scots accent, his grotesque visage almost buried in snuff, the roll of his eyes, and twist of his mouth, his strange, inhuman laugh, his tremendous periwig, and his manner altogether, indeed, has something so caricatureably risible in it, that—ha, ha, ha!—may I die, madam, if I don't take him for a mountebank-doctor at a Dutch fair.

Char. Oh, oh! what a picture has he drawn!

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir Archy Macsarcasm is below, madam.

Char. Shew him up. [*Exit Serv.*]

Morde. Don't you think, madam, he is a horrid, foul-mouthed, uncouth fellow? He is worse to me, madam, than assafetida, or a tallow-chandler's shop in the dog-days; his filthy high-dried poisons me, and his scandal is grosser than a hackney news-writer's: madam, he is as much despised by his own countrymen as by the rest of the world. The better sort of Scotland never keep him company: but that is *entre nous, entre nous*.

Sir A. [*Without.*] Randol, bid Sawney be here wi' the chariot at aught o'clock exactly.

Enter Sir ARCHY MACSARCASM.—[*MORDECAI runs up to embrace him.*]

Ha, ha, ha! my chield o' circumcision, gie's a wag o' yer loof; hoo d'ye do, my bonny Eesraelite?

Morde. Always at your service, Sir Archy. He stinks worse than a Scotch snuff-shop. [*Aside.*]

Sir A. Weel, Mordecai, I see ye are as deeligent in the service o' yer mistress as in the service o' yer leuking-glass, for yer face and yer thoughts are a' turned upon the ane or the ither.

Morde. And I see your wit, Sir Archy, like a lawyer's tongue, will ever retain its usual politeness and good-nature.

Char. [*Coming forward.*] Ha, ha, ha! Civil and witty on both sides. Sir Archy, your most obedient.

Sir A. Ten thousand pardons, madam, I didna observe ye; I hope I see yer ladyship weel. Ah! ye look like a deivinity. [*Curtseys.*]

Sir A. Ten thousand pardons, madam, I didna observe ye; I hope I see yer ladyship weel. Ah! ye look like a deivinity. [*Bowing awkwardly and low.*]

Char. Sir Archy, this is immensely gallant.

Sir A. Weel, madam, I see my friend Mordecai here, is determined to tak' awa' the prize frae us a'. Ha, ha, ha! He is tricked out in a' the colours o' the rainboo.

Char. Mr. Mordecai is always well dressed, Sir Archy.

Sir A. Upon honour, he is as fine as a jay. Turn aboot, mon, turn aboot; let us view yer finery: stap along, and let us see yer shapes; he has a bonny march wi' him; very weel, very elegant. Ha, ha, ha! Guid troth! I think I never saw a tooth-drawer better dressed in a' my life.

[*Admiring MORDECAI's dress.*]

Char. Ha, ha, ha?

Morde. You are very polite, sir.

Char. But, Sir Archy, what is become of my Irish lover, your friend, Sir Callaghan? I hope he dines here.

Sir A. Ah, ah! guid faith wull he! I hae brought him along wi' me.

Char. What, is he in the house?

Sir A. Ay, in this very mansion, madam; for ye maun ken, that, like the monarchs o' auld, I never travel noo without my feul.

Char. Then, pray, Sir Archy, exhibit your fool.

Morde. Let's have a slice of him.

Sir A. Jauntly, jauntly; no' so fast! he's no' in right order yet.

Char. How do you mean, Sir Archy?

Sir A. Madam, as we came hither, I cooncelled him to write a love epistle to you, by way o' introduction till his courship: he is noo aboot it below stairs, an' in ten minutes ye may look to see an amorous billet, sic as hae nae been penned sin' the days o' Don Quixote. Ha, ha, ha!

Char. Oh, charming! I shall be impatient till I see his passion upon paper.

Sir A. Gude faith! madam, he has done that already; for he has composed a jargon that he ca's a sonnet, upon his bewitching Charlotte, as he terms you. Mordecai, you have heard him sing it.

Morde. I beg your pardon, Sir Archy, I have heard him roar it. Madam, we had him last night at the tavern, and made him give it to us in an Irish howl, that might be heard from hence to West Chester.

Sir A. Ha, ha, ha! Why, ye have a deevilish deal o' wit, Mordecai.

Char. Ha, ha, ha! I must hear this song.

Morde. Madam, your servant: I will leave Sir Archy to entertain you for a few minutes.

Char. You are not going, Mr. Mordecai?

Morde. Madam, I am only going down stairs to see if Sir Callaghan is disengaged; and if he be, to have a laugh at him before dinner, by way of a whet; that's all, madam; only by way of a whet.

Sir A. But, harkye! Mr. Mordecai, not a seclable o' the letter.

Morde. Oh! never fear me, Sir Archy, I am as secret as a spy. [*Exit.*]

Sir A. What a fantastical baboon this Eesraelite maks o' himsel'! the fallow is the mockery o' the hale nation.

Char. Why, to say the truth, he is entertaining, Sir Archy.

Sir A. Oh! yes, he is ridiculous, therefore, very usefu' in society; for wherever he comes there maun be laughter. But, now, madam, if ye please, a word or twa o' oor ain matters: ye see I dinna pester ye wi' flames, and darts, and sighings, and lamentations, and freevolous protestations, like yer silly lovers in a romance; for ye ken I always speak my thoughts wi' a blunt integrity: madam, I love you, and gin I didna, I wad scorn to say it.

Char. Oh! Sir Archy, all the world allows you sincerity, which is the most valuable quality a friend or a lover can possess.

Sir A. Vary true, madam; therefore, I cannot help gi'ing ye a bit o' advice concerning these fallows aboot ye, wha ca' themselfs your lovers. 'Squire Groom, doubtless, is a man o' honour, and my vary gude friend, but he is a beggar, a beggar; and, touching this Mordecai, the fallow's walthy, 'tis true; yes, yes, he is walthy, but he is a reptile, a mere reptile! and, as to the Irishman, Sir Callaghan O'Brallaghan, the fallow's weel enough to laugh at, but I wad hae ye look aboot ye there; for ye ken that yer guardian is his uncle, and, to my certain knowledge, there is a design upon yer fortune in that quarter, depend upon it.

Char. Very possible, Sir Archy, very possible; for a woman's fortune, I believe, is the principal object of every lover's wish.

Sir A. Madam, yer observation is very orthodox, in truth, as to Mordecai, Sir Callaghan, 'Squire Groom, and sic like fallows; but men o' honour—men o' honour, madam, hae ither principles, I assure ye, lady, the tenor o' my affection is nae for your pecuniary, but for the mental graces o' yer saul, and the deevine perfections o' yer body, which are, indeed, to me a Peru and a Mexico.

Char. Oh! Sir Archy, you overwhelm me.

Sir A. Madam, I speak upon the vercity o' mine honour; beside, madam, gin ye marry me, ye wull marry a man o' sobreeety and economy: 'tis true, I am not in the high-day o' blude, yet, as the poet sings, "far frae the vale o' years;" not like our young flashy whipsters, that gang aff like a squib or a cracker on a rejoicing night, in a noise and a stink, and are never heard o' after.

Char. You are certainly right, Sir Archy, the young fellows of fashion are mere trifles.

Sir A. They are baubles, madam; absolute baubles and prodigals; therefore, ye should preponderate the matter weel before ye mak' yer election. Consider, madam, there is nae scant o' walth or honour in oor family. Lady, we hae, in the house o' Macsarcasm, twa barons, three viscounts, sax earls, ene marquise, and twa dukes, besides baronets and lairds oot o' a' reckoning.

Char. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir A. What gars ye laugh, madam?

Char. I beg your pardon, sir; but—ha, ha, ha!—I am laughing to—ha, ha, ha!—to think what a number of noble relations I shall have.

Sir A. 'Faith! wull ye, madam; and ither guess families than ye hae in this part o' the world. Odswns! madam, there is as much difference betwixt oor nobelity o' the north, and your's o' the south, as there is between a hound o' blude and a mangrel.

Char. Ha, ha, ha! Pray, how do you make out that, Sir Archy?

Sir A. Why, madam, in Scotland, a' oor nobelity are sprung frae monarchs, warriors, heroes, and glorious achievements; now, here in the south, ye are a' sprung frae sugar-hogsheds, rum-puncheons, woo'-packs, hop-sacks, earn-bars, and tar-jackets; in short, ye are a composition of Jews, Turks, and refugees, and o' a' the commercial vagrants o' the land and sea; a sort of amphibious breed ye are.

Char. Ha, ha, ha! We are a strange mixture, indeed; nothing like so pure and noble as you are in the north.

Sir A. Oh! naething like it, madam, naething like it; we are o' another kidney. Now, madam, as ye yoursel' are nae weel propagated, as ye hae the misfortune to be a child o' commerce, ye should endeavour to mak' your espousals into ane o' oor auncient noble families o' the north; for ye maun ken, madam, that sic an alliance wull purify yer blude, and gie ye a rank and consequence in the world that a' yer pelf, were it as muckle as the bank o' Edenbrough, cou'dna purchase for ye.

Char. Very true, Sir Archy, very true; upon my word, your advice is friendly and impartial, and I wull think of it.

Enter MORDECAI.

Morde. Here he is! he is coming, madam; he is but just giving some orders to his servant about his baggage and post-horses.

Char. I hope he is not going away

Morde. Troth is he, madam; he is impatient to be with the army in Germany.

Sir C. [Within.] Is Sir Archy Macsarcasm and the lady this way, do you say, young man?

Serv. [Within.] Yes, sir.

Sir C. [Within.] Then, I'll trouble you with no further ceremony.

Enter SIR CALLAGHAN O'BALLAGHAN.

Madam, I am your most devoted and most obedient humble servant, and am proud to have the honour of kissing your fair hand this morning.

[Salutes CHARLOTTE.]

Char. Sir Callaghan, your humble servant. I am sorry to hear we are likely to lose you. I was in hopes the campaign had been quite over in Germany for this winter.

Sir C. Yes, madam, it was quite over, but it began again: a true genius never loves to quit the field till he has left himself nothing to do; for then, you know, madam, he can keep it with more safety.

Sir A. Well, but, Sir Callaghan, just as ye entered the apartment, the lady was urging she should like it mightily, gin ye wad favour her wi' a slight narrative of the late transactions and battles in Germany.

Char. If Sir Callaghan would be so obliging.

Sir C. Oh! dear madam, don't ax me.

Char. Sir, I beg pardon; I would not press anything that I thought might be disagreeable to you.

Sir C. Oh! dear madam, it is not for that; but it rebuts a man of honour to be talking to ladies of battles, and sieges, and skirmishes; it looks like gasconading and making the fanfaron. Besides, madam, I give you my honour, there is no such thing in nature as making a true description of a battle.

Char. How so, sir?

Sir C. Why, madam, there is so much doing everywhere, there is no knowing what is done anywhere; for every man has his own part to look after, which is as much as he can do, without minding what other people are about. Then, madam, there is such drumming and trumpeting, firing and smoking, fighting and rattling everwhere; and such an uproar of courage and slaughter in every man's mind; and such a delightful confusion altogether, that you can no more give an account of it than you can of the stars in the sky.

Sir A. As I shall answer it, I think it a very descriptive account that he gives of a battle.

Char. Admirable! and very entertaining.

Morde. Oh, delightful!

Sir A. Mordecai, ask him some questions; to him, to him, mon; hae a little fun wi' him; smoke him, smoke him; rally him, mon, rally him.

[Apart to MORDECAI.]

Morde. I'll do it, I'll do it; yes, I will smoke the Captain. [Apart.] Well, and pray, Sir Callaghan, how many might you kill in a battle?

Sir C. Sir?

Morde. I say, sir, how many might you have killed in any one battle?

Sir C. Kill! Hum! Why, I generally kill more in a battle than a coward would choose to look upon, or than an impertinent fellow would be able to eat. Ha! are you answered, Mr. Mordecai?

Morde. Yes, yes, sir, I am answered. He is a devilish droll fellow; vastly queer.

Sir A. Yes, he is very queer. But ye were very sharp upon him. Odswns! at him again, at him again; have another cut at him. [Apart.]

Morde. Yes, I will have another cut at him.

Sir A. Do, do. He'll bring himself intill a d—d scrape presently. [*Aside.*]

Morde. [*Going to Sir C. and sneering at him.*] He, he, he! But, harkye! Sir Callaghan—he, he, he!—give me leave to tell you now, if I were a general—

Sir C. You a general! 'Faith! then, you would make a very pretty general. [*Turns MORDECAI about.*] Pray, madam, look at the general. Ha, ha, ha!

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir C. Oh! my dear Mr. Mordecai, be advised, and don't prate about generals; it is a very hard trade to learn, and requires being in the field late and early, a great many frosty nights and scorching days, to be able to eat and drink, and laugh, and rejoice, with danger on one side of you, and death on the other; and a hundred things beside, that you know no more of than I do of being high priest of a synagogue; so hold your tongue about generals, Mr. Mordecai, and go and mind your lottery-tickets, and your cent. per cent. in 'Change-alley.

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir A. Ha, ha, ha! He hath tickled up the Eesraelite: he has gi'en it the Moabite o' baith sides o' his lugs.

Char. But, Sir Callaghan, sure, you must have been in imminent danger in the variety of actions you must have gone through.

Sir C. Oh! to be sure, madam; who would be a soldier without danger? Danger, madam, is a soldier's greatest glory, and death his best reward.

Morde. Ha, ha, ha! That is an excellent bull. Death a reward! Pray, Sir Callaghan, no offence, I hope, how do you make death being a reward?

Sir C. How! Why, don't you know that?

Morde. Not I, upon honour!

Sir C. Why, a soldier's death in the field of battle, is a monument of fame, that makes him as much alive as Cæsar, or Alexander, or any dead hero of them all.

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Char. Very well explained, Sir Callaghan.

Sir C. Why, madam, when the history of the English campaigns in America come to be written, there is your own brave young general, that died in the field of battle before Quebec, will be alive to the end of the world.

Char. You are right, Sir Callaghan; his virtues, and those of his fellow-soldiers in that action, will be remembered by their country while Britain or British gratitude has a being.

Sir A. Oh! the highlanders did gude service in that action; they cut them, and slashed them, and whapt them aboot, and played the vary deevil wi' them, sir. There's nae sic thing as standing a highlander's Andrew Ferrara; they will slaughe aff a fallow's head, at a dash slap: it was they that did the business at Quebec.

Sir C. I dare say they were not idle, for they are tight fellows. Give me your hand, Sir Archy; I assure you, your countrymen are good soldiers; ay, and so are our's, too.

Char. Well, Sir Callaghan, I assure you, I am charmed with your heroism, and greatly obliged to you for your account. Come, Mr. Mordecai, we will go down to Sir Theodore, for I think I heard his coach stop.

Morde. Madam, I attend you with pleasure: will you honour me with the tip of your ladyship's wed-

ding-finger? Sir Callaghan, your servant; your's; your's; look here, here. [*Erit with CHAR.*]

Sir C. I find he is a very impertinent coxcomb, this same beau Mordecai.

Sir A. Yes, sir, he is a d—d impudent rascal!

Sir C. I assure you, I had a great mind to be upon the *qui vive* with him, for his jokes and his mockeries, but that the lady was by.

Sir A. Yes, he is a cursed impudent fellow! Because he is suffered to speak till a man o' fashion at Bath and Tunbridge, and other public places, the rascal always obtrudes himself upon ye. But, Sir Callaghan, hae ye written the letter to the lady?

Sir C. I have not.

Sir A. Hoo happened that, mon?

Sir C. Why, upon reflecting, I found it would not be consisting with the decorums of a man of honour, to write to a lady in the way of matrimonial advances, before I had first made my affections known to her guardian, who is, you know, my uncle; so, I have indited the letter to him instead of the lady, which is the same thing, you know.

Sir A. Ha, ha! Exactly, exactly: for, so ye do but write about it, ye ken, it matters not to whom.

Sir C. Ay, that is what I thought myself: so here it is. [*Takes out a letter.*] "To Sir Theodore Goodchild."

Sir A. Ay, let us have it: I warrant it's a bonny epistle.

Sir C. [*Reads.*] "Sir,—As I have the honour to bear the character of a soldier, and to call Sir Theodore Goodchild uncle, I do not think it would be consisting with a man of honour to behave like a scoundrel."

Sir A. That's an excellent remark, Sir Callaghan, an excellent remark, and vary new.

Sir C. Yes, I think it is a good remark. [*Reads.*] "Therefore, I thought proper, before I proceeded any farther, (for I have done nothing as yet,) to break my mind to you before I engage the affections of the young lady." You see, Sir Archy, I intend to carry the place like a soldier, *à la militaire*, as we say abroad for I make my approaches regularly to the breach, before I attempt the covered way.

Sir A. Excellent! that's excellent!

Sir C. Yes, I think it will do. [*Reads.*] "For as you are a gentleman, and one that knows my family by my father's side, which, you are sensible, is as old as any in the three kingdoms, and older, too; so, I thought it would be foolish to stand shilly-shally any longer, but come to the point at once." You see, Sir Archy, I give him a rub; but by way of a hint about my family; because why, do you see? Sir Theodore is my uncle only by my mother's side, which is a little upstart family, that came in with one Strongbow, but t'other day—lord! not above six or seven hundred years ago; whereas, my family, by my father's side, are all the true old Milesians, and related to the O'Flaherty's and O'Shaughnesses, and the Mac Lauchlins, the O'Donnaghans, O'Callaghans, O'Geogaghans, and all the tick blood of the nation; and I myself, you know, am an O'Brallaghan, which is the oldest of them all.

Sir A. Ay, ay; I believe ye are o' an auncient family, Sir Callaghan; but ye are oot in aine point.

Sir C. What is that, Sir Archy?

Sir A. Whar, ye said ye were as auncient as any family i' the three kingdoms.

Sir C. 'Faith! then, I said nothing but truth.

Sir A. Hut, hut, hut awa', mon! hut awa'! ye munna say that; what the de'il! consider our fami-

lies i' the north; why, ye o' Ireland, sir, are but a colony frae us; an outcast, a mere outcast; and as such ye remain till this hour.

Sir C. I beg your pardon, Sir Archy, that is the Scotch account, which, you know, never speaks truth, because it is always partial: but the Irish history, which must be the best, because it was written by an Irish poet of my own family, one Shemus Thurlough Shannaghan O'Brallaghan, and he says, in his chapter of genealogy, that the Scotch are all Irishmen's bastards.

Sir A. Hoo, sir! bastards! Do ye mak' us ille-geetemate, illegeetemate, sir?

Sir C. 'Faith! I do: for the youngest branch of our family, one Mac Fergus O'Brallaghan, was the very man that went from Carrickfergus, and peopled all Scotland with his own hands; so that, my dear Sir Archy, you must be bastards, of course, you know.

Sir A. Harkye! Sir Callaghan, though yer ignorance and vanity wad mak' conquerors and ravishers o' yer auncesters, and harlots and Sabines o' oor mithers, yet, ye sall prove, sir, that their issue are a' the children o' honour.

Sir C. Harkye, harkye! Sir Archy, what is that ye mentioned about ignorance and vanity?

Sir A. Sir, I denoonce ye baith ignorant and vain, and mak' yer maist o't.

Sir C. 'Faith! sir, I can make nothing of it; for they are words I don't understand, because they are what no gentleman is used to; and, therefore, you must unsay them.

Sir A. Hoo, sir! eat my words? a North Briton eat his words?

Sir C. Indeed, you must, and this instant eat them.

Sir A. Ye sall eat first a piece o' this weapon.

[*Draws.*]

Sir C. Poo, poo! Sir Archy, put up, put up; this is no proper place for such work; consider, drawing a sword is a very serious piece of business, and ought always to be done in private: we may be prevented here; but if you are for a little of that fun, come away to the right spot, my dear.

Sir A. Nae equivocation, sir; dinna ye think ye hae gotten beau Mordecai to cope wi'. Defend yersel'; for, by the sacred honour o' Saint Andrew, ye sall be responsible for makin' us illegeetimate, sir, illegeetimate!

Sir C. Then, by the sacred crook of Saint Patrick, you are a very foolish man to quarrel about such a trifle. But since you have a mind for a tilt, have at you, my dear, for the honour of the sod. Oho! my jewel! never fear us, you are as welcome as the flowers of May.

[*They fight.*]

Enter CHARLOTTE.

Char. Oh, bless me! gentlemen, what are you doing? What is all this about?

Sir C. Madam, it is about Sir Archy's great-grandmother.

Char. His great-grandmother!

Sir C. Yes, madam; he is angry that I said my ancestor, Fergus O'Brallaghan, was a gallant of her's.

Char. Grandmother! Pray, Sir Archy, what is the meaning of all this?

Sir A. Madam, he has cast an affront upon a hale nation.

Sir C. I am sure, if I did, it was more than I intended; I only argued out of the history of Ireland, to prove the antiquity of the O'Brallaghans.

Sir A. Weel, sir, sin ye say ye didna intend the affront, I am satisfied. [*Puts up his sword.*]

Sir C. Not I, upon my honour; there are two things I am always afraid of: the one is, of being affronted myself, and the other, of affronting any man.

Sir A. Vary weel, sir, vary weel.

Char. That is a prudent and a very generous maxim, Sir Callaghan. Sir Archy, pray, let me beg that this affair may end here: I desire you will be the friends you were before this mistake happened.

Sir A. Madam, yer commands are absolute.

Char. Sir Callaghan—

Sir C. Madam, with all my heart and soul. I assure you, Sir Archy, I had not the least intention of affronting or quarrelling with you.

[*Offers to embrace.*]

Sir A. [*Starting from him with contempt.*] Vary weel, sir, vary weel.

Sir C. Oh! the curse of Cromwell upon your proud Scotch stomach!

[*Aside.*]

Char. Well, gentlemen, I am glad to see you are come to a right understanding: I hope 'tis all over.

Sir A. I am satisfied, madam; there is an end on't. But now, Sir Callaghan, let me tell ye as a friend, ye should never enter intill a dispute aboot leeterature, heestory, or the anteequity o' families, for ye hae gotten sic a wicked, awkward, cursed jargon upon yer tongue, that ye are never inteelligible in yer language.

Sir C. Ha, ha, ha! I beg your pardon, Sir Archy, it is you that have got such a cursed twist of a fat Scotch brogue about the middle of your own tongue, that you can't understand good English when I spake it you.

Sir A. Ha, ha, ha! Weel, that is droll enough, upon honour! ye are as gude as a farce or a comedy: but ye are oot again, Sir Callaghan; it is ye that hae the brogue, and not me; for a' the world kens I speak the sooth country sae weel, that whatever I gang, I am always ta'en for an Englishman: but we wul mak' judgment by the lady which of us twa has the brogue?

Sir C. Oh! with all my heart! Pray, madam, have I the brogue?

Char. Ha, ha, ha! Not in the least, Sir Callaghan, not in the least.

Sir C. I am sure I could never perceive it.

Char. Pray, Sir Archy, drop this contention, or we may chance to have another quarrel; you both speak most elegant English: neither of you have the brogue; neither. Ha, ha, ha!

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Dinner is served, madam, and Sir Theodore desires your company. [*Exit.*]

Char. I'll wait on him. Gentlemen, you will come. [*Exit.*]

Sir A. Instantly, madam. Weel, Sir Callaghan, dinna let us drape the design o' the letter, notwithstanding what has happened.

Sir C. Are we friends, Sir Archy?

Sir A. Pooh! upon honour am I; it was a' a mistake.

Sir C. Then give me your hand: I assure you, Sir Archy, I always love a man when I quarrel with him, after I am friends.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Dinner is served, gentlemen. [*Exit.*]

Sir A. Come along, then, Sir Callaghan; I will bring ye and the lady together after dinner, and then we sall see hoo ye'll mak' yer advances in love.

Sir C. Oh! never fear me, Sir Archy: I will not stay to make a regular siege of it, but will take her at once with a *coup de main*, or die upon the spot; for, as the old song says, Sir Archy:

*You never did hear of an Irishman's fear,
In love or in battle, in love or in battle;
We are always on duty, and ready for beauty,
Tho' cannons do rattle, tho' cannons do rattle:
By day and by night, we love and we fight,
We're honour's defender, we're honour's defender;
The foe and the fair we always take care
To make them surrender, to make them surrender.*

[*Ereunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Enter Sir ARCHY MACSARCASM and CHARLOTTE.

Sir A. Odswuns! madam, step intill us for a moment, ye will crack yoursel wi' laughter; we hae gotten anither feul come to divert us unexpectedly, which, I think, is the highest finished feul the age has produced.

Char. Whom do you mean, Sir Archy?

Sir A. 'Squire Groom, madam; but sic a figure, the finest ye ever beheld: his little half-beuts, black cap, jockey dress, and a' his pontificalibus, just as he rid the match yesterday at York. Anteequity, in a' its records o' Greek and Roman folly, never produced a senator, visiting his mistress in so complete a feul's garb.

Char. Ha, ha, ha! Ridiculous! I thought I had done wondering at the mirror of folly; but he is one of those geniuses that never appear without surprising the world with some new stroke.

Enter MORDECAI.

Morde. Oh! madam—ha, ha, ha!—I am expiring! such a scene betwixt your two lovers, 'Squire Groom and Sir Callaghan! they have challenged each other.

Char. Oh, heavens! I hope not.

Sir A. Ha, ha, ha! That's gude, that's gude! I thought it would come to action. Ha, ha, ha! That's clever! now we sall hae ane o' them penked. Ha, ha, ha!

Char. How can you laugh, Sir Archy, at such a shocking circumstance?

Morde. Don't be frightened, madam,—ha, ha, ha! don't be frightened; neither of them will be killed, take my word for it, unless it be with claret, for that's their weapon.

Char. Oh! Mr. Mordecai, how could you startle one so?

Sir A. Oh! I am sorry for that: gude faith! I was in hopes they had a mind to shew their prowess before their mistress, and that we should hae a little Irish or Newmarket bluid spilt. But what was the cause of challenge, Mordecai?

Morde. Their passion for this lady, sir. 'Squire Groom challenged Sir Callaghan to drink your ladyship's health in a pint bumper, which the knight gallantly accepted in an instant, and returned the challenge in a quart: which was as gallantly received and swallowed by the 'Squire—ha, ha, ha!—and out-braved by a fresh daring of three pints: upon which I thought proper to decamp; not thinking it altogether safe to be near the champions, lest I should be deluged by a cascade of claret.

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Char. Oh, monstrous! they will kill themselves.

Morde. Never fear, madam.

Groom. [*Within, hallooing.*] Come along, Sir Callaghan O'Brallaghan! hoics, hoics! hark forward, my honeys!

Morde. Here your champion comes, madam.

Enter 'Squire GROOM, drunk.

Groom. Madam, I beg a million of pardons for not being with you at dinner; it was not my fault, upon my honour, for I sat up all night, on purpose to set out betimes; but, about one o'clock, last night, at York, as we were all d—d jolly, that fool, Sir Roger Bumper, borrowed my watch to set his by it—there it is, look at it, madam, it corrects the sun; they all stop by it, at Newmarket—and so, madam, as I was telling you, the drunken block-head put mine back two hours on purpose to deceive me; otherwise, I would have held fifty to one, I should have been here to a second.

Char. Oh! sir, there needs no apology: but how came you to travel in that extraordinary dress?

Groom. A bet, a bet, madam: I rid my match in this very dress yesterday; so, Jack Buck, Sir Roger Bumper, and some more of them, laid me a hundred each, that I would not ride to London and visit you in it, madam. Ha, ha, ha! Don't you think I have touched them, madam? eh! I have taken them all in, eh! haven't I, madam?

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Char. You have, indeed, sir. Pray, what time do you allow yourself to come from York to London?

Groom. Eh! time! Why, bar a neck, a leg, or an arm, sixteen hours, seven minutes, and thirty-three seconds; sometimes three or four seconds under; that is, to the Stones'-end, not to my own house.

Sir A. No, no; not till yer ain hoose, that would be too much.

Groom. No, no: only to the Stones'-end; but then, I have my own hacks—steel to the bottom—all blood—stickers and lappers every inch, my dear, that will come through if they have but one leg out of the four. I never keep anything, madam, that is not bottom; game, game to the last: ay, ay, you will find everything that belongs to me game, madam.

Sir A. Ha, ha, ha! Yes, yes, he is game, game to the bottom. There, walk about, and let us see yer shapes. Ha! what a fine figure! why, ye are sae fine a figure, and hae sae gude an understanding for it, it is a pity ye should ever do onything a' yer life but ride horse-races. Dinna ye think he's a cursed idiot, Mordecai?

Morde. [*Apart.*] Hum! he is well enough for a 'squire. Ha, ha!

Groom. Madam, I am come to pay my respects to you, according to promise. Well, which of us is to be the happy man? you know I love you; may I never win a match if I don't.

Char. Oh! sir, I am convinced of your passion; I see it in your eyes.

Sir A. Weel, but 'squire, ye hae gi'en us nae account hoo the match went.

Char. What was the match?

Groom. Our contribution. There are seven of us: Jack Buck, Lord Brainless, Bob Rattle, (you know Bob, madam; Bob's a d—d honest fellow!) Sir Harry Idle, Dick Riot, Sir Roger Bumper, and myself. We put in five hundred a-piece, all to ride ourselves, and all to carry my weight. The odds, at starting, were six and seven to four against me, the

field round; and the field, ten, fifteen, and twenty to one; for you must know, madam, the thing I was to have ridden was let down—do you mind?—was let down, madam, in his exercise.

Sir A. That was unlucky!

Groom. Oh! d—d unlucky! however, we started off score, by Jupiter; and for the first half-mile, madam, you might have covered us with your under-petticoat. But your friend Bob, madam—ha, ha! I shall never forget it—poor Bob went out of the course, and run over two attorneys, an exciseman, and a little beau Jew, Mordecai's friend, madam, that you used to laugh at so immoderately at Bath; a little, fine, dirty thing, with a chocolate-coloured phiz, just like Mordecai's. The people were in hopes he had killed the lawyers, but were d—d disappointed when they found he had only broken a leg of one, and the back of the other.

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir A. And how did it end, 'Squire? Wha wan the subscription?

Groom. It lay between Dick Riot and I. We were neck and neck, madam, for three miles, as hard as we could lay leg to ground; made running every inch; but, at the first loose, I felt for him—found I had the foot—knew my bottom—pulled up—pretended to dig and cut—all fudge, all fudge, my dear; gave the signal to Pond to lay it on thick—had the whip-hand all the way—lay with my nose in his flank, under the wind, thus—snug, snug, my dear, quite in hand; while Riot was digging and lapping, right and left; but it would not do, my dear, against foot, bottom, and head: so, within a hundred yards of the distance-post, poor Dick knocked up, as stiff as a turnpike, and left me to canter in by myself, and to touch them all round, Ha! took the odds.

Sir A. Weel, it is wonderful to think to what a pitch of excellence oor nobility are arrived at in the art of sporting; I believe we axcel a' the nobility in Europe in that science, especially in jockeyship.

Groom. Sir Archy, I'll tell you what I'll do: I will start a horse, fight a main, hunt a pack of hounds, ride a match or a fox chase, drive a set of horses, or hold a toast, with any nobleman in Europe, for a thousand each, and I say done first.

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir A. Why, I ken ye wull, and I wull gang yer halves. Why, madam, the 'Squire is the keenest sportsman in a' Europe. Madam, there is naething comes amiss till him; he wull fish, or fowl, or hunt; he hunts everything; everything frae the flae i' the blanket to the elephant in the forest. He is at a' a perfect Nimrod; are ye not, 'Squire?

Groom. Yes, d—e, I'm a Nimrod, madam; at all, at all; anything, anything. Why, I ran a snail with his grace, the other day, for five hundred; no-thing in it; won it hollow, above half a horn's length.

Sir A. By above half a horn's length! that was hollow, indeed, 'Squire.

Groom. Oh! devilish hollow.

Sir A. But where is Sir Callaghan a' this time?

Groom. Oh! he's with Sir Theodore, who is joking him about his drinking bumpers with me, and his passion for you, madam.

Sir A. Ye mun ken, gentlemen, this lady and I hae laid a scheme to hae a little sport wi' Sir Callaghan; now, if you wull stap behind that screen, and promise to be silent, I'll gang and fetch him, and ye sall hear him make love as fierce as any hero in a tragedy.

Groom. Sir Archy, I'll be as silent as a bound at fault.

Sir A. Then do ye retire, madam, and come in till him, as if ye came on purpose. I'll fetch him in an instant.

Char. I shall be ready, Sir Archy. *[Exit.]*

Sir A. Get ye behind, get ye behind, gentlemen. *[Exit.]*

Groom. Ay, ay; we'll squat, never fear, Sir Archy. An Irishman make love! I should be glad to hear what an Irishman can say when he makes love. What do you think he'll say, little Shadrach? Do you think he'll make love in Irish?

Morde. Something very like it, I dare say, 'Squire. Let us retire, here they come. *[Reunt.]*

Enter Sir ARCHY MACSARCASM and Sir CALLA GHAN O'BRAALLAGHAN.

Sir A. Speak bauldly, man; ye ken the auld proverb, "Faint heart—"

Sir C. That is true—"never won fair lady." Yes, I think now I have got a bumper or two, I may tell her my passion, and bring the point to an *eclaircissement*.

Sir A. Ay, that's right, mon! stick to that, she will be wi' you in a twinkling. Yer servant, I wish ye gude success. *[Exit.]*

Sir C. Sir Archy, your servant. Well, now, what am I to do in this business? I know it is a great scandal for a soldier to be in love in time of war: I strive to keep her out of my mind, but can't; the more I strive to do it, the more she comes in. I am upon the forlorn-hope here, so must e'en make my push with vigour at once.

Enter CHARLOTTE.

Char. Sir Callaghan, your servant.

Sir C. Madam, I humbly beg your pardon for not seeing of you sooner; but I was speaking a soliloquy to myself, about your ladyship, and that kept me from observing you.

Char. Sir Theodore told me you wanted to speak to me upon some particular business.

Sir C. Why lookye, madam, for my part, I was never born or bred in a school of compliments, where they learn fine bows and fine speeches, but in an academy where heads, and legs, and arms, and bullets, dance country-dances without the owner's leave, just as the fortune of war directs: therefore, madam, all that I can say to you is, that your eyes have made me prisoner of war; that Cupid has made a garrison of my heart, and kept me to devilish hard duty; and if you don't believe me, I shall be a dead man before I come to action.

Char. But, Sir Callaghan, among all your symptoms of love, you have forgot to mention one that I am told is very elegant, and very powerful.

Sir C. Pray, what is that, madam?

Char. A song that I hear you have made, and set yourself, in the true Irish taste.

Sir C. Madam, I own I have been guilty of torturing the muses in the shape of a song, and I hope you will pardon my putting your ladyship's name to it.

Char. Upon one condition I will, which is, that you will do me the favour to let me hear you sing it.

Sir C. Oh! dear madam, don't ax me; it is a foolish song; a mere bagatelle.

Char. Nay, I must insist upon hearing it, as you expect or value the smiles, or fear the frowns, of your mistress; for, by your poetry, I shall judge of your passion.

Sir C. Then, madam, you shall have it, if it were

ten times worse. Hem, hem! Fal, la! la! I don't know how I shall come about the right side of my voice. Now, madam, I tell you beforehand, you must not expect such fine singing from me as you hear at the opera; for, you know, we Irishmen are not cut out for it like the Italians.

SONG.

*Let other men sing of their goddesses bright,
That darken the day and enlighten the night:
I sing of a woman—but such flesh and blood,
A touch of her finger would do your heart good.*

With my fal, la! la! la, &c.

*Ten times in each day to my charmer I come,
To tell her my passion, but can't, I'm struck dumb;
For Cupid he seizes my heart by surprise,
And my tongue falls asleep at the sight of her eyes.
Her little dog Pompey's my rival, I see;
She kisses and hugs him, but frowns upon me:
Then pr'ythee, my Charlotte, abuse not your charms,
Instead of a lap-dog, take me to your arms.*

Char. Well, Sir Callaghan, your poetry is excellent; nothing can surpass it but your singing.

Sir C. Lookye, madam; to come to the point, I know I can't talk fine courtship, and love, and nonsense, like other men; for I don't spake from my tongue, but my heart; so that if you can take up your quarters for life with a man of honour, a sincere lover, and an honest Prussian soldier, now is your time, I am your man. What do you say, madam? Come, speak the word boldly, and take me to your arms.

Char. Ha, ha, ha! Don't be so violent, Sir Callaghan; but, say a lady were inclined to do herself the honour of going before a priest with you, I suppose you would have so much complaisance for your mistress, as to quit your trade of war, and live at home with her, were she to request it of you.

Sir C. Why, lookye, madam, I will deal with you like a man of honour in that point, too, and let you into the secret. I have received the king my master's money (and a brave king he is, I assure you) for above seventeen years, when I had none of my own; and now I am come to a title and fortune, and that he has need of my service, I think it would look like a poltroon to leave him: no, madam, it is a rule with me, never to desert my king or my friend in distress.

Char. Your sentiment is great, I confess, I like your principles; they are noble and most heroic, but a little too military for me. Ha, ha, ha! [*Erit.*]

Sir C. What! does she decline the battle. Well, then, I'll not quit the field yet, though; I'll reconnoitre her once more, and if I can't bring her into action, why, then, I'll break up the camp at once, ride post to Germany to-morrow morning, and so take my leave in a passion, without saying a word.

[*Erit.*]

Enter Sir ARCHY MACSARCASM and MORDECAI.

Morde. Pr'ythee, what is the meaning of all this, Sir Archy? the house seems to be in the possession of bailiffs, and Sir Theodore looks and speaks as if an earthquake had just happened.

Sir A. Your conjecture is very right, Mr. Mordecai; 'tis a' o'er wi' him! he is undone! a beggar, and so is the girl.

Morde. You astonish me.

Sir A. It is an unexpected business; but 'tis a fact, I assure ye. Here he is himself! Poor deevil! hoo dismal he looks.

Enter Sir THEODORE GOODCHILD, and an Attorney

Sir T. You are the attorney concerned for the creditors, Mr. Atkins?

Attor. I am, Sir Theodore; and am extremely sorry for the accident.

Sir T. I am obliged to you, sir; you do but your duty. The young lady is that way, sir; if you will step to her, I'll follow you. [*Erit Attorney.*] I hope you will excuse me, Sir Archy; this is a sudden and unhappy affair; I am unfit for company; I must go and open it myself to poor Charlotte.

[*Erit.*]

Morde. But pray, Sir Archy, what has occasioned all this?

Sir A. 'Faith, Mordecai, I dinna ken the particulars: but it seems, that he and a rich merchant in Holland (his partner, and joint guardian over this girl), are baith bankrupts; and, as the lawyer that is without there confirms, have failed for above a hundred thousand pounds mair than they can answer.

Morde. But how is this to affect the young lady?

Sir A. Why, sir, the greatest part of her fortune was in trade it seems, with Sir Theodore and his partner; besides, the suit in chancery, that she had wi' the company for above forty thousand pounds, has been determined against her this very day; so, that they are a' undone. Beggars, beggars!

Morde. I understand that the affair was clearly in her favour.

Sir A. Oh! sir, ye dinna ken the law. The law is a sort of hocus-pocus science, that smiles in yer face while it picks yer pocket; and the glorious uncertainty of it is of mair use to the professors than the justice of it.—Here the parties come, and seemingly in great affliction.

Enter Sir THEODORE GOODCHILD and CHARLOTTE.

Char. Dear sir, be patient, and moderate your sorrow; it may not be so terrible as your apprehensions make it. Pray, bear up.

Sir T. For myself I care not; but that you should be involved in my ruin, and left fortuneless; your fair expectations of a noble alliance blasted; your dignity and affluence fallen to scorn and penury—

Char. It cannot prove so bad, sir. I will not despair, nor shall you; for though the law has been so hard against me, yet, in spite of its wiles and treachery, a competency will still remain, which shall be devoted to mitigate your misfortunes. Besides, Sir Archy Macsarcasm is a man of honour, and on his promise and assistance I will rely.

Sir A. Wull ye! ye may as weel rely upon the assistance o' the philosopher's stone. What the deevil, wad she marry me to tinker up the fortunes o' broken citizens. But I wull speak till them, and end the affair at once. [*Aside.*—I am concerned to see you in this disorder, Sir Theodore.

Char. If all the vows of friendship, honour, and eternal love, which you have so often made me, were not composed of idle breath, and deceitful ceremony, now let their truth be seen.

Sir A. Madam, I am sorry to be the messenger o' ill tidings, but a' oor connexion is at an end. Oor hoose hae heard o' my addresses till you; and I hae had letters frae the dukes, the marquises, and a' the dignitaries o' the family, remonstrating, nay, expressly prohibiting my contaminating the blood of Macsarcasm wi' ony thing sprung from a hog's-head or a counting-house. I assure ye my passion for ye is mighty strong, madam; but I canna bring disgrace upon an honourable family.

Char. No more; your apology is baser than your perfidy. There is no truth, no virtue in man!

Sir A. Gude troth, nor in woman neither, that has nae fortune. But here is Mordecai: now, madam, a wandering Eesraelite, a casualty, a mere casualty, sprung frae annuities, bills, bubbles, bears, and lottery-tickets, and can hae nae family objections. He is passionately fond of you; and till this offspring of accident and mammon I resign my interest in ye.

Morde. Sir, I am infinitely obliged to you; but—a—matrimony is a subject I have never thoroughly considered; and I must take some time to deliberate, before I determine upon that inextricable business: besides, madam, I assure you, my affairs are not in a matrimonial situation.

Char. No apology, sir. Begone! I despise you and your apology.

Enter 'SQUIRE GROOM.

Groom. Hoics! hoics! What's the matter here? What is all this? What, are we all at fault? Is this true, Sir Theodore? I hear that you and the filly have both run on the wrong side of the post.

Sir T. It is too true; but I hope, sir, that will make no alteration in your affection.

Groom. Harkye! Sir Theodore, I always make my match according to the weight my thing can carry. When I offered to take her into my stable, she was sound, and in good case; but I hear her wind is touched; if so, I would not back her for a shilling. Matrimony, Sir Theodore, is a cursed long course; devilish heavy and sharp turnings. It won't do; can't come through, my dear; can't come through.

Sir A. I think, 'Squire, ye judge very nicely. Noo, in my thoughts, the best thing the lady can do is to snap the Irishman.

Morde. Well observed, Sir Archy. Snap him, snap him, madam! Hush! he's here.

Enter Sir CALLAGHAN O'BRAILLAGHAN.

Sir A. Ha! my gude friend, Sir Callaghan, I kiss yer hand. I hae been speaking to the lady wi' a' the eloquence I hae; she is enamoured o' yer person, and ye are just come i'the nick to receive her heart and her hand.

Sir C. By the honour of a soldier, madam, I shall think that a greater happiness than any that fortune can bestow upon me.

Sir A. Come, come, madam; true love is impatient, and despises ceremony; gie him yer hand at ance.

Char. No, sir; I scorn to deceive a man who offers me his heart: though my fortune is ruined, my mind is untainted; even poverty shall not pervert it to principles of baseness.

Sir C. Fortune ruined! Pray, Sir Theodore, what does the import of this language mean?

Sir T. The sad meaning is, Sir Callaghan, that, in the circuit of Fortune's wheel, the lady's station is reversed: she who, some hours since, was on the highest round, is now degraded to the lowest: this, sir, has turned the passion these gentlemen professed for her into scorn and ridicule, and I suppose will cool the fervency of your's.

Sir C. Sir Theodore, I assure you, I am heartily glad of her distress.

Sir T. Sir?

Sir C. When she was computed to have a hundred thousand pounds, I loved her 'tis true; but it was with fear and trembling, like a man that loves to be a soldier, yet is afraid of a gun; because I

looked upon myself as an unequal match to her; but now she is poor, and that it is in my power to serve her, I find something warm about my heart here, that tells me I love her better than when she was rich, and makes me beg she will take my life this instant, and all I have into her service.

Sir T. Generous, indeed, Sir Callaghan.

Sir C. Madam, my fortune is not much, but it is enough to maintain a couple of honest hearts, and have something to spare for the necessities of a friend, which is all we want, and all that fortune is good for.

Sir T. Here, take her, sir; she is your's, and what you first thought her, mistress of a noble fortune.

Groom. What?

Morde. How's this?

Sir A. Gently! hush! saftly! he is only taking him in, he is taking him in! the bubble's bit!

Sir T. And had she millions, your principles deserve her: she has a heart, loving and generous as your own, which your manly virtue has subdued, and tempered to your warmest wishes.

Sir C. Pray, Sir Theodore, what does all this mean? Are you in jest, or in earnest? By my honour, I don't know how to understand one word you say. First, she has a fortune, then she has no fortune; and then she has a great fortune again! this is just what the little jackanapes about town call humbugging a man.

Sir T. Sir, I am serious.

Sir C. And, pray, what are you, madam? Are you serious, too, or in joke?

Char. Such as I am, sir, if you dare venture upon me for life, I am your's.

Sir C. By the integrity of my honour, madam, I will venture upon you, not only for life, but for death, too! which is a great deal longer than life, you know.

Sir T. I hope, nephew, you will excuse the deceit of my feigned bankruptcy, and the pretended ruin of the lady's fortune: it was a scheme devised to detect the illiberal, selfish views of prodigals, who never address the fair but as the mercenary lure attracts; a scheme to try and reward your passion, which hath shewn itself proof against the time's infection.

Sir C. 'Faith, then, it was no bad piece of generalship in you. But now she has surrendered herself prisoner of war, I think I have a right to lay her under contribution; for your kisses are lawful plunder, and mine by the laws of love. [*Kisses her.*] Upon my honour, her breath is as sweet as the sound of a trumpet.

Groom. Why, the knowing ones are all taken in here; double-distanced. Zounds! she has run a crimp upon us.

Morde. She has jilted us confoundedly.

Sir A. By the cross o' St. Andrew I'll be revenged; for I ken a lad of an honourable family, that understands the auncient classics in a' their perfection; he is writing a comedy, and he sall insinuate baith their characters intill it.

Morde. And I will write a satire upon her, in which she shall have an intrigue with a life-guard'sman and an opera-singer.

Groom. I can't write; but I'll tell you what I'll do—I'll poison her parrot, and cut off her squirrel's tail, d—e!

Sir C. Harkye! gentlemen, I hope you will ax my leave for all this. If you touch a hair of the parrot's head, or a feather of the squirrel's tail, or

if you write any of your nonsensical comedies or lampoons, I shall be after making bold to make a few remarks on your bodies. Ha! I have an excellent pen by my side, that is a very good critic, and that can write a very legible hand upon impertinent authors.

Sir A. Hoot awa! noot awa! Sir Callaghan, dinna talk in that idle manner, sir; oor swords are as sharp and as responsible as the swords of ither men. But this is nae time for sic matters; ye hae got the lady, and we hae got the willows. I am sorry for the little Gargishite here, because he has

bespoken his nuptial chariot and a' his leeveries; and, upon honour, I am very sorry for my gude friend the 'Squire here; the lady's fortin wad hae been very convenient till him, for I fancy he is fetlock deep in the turf: and, upon honour, I am sorry for the lady, for she has missed being matched intill the house of Macsarcasm, which is the greatest loss of a'.

Sir C. The whole business together is something like the catastrophe of a stage play, where knaves and fools are disappointed, and honest men rewarded. [Exeunt.

THE MAID OF THE OAKS;

A DRAMATIC ENTERTAINMENT, IN TWO ACTS;

BY JOHN BURGOYNE

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SIR HARRY GROVEBY
OLD GROVEBY
OLDWORTH
DUPELEY
HURRY
Painter
Druid
Shepherds.

LADY BAB LARDOON
MARIA
Shepherdesses
Attendants.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—Part of an ornamented Farm

Enter SIR HARRY GROVEBY and DUPELEY, meeting.

Sir H. Dear Charles, welcome to England! and doubly welcome to Oldworth's Oaks! Friendship, I see, has wings, as well as love.

Dupe. Your summons found me the day after my arrival. Next to my eagerness to see you, was that of being in time for the *fête champêtre*. Novelty and pleasure are the beings I pursue.

Sir H. You have pursued but their shadows; here they reign, in the manners of this new Arcadia, and the smiles of the sweet maid of the Oaks.

Dupe. Who, in the name of curiosity, is she that bears this romantic title? for your letter was a mere eclogue; the devil a thing could I make out, but a rhapsody upon rural innocence, and an invitation from a gentleman I did not know, to an entertainment I never saw.

Sir H. The business of the day is a wedding, and Charles Dupeley is invited to see his friend, Sir Harry Groveby, united to the most charming of her sex.

Dupe. The devil it is! What, a young fellow of your hope and fortune, sacrificed to a marriage of romance! But, prythee, tell me who she is?

Sir H. An orphan ward of the worthy old gentleman, at whose seat you now are: his character is singular, and as amiable in its way as her's. Inheriting a great estate, and liberally educated, his disposition led him early to a country life, where his benevolence and hospitality are boundless: and these qualities, joined with an imagination border-

ing upon the whimsical, have given a peculiar turn to the manners of the neighbourhood, that, in my opinion, degrades the polish of courts—but judge of the original.

Enter OLDWORTH.

Mr. Oldworth, I present you my friend; he is just arrived from abroad; I will not repeat how much he is worthy of your friendship.

Old. To be worthy of your's, Sir Harry, is the best recommendation. [*To DUPELEY.*] Sir, your friend is going to receive from my hands a lovely girl, whose merit he has discerned and loved for its own sake: such nuptials should recall the ideas of a better age: he has permitted me to celebrate them upon my own plan, and I shall be happy to receive the judgment of an accomplished critic.

Dupe. Sir, by what I already see of Oldworth's Oaks, and know of the character of the master, I am persuaded the talent most necessary for the company will be that of giving due praise.

Enter HURRY.

Hur. Lord! sir, come down to the building directly; all the trades are together by the ears; it is for all the world like the tower of Babylon; they have drove a broad-wheel waggon over two hampers of wine, and it is all running among lilies and honeysuckles; one of the cooks stumbled over one of the clouds, and threw a ham and chickens into a tub of white-wash; a lamp-lighter spilt a gallon of oil into a creamed apple-tart; and they have sent for more roses, and there is not one left within twenty miles.

Old. Why, honest Hurry, if there is none to be had, you need not be in such haste about them. Mercy on us! my *fête* has turned this poor fellow's head already; he will certainly get a fever.

Hur. Get a favour, sir! why, there has not been one left these three hours; all the girls in the parish have been scrambling for them, and I must get a hundred yards more. Lord ha' mercy! there is so much to do at once, and nobody to do it, that it is enough to moider one's head. If you loiter longer, sir, they will all be at loggerheads; they were very near it when I came away. [*Exit.*]

Old. I forgot to tell you, Sir Harry, that Lady Bab Lardoon is in the neighbourhood, and I expect her every moment.

Dupe. Who is she, pray?

Sir H. Oh! she's a superior! a phoenix! more worthy your curiosity than any object of your travels. She is an epitome, or rather a caricature, of what is called very fine life, and the first female gamester of the time.

Old. For all that, she is amiable: one cannot help discerning and admiring the natural excellence of her heart and understanding, though she is an example that neither is proof against a false education, or a rage for fashionable excesses. But when you see her, she will best explain herself. This fellow will give me no rest.

Re-enter HURRY.

Hur. Rest, sir! why, I have not slept this fortnight: come along, sir; pray, make haste; nothing's to be done without it.

Old. Nor with it, honest Hurry.

[*Exit with HURRY.*]

Dupe. Pr'ythee, Sir Harry, how came your acquaintance in this odd family?

Sir H. By mere chance: suffice it that I came, saw, and loved. I laid my rank and fortune at the

fair one's feet, and would have married instantly; but that Oldworth insisted upon a probation of six months' absence—It has been a purgatory!

Dupe. I should like to see the woman that could entangle me in this manner. Shew me but a woman, from an Italian princess, to a figurante at the French opera; and, at the first glance, I will discover the whole extent of their artifice, find their true lure, and bring them to my hand as easily as a tame sparrow.

Sir H. And pray, my sagacious friend, upon what circumstances have you formed your suspicions that I am more likely to be imposed upon than yourself?

Dupe. Upon every one I have seen and heard; but, above all, upon that natural propensity of every true home-bred Englishman, to think one woman different from another. Now, I hold there is but one woman in the world.

Sir H. I perfectly agree, and Maria is that charming one.

Dupe. Ay; but Maria, and Lady Bab, and Pamela Andrews, and Clarissa Harlowe, and the girl that steals a heart in a country church, and she that picks your pocket in Covent-garden, are one and the same creature for all that; I am always too quick for them, and make fools of them first. Oh! do but try them by the principle I have laid down, you'll find them as transparent as glass.

Sir H. My own principle will answer my purpose just as well; with that perspective I have looked through the woman, and discovered the angel; and you will do the same when you see her, or never brag of your eye-sight more.

Dupe. Rhapsody and enthusiasm! I should as soon discover Mahomet's seventh heaven. But what says your uncle, old Groveby, to this match?

Sir H. 'Faith! I have asked him no questions, and why should I? when I know what must be his answer.

Dupe. Oh! he can never disapprove a passion that soars above the stars.

Sir H. He has all the prejudices of his years and worldly knowledge; the common old gentleman's character—you may see it in every drama from the days of Terence to those of Congreve; though not, perhaps, with quite so much good humour, and so little obstinacy as my uncle shews. He is ever most impetuous when most kind; and I dare trust his resentment will end with a dramatic forgiveness.

Re-enter HURRY.

Hur. Lord! sir, I am out of breath to find you; why, almost everything is ready except yourself; and madam Maria is gone to the grove, and she is so dressed, and looks so charming!

Sir H. Propitious be the hour! Here, Hurry, find out this gentleman's servant, and shew him where he is to dress. [*Exit.*]

Dupe. Oh! I shall be time enough: Hurry shall first shew me a little of the preparation. What is going forward here? [*Approaches the side scene.*]

Hur. Hold! sir, not that way; my master lets nobody see his devices and figaries there.

Dupe. Why, what is he doing there, Hurry?

Hur. Doing! as you are a gentleman, I will tell you what he is doing—I hope nobody hears us. [*Looking about.*] Why, he is going to make the sun shine at midnight, and he is covering it with a thousand yards of sail-cloth, for fear the rain should put it out. Lord! such doings! Here, this way, your honour.

Dupe. But, harkye! honest Hurry, do stand still a moment to oblige me.

Hur. Stand still, sir! Lord, sir! if I stand still, everything stands still; and then what a fine shampeter should we make of it! [*Restless.*]

Dupe. Who is this maid of the Oaks, friend Hurry?

Hur. A young lady, sir.

Dupe. I thought as much.

Hur. She is one of the most charmingest, sweetest, delightfulest, mildest, beautifullest, modestest, genteeldest, never-to-be-praised-enough, young creature in all the world!

Dupe. And who is her father, pray?

Hur. It is a wise child that knows its own father. Lord bless her! she does not want a father.

Dupe. Not while Mr. Oldworth lives.

Hur. Nor when he is dead neither; everybody would be glad to be her father, and everybody wishes to be her husband; and so, sir, if you have more questions to ask, I'll answer them another time, for I am wanted here, and there, and everywhere.

[*Bustles about.*]

Dupe. Shew me to my chamber to dress, and I'll desire no more of you at present.

Hur. Bless your honour for letting me go; for I have been very miserable all the while you were talking to me. This way, this way, sir. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*The Oaks.*

MARIA discovered sitting under a tree.

SONG.—MARIA.

*Come, sing round my favourite tree,
Ye songsters that visit the grove;
'Twas the haunt of my shepherd and me,
And the bark is a record of love.*

*Reclin'd on the turf by my side,
He tenderly pleaded his cause;
I only with blushes reply'd,
And the nightingale fill'd up the pause.
Come, sing, &c.*

Enter OLDWORTH.

Old. Joy to my sweet Maria! may long succeeding years resemble this, her bridal hour! may health, and peace, and love, still inspire her song, and make the harmony of her voice an emblem of her life! But come, my girl, if there is a wish remaining in your heart within my power to gratify, I hope, in this last hour of my cares, I shall not be a stranger to it.

Maria. My mind is incapable of reserve with you: the most generous of men is on the point of giving his hand to your—what shall I call myself? I am almost nameless, but as the creature of your bounty and cares; this title gives me a value in my own eyes, but I fear it is all I have to boast. The mystery you have kept, makes me apprehensive there is something in my origin ought to be concealed. What am I to interpret from your smiles?

Old. Everything that is contrary to your surmises: be patient, sweet maid of the Oaks; before night all mysteries shall be cleared. It is not an ordinary wedding I celebrate, I prepare a feast for the heart—Lady Bab Lardoon, as I live! the princess of dissipation! catch an observation of her while you can, Maria; for though she has been but three days out of London, she is as uncasy as a mole in sun-shine, and would expire if she did not soon dive into her old element again.

Enter Lady BAB LARDOON.

Lady B. Dear Maria, I am happy to be the first of your company to congratulate you. Well, Mr. Oldworth, I am delighted with the idea of your *fête*; it is so novel, so French, so expressive of what everybody understands, and nobody can explain! then there is something so spirited in an undertaking of expense where a shower of rain would spoil it all.

Old. I did not expect to escape from so fine a lady, but you and the world have free leave to comment upon all you see here. Laugh where you must, be candid where you can. I only hope that to celebrate a joyful event upon any plan, that neither hurts the morals or politeness of the company, and, at the same time, sets thousands of the industrious to work, cannot be thought blame-worthy.

Lady B. Oh! quite the contrary; and I am sure it will have a run: a force upon the seasons and the manners is the true test of a refined taste, and it holds good from a cucumber at Christmas to an Italian opera.

Enter Sir HARRY GROVEBY.

Sir H. I come to claim my lovely bride; here at her favourite tree I claim her mine: the hour is almost on the point, the whole country is beginning to assemble.

Lady B. Sir Harry, I rejoice at your happiness; and do not think me so tasteless, Maria, as not to acknowledge attachment like your's, preferable to all others, when it can be had—*filer le parfait amour*, is the first happiness in life; but that, you know, is totally out of the question in town; the matrimonial comforts, in our way, are absolutely reduced to two: to plague a man, and to bury him.

Sir H. I heartily congratulate Lady Bab, and all who are to partake of her conversation, upon her being able to bring so much vivacity into the country.

Lady B. Nothing but the *fête champêtre* could have effected it; for I set out in miserable spirits; I had a horrid run before I left town. I suppose you saw my name in the papers?

Sir H. I did; and, therefore, concluded there was not a word of truth in the report.

Maria. Your name in the papers, Lady Bab!

Lady B. To be sure; have not they begun with you yet, Maria?

Maria. Not that I know of, and I am not at all ambitious of the honour.

Lady B. Oh! but you will have it; the *fête champêtre* will be a delightful subject! To be complimented one day, laughed at the next, and abused the third; you can't imagine how amusing it is:—“We hear a certain lady, not a hundred miles from Hanover-square, lost, at one sitting, some nights ago, two thousand guineas. *O tempora! O mores!*”

Old. [*Laughing.*] Pray, Lady Bab, is the concluding ejaculation your own, or was it the printer's.

Lady B. His, you may be sure: a dab of Latin adds surprising force to a paragraph, besides shewing the learning of the author.

Old. Well, but really, I don't see such a great matter in this; why should you suppose anybody applied this paragraph to you?

Lady B. None but my intimates did, for it was applicable to half St. George's parish; but about a week after they honoured me with initials and italics: “It is said, Lady B. L.'s ill success still continues: it was observed, the same lady appeared at

court, in a *riband collier*, having laid aside her *diamond necklace*." (Diamond in italics.) At last, to my infinite amusement, out I came at full length: "Lady Bab Lardoon has tumbled down three nights successively; a certain colonel has done the same, and we hear that both parties keep house with sprained ankles."—But, hark! I hear the pastoral's beginning. [*Music behind.*] Lord! I hope I shall find a shepherd.

Old. The most elegant one in the world; Mr. Dupeley, Sir Harry's friend.

Lady B. You don't mean Charles Dupeley, who has been so long abroad?

Sir H. The very same: I wish you would undertake him; he thinks himself quite an overmatch for the fair sex, of whom his opinion is as ill founded as it is degrading.

Lady B. Oh! is that his turn? What, he has been studying some late posthumous letters, I suppose? 'Twould be a delight to make a fool of such a fellow! Where is he?

Sir H. He is only gone to dress; I appointed to meet him on the other side the grove; he'll be here in twenty minutes.

Lady B. I'll attend him there in your place. I have it: I'll try my hand a little at *naiveté*; he never saw me; the dress I am going to put on for the *fête* will do admirably to impose upon him: I'll make an example of his hypocrisy, and his graces, and his *usage du monde*.

Sir H. My life for it, he will begin an acquaintance with you.

Lady B. If he don't, I'll begin with him: so come along, and we'll make our experiment immediately. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Garden-gate.*

Hur. [*Without.*] Indeed, sir, I can't. Pray, don't insist upon it.

Enter OLD GROVEBY, booted and splashed, pushing in HURRY.

Grove. I must see Sir Harr Groveby, and I will see him. Do ye think—

Hur. Sir Harry won't see you to-day, he has a great deal of business upon his hands; he's going to be married. What would the man have?

Grove. I shall mar his marriage, I believe. [*Aside.*] I am his uncle, puppy, and ought to be at the wedding.

Hur. Are you so, sir? Bless my heart! why would you not say so? This way, good sir. It was impossible to know you in such a figure; I could sooner have taken you for a smuggler than his uncle: no offence, sir. If you will please to walk in that grove there, I'll find him directly. I am sorry for what has happened; but you did not say you were a gentleman, and it was impossible to take you for one. [*Exit.*]

Grove. Going to be married! and to whom? to a young girl, without birth, fortune, or without anybody's knowing anything about her; and without so much as saying to me, his uncle, with your leave, or by your leave: if he will prefer the indulgence of a boyish passion, to my affection and two thousand pounds per annum, I shall return to Gloomstock-hall, and make a new will directly. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*A Grove.*

Enter MARIA.

Maria. I wish I may have strength to support my happiness: I cannot get the better of my agitation; and though this day is to complete my wishes, my heart, I don't know how, feels something like distress. But what strange person is coming this way?

Enter OLD GROVEBY.

Grove. Madam, your servant; I hope I don't intrude: I am waiting here for a young gentleman; if I disturb you, I'll walk at the other end.

Maria. Indeed, sir, you don't disturb me. Shall I call anybody to you, sir?

Grove. Not for the world, fair lady. This is a most lovely creature! [*Aside.*]

Maria. Who can this be? [*Aside.*]

Grove. I find, madam, there is going to be a wedding here to-day.

Maria. Yes, sir; a very splendid one, by the preparations.

Grove. A very foolish business, to make such a fuss about a matter which both parties may have reason to curse this time twelvemonth.

Maria. I hope not, sir. Do you know the parties?

Grove. One of them, too well, by being a near relation. Do you know the bride, young lady?

Maria. Pretty well, sir; my near acquaintance with her makes me attend here to-day. [*Confused.*]

Grove. Might I, without being impertinent, beg to know something about her: but you are partial to her, and won't speak your mind.

Maria. I am, indeed, partial to her; everybody is too partial to her; her fortune is much above her deserts.

Grove. Ay, ay, I thought so: sweet lady, your sincerity is as lovely as your person—you really think, then, she does not deserve so good a match?

Maria. Deserve it, sir! so far from deserving it, that I don't know that human creature that can deserve Sir Harry Groveby.

Grove. What a sensible, sweet creature this is! [*Aside.*] Young lady, your understanding is very extraordinary for your age: you sincerely think, then, that this is a very unequal match?

Maria. Indeed I do, very sincerely.

Grove. And that it ought not to be?

Maria. Ought not to be, sir! [*Hesitating.*] Upon my word, sir, I scarce know how to answer your question. [*Confused.*]

Grove. Your delicacy to your friend won't let you speak out; but I understand your objections: nay, I feel them so much, that I am come on purpose to break the match.

Maria. [*Astonished.*] Indeed, sir!

Grove. Ay, indeed, am I: a silly young puppy! without acquainting me with it, to go so far. I suppose some interested creature, with a little beauty and more cunning, has laid hold of this precious fool of a nephew of mine.

Maria. Your nephew, sir?

Grove. Yes, yes, my nephew; but he must give up his girl, or renounce the relationship.

Maria. But consider, sir, what the poor young woman must suffer!

Grove. She ought to suffer, a designing baggage! Had the young blockhead but half an eye he would have fallen in love with you; and if he had, there had been some excuse for his folly.

Maria. But, sir, pray, let me plead for him.

Groce. Nay, nay; my nephew, as you hinted at first, is a very silly fellow; and, in short, it is a d—d match.

Enter Sir HARRY GROVEY, who starts at seeing his Uncle.

Maria. I cannot stand this interview. [*Erit.*

Groce. Oh! your humble servant, Sir Harry Grovey! So, you are going to be married, and forgot that you had an uncle living, did you? But where is the old fox that has made a chicken of you? I shall let him know a piece of my mind.

Sir H. Mr. Oldworth, sir, knew nothing of my having an uncle, or he would never have given his consent without your's.

Groce. I have but a short word to say to you: give up the lady, or give up me.

Sir H. Let me entreat you to see her first.

Groce. I have seen a young lady; and I am so put upon my mettle by your ingratitude, that if she would but talk to me half-an-hour longer, I'd take her without a petticoat to Gloomstock-hall, and have my *champêtre* wedding, too.

Sir H. You are at liberty, sir—

Groce. To play the fool, as you have done: her own friend and companion told me she was undeserving.

Sir H. That Maria was undeserving! where is she who told you so? who is the slanderer? she has deceived you.

Groce. I don't know her name.

Sir H. Where did you see her

Groce. Here, here.

Sir H. When, sir?

Groce. This moment, sir.

Sir H. As I came in, sir?

Groce. Yes, sir, yes; she could not bear the sight of you, and went away.

Sir H. Dear sir, that was Maria herself.

Groce. Maria! what?

Sir H. Maria, the maid of the Oaks, my bride that is to be.

Groce. And she is the person you are going to marry?

Sir H. I cannot deny it.

Groce. If you did, you ought to be hanged: follow me, sir, follow me, sir; shew me to her this moment.

Sir H. What do you mean, sir?

Groce. What's that to you, sir! she has bamboozled you and I, too, and I will be revenged.

Sir H. But, dear sir—

Groce. Don't dear me, I won't rest a moment till I have seen her; either follow me or lead the way, for I must, I will see her directly, and then you shall know, and she too, that I am—Zounds! I'll shew you what I am; and so, come along, you puppy, you!

SCENE III.—A Flower-garden.

Enter Lady BAB LARDOON, dressed as a Shepherdess, OLDWORTH following.

Old. Hist, hist! Lady Bab! Here comes your prize; for the sake of mirth, and the revenge of your sex, don't miss the opportunity.

Lady B. Not for the world; you see I am dressed for the purpose. Step behind that stump of shrubs, and you shall see what an excellent actress I should have made. Away, away!

[*Erit* OLDWORTH. *Lady B. retires.*

Enter DUPELEY.

Dupe. Where the devil is Sir Harry? this is certainly the place where I was appointed to find him; but I suppose I shall spring him and his bride from under a rose-bush by-and-by like two pheasants in pairing-time. [*Observing Lady B.*] Ha! is that a dress, now, for the day, or is she one of the natives of this extraordinary region? Oh! I see now, it is all pure Arcadian; her eyes have been used to nothing but daisy-hunting: but what a neck she has! how beautifully Nature works when she is not spoiled by a d—d town stay-maker! what a pity she is so awkward! I hope she is not foolish.

[*During this observation, he keeps his eyes fixed upon her; Lady B. looks first at him, then at herself; unpins her nosegay, and with an air of the most perfect naïveté, presents it to him.*

Lady B. You seem to wish for my nosegay, sir; it is much at your service.

[*Offers the flowers and curtsies awkwardly.*

Dupe. Oh! the charming innocent! my wishes extend a little further. [*Aside.*] A thousand thanks, my fair one; I accept it as a faint image of your own sweets. To whom am I so much obliged?

Lady B. To the garden-man, to be sure; he has made flowers to grow all over the garden, and they smell so sweet! pray, smell 'em; they are charming sweet, I assure you, and have such fine colours;—La! you are a fine nosegay yourself, I think.

[*Simpers and looks at him.*

Dupe. Exquisite simplicity! [*Aside.*] Ah! I knew at first glance you were a compound of innocence and sensibility.

Lady B. Lack-a-daisy heart! how could you hit upon my temper so exactly?

Dupe. By a certain instinct I have; for I have seen few or none of the sort before: but, my dear girl, what is your name and situation

Lady B. Situation!

Dupe. Ay, what are you?

Lady B. I am a bridemaid.

Dupe. But when you are not a bridemaid, what is your way of life? how do you pass your time?

Lady B. I rise with the lark, keep my hands always employed, dance upon a holyday, and eat brown bread with content.

Dupe. Oh! the delicious description!—beechen shades, bleating flocks, and pipes, and pastorals. What an acquisition to my fame, as well as pleasure, to carry off this quintessence of *champêtre*! 'tis but an annuity job—I'll do it. [*Aside.*

Lady B. [*Examines him.*] And pray, what may you be? for I never saw anything so out of the way in all my life. He, he, he! [*Simpers.*

Dupe. I, my dear—I am a gentleman.

Lady B. What a fine gentleman! Bless me, what a thing it is! Ha, ha, ha! I never saw anything so comical in all my life. Ha, ha, ha! And this is a fine gentleman, of which I have heard so much.

Dupe. What is the matter, my dear? is there anything ridiculous about me, that makes you laugh? What have you heard of fine gentlemen, my sweet innocence?

Lady B. That they are as gaudy as peacocks, as mischievous as jays, as chattering as magpies, as wild as hawks—

Dupe. And as loving as sparrows.

Lady B. I know you are very loving—of yourselves. Ha, ha, ha! You are a sort of birds that flock but never pair.

Dupe. Why, you are satirical, my fairest : and have you heard anything else of fine gentlemen ?

Lady B. Yes, a great deal more : that they take wives for fortunes, and mistresses for shew ; squander their money among tailors, barbers, cooks, and fiddlers ; pawn their honour to sharpers, and their estates to Jews ; and, at last, run to foreign countries to repair a pale face, a flimsy carcass, and an empty pocket :—that's a fine gentleman for you !

Dupe. [Surprised.] Pray, my dear, what is really your name ?

Lady B. [Resuming her simplicity.] My name is Philly.

Dupe. Philly !

Lady B. Philly Nettletop, of the vale.

Dupe. And pray, my sweet Philly, where did you learn this character of a fine gentleman ?

Lady B. Oh ! I learnt it with my catechism. Mr. Oldworth has taught it to all the young maidens hereabout.

Dupe. [Significantly.] So it is from Mr. Oldworth, is it, my charming innocence, that you have learnt to be so afraid of fine gentlemen ?

Lady B. No, not at all afraid ; I believe you are perfectly harmless if one treats you right, as I do our young mastiff at home

Dupe. And how is that, pray ?

Lady B. Why, while one keeps at a distance, he frisks, and he flies, and he barks, and tears, and grumbles, and makes a sad rout about it—Lord ! you'd think he would devour one at a mouthful ; but if one does but walk boldly up and look him in the face, and ask him what he wants, he drops his ears and runs away directly.

Dupe. Well said, rural simplicity, again ! Well, but, my dear heavenly creature, don't commit such a sin as to waste your youth and your charms upon a set of rustics here ; fly with me to the true region of pleasure : my chaise and four shall be ready at the back gate of the park, and we will take the opportunity, when all the servants are drunk, as they certainly will be, and the company is gone tired to bed.

Lady B. [Fondly.] And would you really love me dearly now, Saturdays, and Sundays, and all ?

Dupe. [Aside.] Oh ! this will do without an annuity, I see.

Lady B. You'll forget all this prittle-prattle gibberish to me now, as soon as you see the fine strange ladies, by-and-by ; there's Lady Bab Lardoon, I think they call her, from London.

Dupe. Lady Bab Lardoon, indeed ! I should as soon be in love with the figure of the great mogul at the back of a pack of cards ; if she has anything to do with hearts, it must be when they are trumps, and she pulls them out of her pocket : no, sweet Philly ; thank heaven, that gave me insight into the sex, and reserved me for a woman in her native charms ; here alone she is to be found, and paradise is on her lips. [Struggling to kiss her.

Enter HURRY

Hur. Oh ! Lady Bab, I come to call your ladyship—Lord ! I thought they never kissed at a wedding till after the ceremony.

[Going. DUPELEY stares ; Lady B. laughs.

Dupe. Stay, Hurry, who are you looking for ?

Hur. Why, I came with a message for Lady Bab Larder, and would have carried her answer, but you stopped her mouth.

Dupe. Who—what—who ? This is Philly Nettletop.

Hur. Philly Fiddlestick ! 'Tis Lady Bab Larder, I tell you : do you think I don't know her because she has got a new dress ? [Exit.

Dupe. Lady Bab Lardoon !

Lady B. No, no ; Philly Nettletop.

Dupe. Here's a d—d scrape ! [Aside.

Lady B. In every capacity, sir, a rural innocent, Mr. Oldworth's mistress, or the great mogul, equally grateful for your favourable opinion.

[With a low curtsey.

Enter OLDWORTH and Sir HARRY GROVEBY, laughing.

Mr. Oldworth, give me leave to present to you a gentleman remarkable for second sight ; he knows all women by instinct—

Sir H. From a princess to a figurante, from a vintage to a May-pole ; I am rejoiced I came in time for the catastrophe.

Lady B. Mr. Oldworth, there is your travelled man for you ; and I think I have given a pretty good account of him.

[Pointing at DUPELEY, who is disconcerted.

Old. Come, come, my good folks, you have both acquitted yourselves admirably : Mr. Dupeley must forgive the innocent deceit ; and you, Lady Bab, like a generous conqueror, should bear the triumph moderately.

Sir H. Now this scene is finished, let me open another to you : Maria's charms have been as much signalized as her ladyship's wit : my old uncle Groveby—

Lady B. Of Gloomstock-hall ?

Sir H. The same ; and full primed with the rhetoric of sixty-five, against the marriage of inclination ; but such a conversion ! such a revolution !

Old. Your uncle here ! I must chide you, Sir Harry, for concealing from me that you had a relation so well entitled to be consulted. Which way is he ?

Sir H. I left him all in transport with my bride ; he kisses her, and squeezes her hand : 'gad ! I sha'n't get her away from him, without your help.

Enter OLD GROVEBY with MARIA under his arm.

I was coming to seek you, my Maria.

Grove. Your Maria, sir ! my Maria : she will own me, if you won't ; there, sir, let her teach you your duty.

[Quitting MARIA, who retires with Sir H. to the bottom of the stage.

Old. Sir, I have many pardons to ask of you ; but Sir Harry will be my witness, that my fault was in my ignorance ; had I known your name and situation, I should have paid you my respects months ago.

Grove. Sir, I don't wonder the graceless rogue forgot me ; but I'll be even with him ; he sha'n't have a guinea from me.

Old. Good sir, you are not serious that he has offended you.

Grove. I am serious, that I have found another inheritor for Gloomstock-hall ; I have got a niece worth twenty such nephews. [MARIA and Sir H. approach.] Ay, you may look, sir, but she shall have every acre of it. [Taking MARIA by the hand.] Mr. Oldworth, I intend there shall be no more ceremony between us ; I shall not quit your *champêtre*, I assure you.

Old. Sir, your good humour and compliance will be a new compliment to the day : my hopes and wishes are accomplished ! my long-projected joys

are full, and I will proclaim them! Come to my arms, Maria; I have a father's right; and my child's conduct has made it a proud one.

Maria. How, how, sir?

Old. Excuse me, brother, madam, all: my story is very short, Maria; the hour of your birth made me a widower, and you a splendid heiress; I trembled at the dangers of that situation, made more dangerous by the loss of your mother—to be the object of flattery in the very cradle, and made a prey to interest is the common lot attending it; these reflections induced me to conceal your birth.

Maria. How blind have I been! benevolent as you are to all, I might still have perceived and interpreted the distinction of your unremitting tenderness. Oh! sir, expect not words; where shall I find even sentiments of tenderness, gratitude, and duty, that were not your's before?

Old. To you, Sir Harry, I shall make no apology for my secrecy; it has served to give scope and exercise to your generosity, a sensation more gratifying to minds like your's, than any acquisition of fortune; that pleasure past, accept now, with Maria's hand, the inheritance of Oldworth's Oaks.

Sir H. Sir, your conduct does not surprise, but it overwhelms me; long may you remain the possessor of Oldworth's Oaks! when you cease to be so, he will ill deserve to succeed you who does not make your example the chief object of his imitation.

Lady B. Mr. Oldworth, you promised us a singular regale, but you have outdone yourself.

Grove. Regale! Egad! I don't know what to call it; he has almost turned the *champêtre* into a tragedy, I think.

Old. My worthy friend, I have robbed you of a pleasure; I know you also had your eye upon my maid of the Oaks, for an exercise of your generosity.

Enter HURRY.

Hur. An't please your honour and worship, here are all the quality persons in fanciful dresses; you never saw such a sight; they are, for all the world, like the Turks and Prussians; do but look at 'em, how they come prancing along through the grove. I never saw anything so fine, and so proud, and so fantastical! Lord! I wonder anybody will ever wear a coat and waistcoat again! this is shampeter, indeed!

Grove. My friend Hurry is in the right; Harry, come and help to dress me; for, till I have got my fool's coat on, I can't make one among them.

Sir H. I'll wait upon you. My sweet Maria, I must leave you for a few minutes—for an age.

Old. My heart is now disburthened, and free to entertain my friends: come, Maria, let us meet them, and shew in our face the joy of our hearts: will your ladyship and Mr. Dupeley assist us?

[*Exit Sir H.*]

Lady B. Oh! most willingly, Mr. Oldworth.

Re-enter HURRY.

Hur. Gentlemen, nobility, ladies, and gentry, you are all wanted in the temple of Venice to—but I'll not say what, that you may be more surprised; and if you are surprised here, you'll be more surprised there; and we sha'n't have done with you there neither: pray, make haste, or you'll get no place.

[*All crowd off but OLDWORTH, OLD GROVEBY, DUPELEY, and LADY BAB.*]

Dupe. Well, Lady Bab, are your spirits quite

exhausted, or have the events of the day made you pensive? I begin to believe there are more rational systems of happiness than ours: should my fair instructor become a convert, my ambition would be still to follow her.

Lady B. I am no convert; my mind has ever been on the side of reason, though the torrent in which I have lived has not allowed me time to practise, or even to contemplate it as I ought; but to follow fashion, where we feel shame, is surely the strongest of all hypocrisy, and from this moment I renounce it.

Grove. And you never made a better renounce in your life.

Dupe. To those charms I owe my conversion; and there wants but the hand of Lady Bab to make Oldworth's Oaks distinguished by another union, founded on merit in her sex, and discernment in mine.

Lady B. Sir, your proposal does me honour; but it is time enough to talk of hearts and hands: after the life we have led, six months' probation may be very proper for us both.

Old. Lady Bab, confer the gift when you please; but my *fête champêtre* shall be remembered as the date of the promise: and now for such a song and dance as will best conclude so happy a day.

[*Ereunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*A grand Saloon.*

Enter Masqueraders, with all the Characters in the piece.

FINALE.

Shepherd. Ye fine-fangled folks, who, from cities and courts,

*By your presence enliven the fields,
Accept for your welcome innocent sports,
And the fruits that our industry yields.*

Cho. Ye fine-fangled folks, &c.

*No temple we raise to the idol of wealth,
No altar to interest smokes;
To the blessings of love, kind seasons, and health,
Is devoted the feast of the Oaks.*

Cho. No temple we raise, &c.

Shepherdess. From the thicket and plain, each favourite haunt,

*The villagers hasten away:
Your encouraging smile is the bounty they want,
To compensate the toils of the day.*

Cho. From the thicket, &c.

*The milk-maid abandons her pail and her cow,
In the furrow the ploughman unyokes,
From the valley and meadow all press to the brow,
To assist at the feast of the Oaks.*

Cho. The milk-maid, &c.

Shepherd. The precept we teach is contentment and truth,

*That our girls may not learn to beguile;
By reason to govern the pleasures of youth,
And decorate age with a smile.*

Cho. The precept we teach, &c.

*No serpent approaches with venomous tooth,
No raven with ominous croaks,
Nor rancorous critic, more fatal than both,
Shall poison the feast of the Oaks.*

Cho. No serpent approaches, &c.

[*Ereunt.*]

RUGANTINO ;

OR, THE BRAVO OF VENICE :

A MELO-DRAME, IN TWO ACTS

BY M. G. LEWIS.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DUKE OF VENICE
LOMELINO
MANFRONE
PATRIARCH OF VENICE
PAROZZI
CONTARINO
MEMMO
FALIERI
GONZAGA
PISANI
STEPHANO
BERTOLDO
JUANILLO
PAOLO
RUGANTINO
Herald

ROSABELLA
CAMILLA
LAURA
BETTINA.

Masques.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Place of St. Giorgio Maggiore at sunset.*

Enter PAROZZI, followed by MEMMO.

Mem. But be patient, Parozzi; at least be patient!

Par. Patient? Has not Rosabella rejected me? nay; when I taxed her with a passion for Flodoardo, did she not insultingly contrast the virtues by which he dignified his obscurity, with the vices by which, she said, my nobility was disgraced?

Mem. Well, well! To be sure nothing is half so disagreeable as truth; and it's certainly mighty provoking—

Par. Provoking! If I forgive her——! But her fate is fixed! She dies.

Mem. Dies? My dear Parozzi, don't look so fierce, or I shall certainly take to my heels! D—d—dies, said you?

Par. She dies! the Bravo Rugantino has received his hire.

Mem. Rugantino! I had much rather you wouldn't mention him.

Par. He, at whose name all Venice quakes.

Mem. I don't know what all Venice does; but I'm sure I do!

Par. Annually, on the evening before her birthday, Rosabella goes in solemn procession to pass some hours alone in the shrine of her patroness, St. Rosa. There will Rugantino meet her this very night; there too will I be!

Mem. You? Won't it be dangerous too?

Par. Ha! my revenge would be but half gratified, did I not see the blow struck myself! did not Rosabella hear as she expires, "Remember the scorned Parozzi." [*A galley passes at a distance.*] But look, Memmo, is not that the galley—

Mem. Which carried out Contarino? 'tis the same! It approaches! Contarino is on board.

The galley arrives—CONTARINO springs on shore.

Par. and Mem. Welcome, Contarino: welcome!

Par. Quick; your tidings—

Con. Are excellent. The emperor approves of our conspiracy: in a week his troops will arrive to assist us, and then shall we be masters of Venice. But the duke's prime counsellors, Manfrone and Lomelino, suspect our plans, and traverse them: they must be despatched immediately.

Par. For that have I already provided; Rugantino is in my pay, and—

Con. Rugantino? I have heard much of this strange man; but what I am to believe—

Par. Learn that from me. Soon after your departure a young stranger arrived here, called Floardo. His plausible manners pleased the duke; his Apollo-like form fascinated Rosabella; but he became the general idol when he found means to

seize the five banditti, who had so long been the terror of Venice. We knew them well, Contarino, and had often found their daggers of use.

Con. But how did he discover their lurking-place?

Par. I know not; suffice it to say, that the five banditti were executed; but on the following morning this paper was found affixed to the palace-gates.

Con. [Reading.] "*Venetians! the banditti who suffered yesterday have left a sixth behind them, whose single arm equals those of the other five. Ye, who need my dagger, seek me! As a proof of my skill, let St. Bertrand's cave be searched; 'twas there I stabbed to the heart the senator Carlo Foscari.—From the Venetian bravo, Rugantino.*"—Carlo Foscari?

Par. The duke's near kinsman, who had disappeared some months before.

Con. This paper shows a daring mind.

Par. "Ha!" cried I, when I had perused it, "this is the very man we need!" But Rugantino knew of my connection with his deceased associates, and ere I had time to seek him, he found me. Oh! 'tis the ugliest knave—his face so deform'd by scars—his eye-brows so black and bushy—then his smile is a terrific grin, and when he laughs, the sound is enough to scare mirth out of the universe.

Con. But Lomelino and Manfrone—

Par. He has engaged to despatch them the instant that he receives 10,000 ducats.

Con. Oh! a trifle! Memmo is rich; he'll furnish them.

Mem. I? That's ever your way. Always Memmo! and nothing but Memmo!

Con. Simpleton! If our plot succeeds, have we not promised—

Mem. Yes, yes! I own you give me plenty of promises—but you take from me plenty of realities! However, you shall have the 10,000 ducats this once; though I protest, it's like parting with ten thousand drops of my heart's blood.

Par. Peace, peace! Have you brought the arms, Contarino?

Con. Yes: where shall I deposit—

Par. Oh! at Memmo's, where we'll meet again at ten to-night.

Mem. The arms at my house? Dear, dear! now why at mine? If the house should be searched, then I shall get into a scrape, and—

Par. Silence! It shall be so. Till ten, farewell, Contarino.

Con. Farewell.

[*Exeunt CON. and PAR.*]

Mem. Now that's the way I'm always treated! they borrow my money, make me their scape goat, snap my nose off on all occasions, and all because I'm rather apt to be afraid, and honest enough to own it. Hang it! I'll try whether putting on a huff-bluff look like themselves, and strutting with a swaggering stride, thus, won't awe them into—[*Noise without.*] Hey! what's all this uproar?

Enter Herald, followed by JUANILLO, BETTINA, PAOLO, and Mob.

Juan. Silence!

Bet. Aye, aye! let's hear the proclamation.

Paolo. Silence! silence!

Juan. Aye: silence! silence!

Mem. Why don't somebody knock that fellow down, who makes such a noise with crying silence?

All. Knock him down! knock him down! silence!

Herald, [Reading.] "*Whereas, the senator Foscari was found murdered by the Bravo Rugantino, the Duke hereby promises five hundred ducats to any one who shall discover where the murderer is concealed.*" God save the Duke!

[*Exit.*]

ACT. DRAMA.—NOS. 101 & 102.

All. Huzza!

Mem. Now, friends, here's a good round sum to be earned by some of you.

Juan. By none of us, Signor Memmo. Oh! this Rugantino's a terrible fellow! why, when young Flodoardo seized the five other banditti, didn't this Rugantino, who was the sixth, still contrive to escape?

Enter STEPHANO.

Steph. I'm beyond my time, and I fear Camilla—Hey-day, what do all these people here?

Juan. But why did Flodoardo leave Venice?

Mem. 'Tis suspected, he was in love with the duke's daughter, who is already promised to the prince of Milan.

Steph. What say they of my master.

Juan. Well, before he left us, I wish he had caught this Rugantino as finely as he caught his five companions: I protest I can't sleep for fear of the villain.

Paolo. Nor I.

Juan. Nor I.

Steph. I see Camilla coming. Now then to scare them away.

Juan. One thing's certain: If ever Rugantino's found, Flodoardo is the only man to take him.

Mem. The only man?—Come, come! there are others. I don't boast of my courage.

Juan. And I'm sure, nobody else does, who knows you, Signor.

Mem. But if I once set eyes on this Rugantino, I'll put myself into this attitude, spring upon him thus, and exclaim in a terrible voice—

Steph. [*Approaches softly.*] Rugantino's coming!

All. [*Running off.*] Where? where? where?

Run! run! run!

Steph. [*Advances, laughing.*] Rugantino's name sent them off like so many peas out of a pop-gun. But to give the devil his due, Signor Memmo ran by far the fastest. Now then for this antiquated duenna, who, in defiance of time and her looking-glass, fancies herself a girl of fifteen; and who is so passionately fond of dancing, that she even walks the streets in a fandango step. 'Tis a hard task which the prince of Milan has put on me, to make love to this superannuated coquette; but as he insists that no means of shaking Rosabella's constancy to Flodoardo should be left untried—she's here.

Enter CAMILLA.

Cam. Is it you, Signor Stephano?

Steph. And is it you, divine object of my—

Cam. Oh? sweet Signor, no raptures, if you love me! 'Tis late, and I'm so *pressé*, as the French have it, I've only time to assure you, that I've spared no pains to influence my lady in your master's favour.

Steph. And what success—

Cam. Absolutely none! her love to Flodoardo is immovable; but perhaps when the duke shall know of her attachment to this needy stranger, his remonstrances may induce her to give him up—but bless me! I must away, for I've a thousand things to do. You must know, that to-morrow night the duke gives a grand *fête* on one of the islands of the Adriatic sea, in honour of his daughter's birth-day. A mask is to be performed, called "The Triumph of Thetis;" and my lady, myself, and some other beauties of the court are to represent heathen goddesses. Now you must know, that I'm reckoned excellent in a mask.

Steph. I don't doubt it, Signora; I dare say, I should admire you in a mask more than in any other way.

Cam. And how, do you think, I was disguised at the last masquerade?

Steph. How, pray?

Cam. How? As Venus! Wasn't that charming?

Steph. As Venus? Ah! Signora, how admirably you must have been disguised!

Cam. Nobody found me out the whole night!

Steph. I dare say not; how the devil should they?

[*Aside.*]

Cam. And when I unmasked, the surprise!

Steph. Was excessive, I doubt not.

Cam. Universal, Signor! As to the duke, he was perfectly thunderstruck.

Steph. Struck, Signora? He must have been struck all of a heap! why, if I had been there, I don't think I should ever have recovered it!

Cam. And now guess, which of the heathen goddesses I am to be to-morrow night!

Steph. I can't imagine—Medusa perhaps; or very likely one of the three—furies. [*Aside.*]

Cam. A syren, signor! a syren!

Steph. A syren? Ah! signora, I shouldn't have guess'd that in a century!

Cam. And I've such a divine dress! I shall be all over sea-weed and cockle-shells, with a comb in one hand, and a looking-glass in t'other; and I shall dance an entire new *pas seul*, and—you never saw me dance, I think?

Steph. Frequently!

Cam. Indeed! Where, pray?

Steph. [*Bowing.*] In my dreams, signora!

Cam. [*Aside.*] In his dreams! How delicate a compliment! How refined, how fanciful, how far-fetched, how French!

Steph. But as you're to be a syren, oh! too adorable Camilla, suffer me to be your attendant triton!

Cam. An attendant triton? charming! Granted! granted, sweet signor!

Steph. Then need I not envy Neptune himself the possession of his Amphitrite!

Cam. [*Aside.*] Heroic creature! Let me die, but he's quite a *pastor fido*!—But I must begone.

Steph. First in the prince's name let me force this jewel upon your finger, and next in my own print a kiss on your snowy hand? [*Kneeling.*]

Cam. Oh! mercy! I desire—I entreat—*je vous jure*—

Steph. [*Rising.*] Nectar and ambrosia!

Cam. Oh! sweet signor!

Steph. Divine signora!

Cam. Adieu!

Steph. Farewell!

Both. Adieu! adieu! adieu!

Ereunt.

Enter PAROZZI.

Par. She comes! my lovely victim comes! But no more does my heart melt with tenderness at thy sight, Rosabella! No; hatred fills my bosom wholly, and should Rugantino's dagger fail, my own—they are here! Now then for St. Rosa's shrine! Away! [*Erit.*]

[*A solemn procession crosses the stage. ROSABELLA, LAURA, and Ladies, Priests with lighted torches, &c. BETTINA, JUANILLO, PAOLO, and Mob, as spectators.*]

SCENE II.—*A Hall in the Palace.*

Enter LOMELINO and MANFRONE.

Man. Enough, Lomelino; the prince of Milan may depend on my services.

Lom. His plans are daring and romantic, it's true; but still—

Man. Hush! the duke.

Enter the DUKE, with a paper.

Duke. Oh! insolence unparalleled! Look, my friends! this paper is from Rugantino.

Man. How?

Lom. And it contains—?

Duke. Read! read!

Lom. [*Reading.*] “*Duke of Venice,—In your late proclamation you promise to any one who shall discover Rugantino, fire hundred ducats; now to any one who shall seize him, I promise five thousand. Your servant, signor; Rugantino.*” Unheard-of assurance! But how did this paper reach you?

Duke. Will you believe me, friends! 'Twas fixed against my chamber-door! against my very chamber-door!

Man. Inconceivable!

Duke. Nothing is safe from this miscreant! I tremble for myself—for Venice—for my child—Say, where is Rosabella?

Lom. She ever passes the night preceding her birth-day in St. Rosa's shrine alone.

Duke. Alone? In this time of danger that must not be! Good Manfrone, tell Camilla to bear my orders, that her lady should return instantly. [*Erit MANFRONE.*] Follow me, Lomelino! I am half mad with anger and confusion! [*Ereunt.*]

SCENE III.—*An illuminated Church, with St. Rosa's shrine in the centre. On one side large iron-grated doors; on the other a magnificent tomb, on which is inscribed “Here lies Carlo Foscari, who was inhumanly murdered by the Bravo, Rugantino.” THE PATRIARCH OF VENICE, Monks, PAROZZI, BETTINA, JUANILLO, PAOLO, and Spectators are discovered in groups. The procession enters through the iron gates. ROSABELLA kneels to the PATRIARCH; he gives her his benediction, and then orders the Spectators to withdraw; they all obey, except PAROZZI, who conceals himself behind the tomb. The PATRIARCH then retires with the Monks, closing the iron gates after him. ROSABELLA desires to be left alone, and LAURA and the Ladies retire.*

Ros. I know not why, but an unusual dread has seized on my heart—this sacred place—the dead and awful silence—that tomb too, where rests the murdered Foscari—Let me banish these terrors in prayer at yonder shrine. Oh! Flodoardo. [*Going.*]

[*During this speech a Beggar comes slowly from behind a tomb, and leans on a staff.*]

Beg. Alack! alack!

Ros. What feeble voice—?

Beg. Will no one aid a poor old man?

Ros. Lean on me, father! Lean on me!

Beg. Thanks, dear lady! The dampness of these marble walls—Alas! I faint!

Ros. And there is no seat—Stay! stay! [*Draws a couch from the shrine; the Beggar sinks upon it: ROSABELLA kneels behind him, and supports his head.*] Rest here, father! Perhaps this essence may revive. [*Giving a smelling-bottle.*]

Beg. Kindest lady! You are—you are the duke's daughter, I think?

Ros. I am.

Beg. Oh! dear lady. [*Suddenly altering his voice.*] Start not! your life is in danger!

Ros. My life?

Beg. [*Clasping her hand.*] Hush! Fear nothing!

You shall not die; but if you value existence, be silent.

Ros. Unhand me! I'll fly, and—

[Attempting to go; the Beggar suddenly starts up, still detaining her, and whistles; she sinks on one knee, as if imploring mercy. PAROZZI springs from behind the tomb.

Par. Is't done? [The Beggar has drawn a dagger, which he points to the kneeling ROSABELLA.] Ha!—Strike, I say! Strike, or thus—

[Drawing his dagger and rushing to stab her.

Beg. I strike! [At the moment that PAROZZI raises his arm, the Beggar stabs him; ROSABELLA starts from the ground, but the Beggar still detains her, and she falls exhausted into his arms.] Fear not! tremble not! but mark me! I have saved your life; Rosabella, remember that! Remember too, that from this hour our fates are united indissolubly! thou art mine, Rosabella; thou never shalt be another's.

Ros. Thine? thine?

Beg. Mine! [Holding up the dagger.] I swear it by this blood, which I have shed for thee! by this heart, which I would drain for thee! by this kiss, thou Bravo's bride!

Ros. [Struggling.] Fearful man; my voice—my cries—

Enter CAMILLA, by the iron gate.

Cam. Signora, I come. Help! murder, murder!

[Erit.

Beg. I must away! But know'st thou, who press'd thy cheek, Rosabella? Go; tell thy father, the proud duke, 'twas the Bravo Rugantino!

Ros. Rugantino?

[She staggers back, and supports herself against a pillar.

Re-enter CAMILLA, followed by the PATRIARCH, and Monks, with torches; LAURA and the Ladies also return in confusion. While they enter, RUGANTINO throws off his false beard and Beggar's dress, and appears as a Friar; he steps behind a pillar, draws a cowl over his face, and when the Monks enter, he mixes with the crowd.

Cam. This way, this way!

Patriarch. No one is here.

Cam. 'Twas a Beggar, whose bloody dagger—Patriarch. Search every aisle. Away!

[They disperse.

Rug. [As he passes ROSABELLA, whose Ladies are listening to CAMILLA's story, he clasps her hand, and says in a low voice] Remember!

Ros. [Starting.] Heavens! that friar is—

Rug. [Shows her the bloody dagger.] I saved your life!

Ros. Leave me! save yourself! fly!

Rug. [Aloud, in a sanctified tone.] Benedicite! fair daughter. [Erit.

Ros. I die; oh, support me!

[Her Ladies crowd around her; the PATRIARCH and Monks return.

SCENE IV.—A Chamber in Memmo's House.

Enter CONTARINO, FALIERI, and GONZAGA. Servants bring in a Table, with goblets, lights, &c.

Fal. 'Tis strange that Parozzi is not yet arrived.

Con. 'Tis past the hour he mentioned.

Gon. Memmo too, who went to seek him, returns not.

[During these speeches, the Servants arrange the table, and retire.

Con. Where is the place of general rendezvous? Fal. In the ruined Carthusian Monastery. When last we mustered—

Mem. [Without.] Contarino! Falieri!

Con. 'Tis Memmo's voice.

MEMMO rushes in, followed by PISANI.

Mem. There! there's a pretty spot of work.

Con. What's the matter?

Mem. There's a fine kettle of fish.

Con. What's the matter, I say?

Mem. The devil's the matter! murder's the matter! hanging's the matter! The matter! Parozzi is—he is—I can't bring my tongue to speak such a terrible word.

Pis. Friends, Parozzi is murdered.

Con. Murdered?

Fal. By whom?

Mem. By whom? by that fiend in a human form; by that pest, from whose knife no man's throat is safe; by Rugantino.

Con. Fal. and Gon. Rugantino?

Pis. Even so.

Mem. And what's worst, Parozzi has let him into our secret; and to obtain his own pardon, perhaps at this moment the Bravo is telling all to the duke.

Con. Confusion!

[Noise without.

Fal. Steps on the stairs.

Mem. I dare say, the officers of justice.

Gon. Bar the door!

[CONTARINO bars it hastily—knocking.

Mem. We're all undone!

[Knocking.

Con. Is there no outlet?

Mem. None, none, except one. Thirty feet high, out of the window into the canal!

[Knocking

A Voice. [Without.] Open, I say!

All Consp. What's that? what's that?

Con. Who speaks?

[The door bursts open, and RUGANTINO appears in his Bravo's habit; his face is marked with several scars.

Rug. Rugantino! Your slave, sweet gentlemen conspirators.

Mem. I'm a dead man.

Con. You among us? You, Parozzi's murderer?

Rug. Right, but mark me, I loved Rosabella, Parozzi was my rival, and I stabbed him to the heart. Now swear that Rosabella shall be mine, elect me your chief, and I'll keep your secret.

Con. You our chief? Think you we'll stoop—

Rug. Ye have stooped to vice; can ye stoop lower? Will you accept my terms?

All. Never!

Rug. Then go your own way; mine leads to the duke—to the duke, sweet signors! Farewell!

[Going.

Con. [Placing himself before the door, which he closes.] Not so fast! draw, friends, draw! the villain's in our power, and—

[All draw.

Rug. In your power? Ho. ho! [Laughing.] Now listen. When I left my home—

Mem. That must be there for certain.

[Pointing downwards

Rug. Silence!

Mem. Oh, mercy on me!

Rug. I left on my table a sealed packet, containing a full account of your plans. This packet, if I return not before the clock strikes eleven, will be conveyed to the duke. Now then, if you choose to stab me, I'll lend you a sword myself.

[Throwing himself carelessly into a seat.

Con. Before eleven?

[The chimes are heard.

Mem. And hark ! it chimes the three quarters. Oh ! go, go, go, my dear Rugantino !

Rug. Do you accept my terms ?

All. We do, we do !

Rug. A list of your associates.

Con. Thou hast it.

[*Giving a paper.*]

Rug. [*Rises.*] So ! the attack must be made to-morrow night.

Con. To-morrow ? The emperor's troops not arrived—

Rug. Cowards ! Have ye not a host in Rugantino ?

Con. It must not be, for—

Rug. No, must not ? Then here I sit, and the clock must strike eleven.

[*Resuming his seat.*]

Mem. Sit ? sit ? For heaven's sake, consent to every thing if he will but go.

Con. I could tear my flesh. Rugantino, be all as thou wilt. But time flies—the packet—

Rug. Nay, I go ; but first some wine.

Mem. [*Filling a goblet hastily.*] There, there, my dear little fellow !

Rug. Now pledge me, pledge me on your knees !

[*All take goblets and kneel, except RUGANTINO.*]

All. We pledge you, Rugantino !

Rug. [*Starts from his chair.*] Ho, ho ! Look, how low guilt can reduce the proudest. Rise, rise ! Rugantino will not deign to drink with you. [*Dashing down the Goblet.*] Farewell !

[*Going.*]

Con. [*To FALIERI.*] At least I'll watch whither—

[*Following him ; RUGANTINO turns suddenly round, and presents a pistol at him.*]

Rug. Follow me, and I fire. 'This pistol can kill but one, 'tis true ; but who among you chooses to be that one ?

Mem. Not I, I'm sure !

Rug. Then let no one quit the room, till he hears my whistle, or he dies. [*He stops at the door, takes off his hat, and bows.*] Sweet signors, eternally your slave.

[*Exit.*]

Mem. Thank heaven ! he's gone at last.

Con. 'Tis in vain to struggle.

Fal. We are in his toils ; yet if he's honest, he'll be a powerful ally.

[*The whistle is heard.*]

Con. Hark ! 'tis the signal.

Fal. Away then !

[*Exeunt.*]

Mem. Aye, aye, away with you ! Oh ! Memmo, Memmo, Memmo ! Cursed was the hour, when you poked your foolish noddle into a plot.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE V.—Rosabella's Chamber.

Enter ROSABELLA and CAMILLA.

Cam. Yes, child ; your adventure with this Bravo has made the duke resolve, that you shall marry the prince of Milan instantly. As to your love for Flodoardo—

Ros. Love, Camilla ? Dear, dear, there's no love in the case ; what I feel for him is friendship—esteem ; and surely Flodoardo deserves to inspire such sentiments. Deserves ? Ah, what does Flodoardo not deserve ?

Cam. Very well ; then you'd be quite contented, were Flodoardo to marry another woman ?

Ros. Oh, but Flodoardo would not marry another woman ; of that I'm quite sure, Camilla.

Cam. Ah ! child, child ! I see this Flodoardo will make you give a great deal of pain to your dear good father.

[*Practising her dance.*]

Ros. Indeed ? Then I am sure I wish I had never seen him. This odious Flodoardo—to make

me give pain—I'm quite vexed with him—quite angry—I don't like him at all !

Cam. What, not like him ?

Ros. No, not at all !

[*Hesitating.*]

Cam. Not at all.

Ros. Not that I hate him neither ; for you know, Camilla, there's no reason why I should hate this poor dear Flodoardo ?

Cam. But there are reasons why you should try to forget him.

Ros. Oh ! as to that, I protest, I vow so often every day to think no more of him, that all day long I think of nothing else ! and when he declared his love, didn't I frown and order him to quit Venice ? though I'm sure, I've done nothing but weep ever since he obeyed me ? Now what can I do more, Camilla ? I'll go to my father, avow everything to him, and perhaps—

Cam. [*Dancing.*] No ; that step's not right.

Ros. And why is that step not right ?

Cam. Because first you should sink thus ; then *borée* thus, then—

[*Dancing.*]

Ros. What, before I go to my father ?

Cam. Lord ! child, I wasn't thinking about your father ; I was thinking of my new *pas seul*, which I mean to dance at the *fête* to-morrow.

Ros. Psha !

Enter LAURA.

Laura. Signora Camilla, your syren's dress is finished.

Cam. Oh ! charming ! I come, dear Laura.

[*Exit LAURA.*]

Ros. What ! a syren's dress ?

Cam. Yes ; as you are to be the goddess Thetis, I mean to be one of your syrens. Oh ! such a dress, Signora !

[*Going.*]

Ros. Stay, stay, Camilla. Surely, at your age—

Cam. My age ? Let me die, child, but to hear you talk, one would think I was quite *passée* ! Because the bud is more delicate, has the rose full-blown no merits ? Because I mayn't do for the blaze of meridian day, is there no such thing as candle-light beauty ? Let me tell you, child, that in the eyes of some people, some people may have scarcely less charms than—some people ; and though I mayn't represent quite as well as yourself the goddess of spring, I flatter myself I may still figure with great effect as a summer syren. But time runs away, my tire-woman waits, and I fly to arrange my cockle-shells. Adieu, mademoiselle.

[*Exit, dancing.*]

Ros. Poor Camilla ! what pity that with so good a heart the levity of her head—yet why blame a folly so innocent, and which keeps her in such good humour with herself and others ? Ah ! rather let me strive to dispel my own delusion, so dangerous to myself and so repugnant to the wishes of my friends. Oh ! Love, love, love ! Dear, dear, I wish I didn't know what the disagreeable word means !

[*Exit.*]

SCENE VI.—The Duke's Bed-chamber. A balcony in the centre ; on one side a bed in an alcove, on the other a large mirror.

The DUKE, LOMELINO, MANFRONE, STEPHANO, BERTOLDO, and Attendants discovered. The DUKE delivers letters to STEPHANO, who goes off. The DUKE dismisses the rest, and seats himself.

Duke. Yet, after all, it must be owned, this Rugantino is a singular character ! The man, who can do what he has done, must possess such talents

and such courage, as at the head of an army would enable him to conquer half the world! Would I could once see this Rugantino!

Rug. [Who during this speech has come softly from the alcove, and now claps the DUKE on the shoulder.] Look up, then!

[The DUKE starts from his chair; RUGANTINO nods to him familiarly.]

Duke. Man—who art thou?

Rug. Thou seest me; and can'st doubt? Well then, I am the Bravo Rugantino; Foscari's murderer, and the republic's most devoted slave.

Duke. Rugantino, thou art a fearful, a detestable man!

Rug. Aye! Well, perhaps I am so; but at least 'tis certain, Andreas, that you and I stand on the same line; for at this moment are we the two greatest men in Venice, you in your way, I in mine. *[The DUKE moves towards the door, RUGANTINO bars his passage.]* Hold, friend! not so fast! we must first have some conversation.

Duke. Indeed! then be this the subject. Mark me, miscreant! Instantly confess who bribed you to murder Foscari, abjure your bloody trade, quit the republic, or I swear—

Rug. Quit it? abjure—and why should I do all this? through fear of thee? Ho, ho! *[Laughing.]* through fear of Venice? Ha! Rugantino fears not Venice; 'tis Venice that fears Rugantino! Quit the republic? Well; on one condition—

Duke. Name it.

Rug. 'Tis a mere trifle. Give me your daughter for my bride.

Duke. Insolent! My daughter is already a prince's bride. Within this hour my written promise sent to the Prince of Milan—

Rug. Aye? Well, well; within another hour this dagger in the prince's heart shall make your written promise void.

Duke. Has heaven no lightnings?

[Goes to his seat.]

Rug. Hear yet more: I've sold for ten thousand ducats the lives of your friends Lomelino and Manfrone; now give me Rosabella, and I'll break the bargain.

Duke. *[Snatches up the light, and hastens to the door.]* Monster! Guards, guards!

Rug. Say you so? Thus then.

[Takes off his hat, and strikes out the light with it; then steps back to the mirror, which he pushes away, and passes through the aperture.]

Duke. Ha! miscreant. Lights! lights, I say!

[The door opens.]

Rug. *[Putting his head out.]* Au revoir, good father that is to be.

[Closes the mirror.]

Enter BERTOLDO and Guards, with torches.

Duke. Seize him.

Ber. Whom, my lord? We see no one.

[The Guards search the room.]

Duke. Traitors! Have you let him pass?

Ber. Pass? No one has past us.

Duke. Not pass'd you?

Ber. Nor is any one here.

Duke. My brain turns round! 'Tis a fiend in human shape.

Enter ROSABELLA.

Ros. Dear father, what means—

Duke. Oh! my child—Rugantino—even now he was here.

Ros. Good heavens!

Duke. He threatened to—*[To BERTOLDO.]* Call Manfrone and Lomelino hither instantly. Fly!

[Exit BERTOLDO.]

Steph. *[Without.]* Where is the duke?

Duke. What new alarm?

Enter STEPHANO.

Steph. Justice, justice! The prince of Milan—

Duke. Say on! Be quick!

Steph. Within this hour arrived at Venice. Even now I found him in his chamber—bleeding—dying.

Duke. Heavens!

Steph. He murmured "A base assassin—" and expired. Near him lay your written promise; a bloody dagger was struck through it, and—

Duke. That dagger—Bring it! Away!

[Exit STEPHANO.]

Enter BERTOLDO.

Ber. *[A letter in his hand.]* My lord, the chambers of Manfrone and Lomelino both are vacant. In vain—*[A sealed packet is thrown on the stage.]*

Duke. What's that?

Ber. This letter was thrown into the balcony.

[Giving it to the DUKE.]

Duke. Manfrone's hand? I tremble. Read, read, my child.

Ros. *[Opens it, and reads.]* "Lomelino lies dead at my feet, and his murderer compels me to write this in his blood—I die, Andreas, and by the hand of—"

[Screams, and drops the letter, which the DUKE snatches up.]

Enter STEPHANO and Guards.

Steph. Here is the dagger, and on the hilt stands the name of—

Ros. *[Looking at the dagger.]* }

Duke. *[Examining the letter.]* } 'Tis Rugantino.

Rug. *[Without.]* Ho, ho!

All. Hark!

[Some run to the balcony, the rest remain in amazement.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—The Palace Gardens.

"Huzzas" are heard without, and shouts of "Flodoardo! Flodoardo!"

Enter ROSABELLA from the palace.

Ros. He is returned! Flodoardo is returned! Oh! joy past utterance. But he returned against my positive orders; I must be angry with him, very angry. But alas the day! how shall I manage to conceal my pleasure. See, see, he comes!

Enter RUGANTINO, clad in glittering armour, from the palace. Every trace of deformity is gone.

Rug. *[Aside.]* She's here; and oh! so lovely! Alas! sweet maid! how would the roses of thy cheek grow pale, knew'st thou, that the man now approaching is the dreaded Rugantino. *[He advances, bowing.]* Lady!

Ros. *[Aside.]* Cavalier—I—you—you have been very long absent—that is—I mean—did you receive much pleasure from your travels?

Rug. Much; for everywhere I heard the praise of Rosabella.

Ros. Flodoardo! will you again offend me?

Rug. After this hour I shall never offend you more. Lady, I come to say farewell—for ever?

Ros. For ever? Ah! Flodoardo, and can you then leave me? Can you leave my father, I meant to say?

Rug. Your father?

Ros. His friendship for you is so warm—

Rug. I value it highly; but it cannot make me happy.

Ros. Does then your happiness require so much?

Rug. It does, it does! But one boon can make me happy; I have begged for it on my knees! [*Pressing her hand to his lips.*] I have begged for it, Rosabella, and my suit has been rejected.

Ros. [*Trying gently to disengage her hand.*] Enthusiast!

Rug. [*Drawing her nearer to him.*] Rosabella!

Ros. What would you of me?

Rug. Your heart! my happiness!

Ros. Flodoardo! [*Forces her hand from him.*] Leave me! I command you—leave me this instant.

[*He bows, and retires. At the palace-gate he stops, and waves his hand.*]

Rug. Lady, farewell! We meet—no more!

Ros. Stay, oh! stay, Flodoardo! I—I am thine.

Rug. [*Rushing back.*] Rosabella!

Ros. Thine, and for ever!

[*He falls on his knee, and she sinks upon his bosom.*]

Enter the DUKE from the palace.

Duke. Do my eyes deceive me?

Ros. [*Shrieking.*] My father!

Duke. How has my confidence been betrayed.

[*He turns to leave them.*]

Rug. Stay, noble Andreas; stay, and hear—

Duke. Young man, what excuse?

Rug. Excuse! Oh! I need none for loving Rosabella; 'twere for him to excuse himself, who had seen Rosabella, and not loved her. Andreas, I adore your daughter; I demand her for my bride.

Duke. You? A needy stranger, who—

Ros. [*Hastening to the DUKE, throwing her arms round his neck, and hiding her face in his bosom.*] Oh! be not incensed with him, dear father.

Duke. Rosabella, hast thou given this youth thy heart; given it to him—irrevocably?

Rug. [*Repeats, and presses his hand against his breast.*] Irrevocably! Ah!

[*ROSABELLA raises her head, and extends her hand towards RUGANTINO.*]

Duke. I am answered. Flodoardo, you see this maid; will you deserve her?

Rug. Deserve her? Ask what thou wilt, and I swear—

Duke. Mark then! The murderer of Manfrone and Lomelino, of Foscari and the prince of Milan. Go, bring him hither: alive, or dead, thou must give into my power the terrible banditti-king, Rugantino.

Rug. My noble lord!

Ros. Oh! no, no, no; he must not! Too surely this detested monster—

Rug. Detested! Oh! silence, Rosabella; at least allow me to hope. Wilt thou swear, Andreas, that Rugantino once in your power, nothing shall prevent Rosabella from being my bride?

Duke. I swear it.

Rug. Enough! Now mark me, duke—You give a masque this night in the Nereid's Island?

Duke. I do. All Venice is invited.

Rug. 'Tis well. Let my purpose be kept secret;

and as soon as all those are arrived, whose names are in this list, [*Giving a paper.*] your guards must surround the only entrance to the saloon. Then let them discharge their muskets, and if I still live, at that signal will I produce before you this dreaded Rugantino.

Duke. You shall be obeyed. But how—

Rug. No questions. I must away; Rosabella—

Ros. [*Weeping, and embracing him.*] Oh! Flodoardo—perhaps—Rugantino's dagger—But no, no, no: Heaven is just, heaven is merciful, and we shall meet again. Away then! Come, father, come!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—A ruined Monastery.

Enter FALIERI, MEMMO, and GONZAGA.

Fal. Our associates not arrived? Yet Rugantino charged us to muster our forces here, and engaged to meet us at sunset.

Gon. 'Tis a perilous knave, that Rugantino.

Mem. Perilous! I protest, I'm glad our plot is to be executed to-night, if it's only that I mayn't come into contact any more with that devil incarnate. I really believe he deals with the black gentleman, and that no mischief happens in Venice without his having a finger in the pie! If any one dies, it's he kills them; if a house is on fire, it's he kindles it; nay, I'm morally certain, 'twas he that occasioned the last earthquake.

Fal. Yet at least he keeps his word—Lomelino and Manfrone are already no more.

Mem. Very true, but yet—Heigho! my poor ten thousand ducats.

Gon. Hark!

Fal. 'Tis Contarino.—Now, friend, where's Rugantino?

Enter CONTARINO.

Con. Even now I left him. Flodoardo is returned, and Rugantino thinks it good to dispatch him immediately. I warrant he'll soon give a good account of him.

Mem. Nay, when despatching is the business, to do the gentleman justice, he loses no time.

Con. Are you all invited to the duke's masque to-night?

Fal. All! and in the most urgent and flattering manner.

Con. That's well! it proves we are not suspected.

Mem. I only hope there's no trick in all this. If this show of kindness should be only a take-in, now—Mercy on me! my teeth chatter at the thought!

Con. Mark me, friends; we must go armed to the duke's.

Fal. Leave his highness to me; this poniard is quite at his service.

Gon. The whole council of ten are invited.

Con. Down with them every man.

Mem. Aye, aye: fine talking! But suppose it should turn out to be—"Down with ourselves?"

Con. Silence, thou white-livered wretch!

Mem. Come, don't be so snappish, if you please.

Con. The stroke of midnight must be the signal for Gonzaga's quitting the saloon, and hastening to seize the arsenal.

Fal. As soon as he hears the alarm-bell, the admiral Adorno will lead his people to our assistance.

Con. Oh! our success is sure, and—But our comrades approach. Be alert, friends; hasten to distribute the arms and crimson scarfs, which are to distinguish our partisans.

Enter PISANI and Conspirators.—*Scarfs, swords, pistols, &c. are distributed; and each drawing his sword, they kneel, and swear fidelity.*

Con. Strangers approach: Disperse, and remember that the signal is—

All. Midnight! [Ereunt, severally.]

Enter the DUKE and CAMILLA, dressed as a syren, with a comb in one hand, and a looking-glass in the other.

Duke. What news, Camilla?

Cam. The best, your highness. Everything's ready, the Tritons and Nereids are dressed, the gondolas are waiting, and we're all impatient to be gone.

Duke. Why, Camilla, you are in high spirits.

Cam. In spirits? In ecstasies! My head's at this moment a chaos of the most enchanting images, of nothing but masks, coloured lamps, and musicians, conchs, cupids, and cockle-shells.

Duke. Delightful! And may I ask what you are to be?

Cam. [Curtseying.] A syren, your highness.

Duke. A syren! Truly, Camilla, 'twas lucky for Ulysses that you were not a syren in his days; closing his ears would not have availed him; he must have closed his eyes too.

Cam. [Curtseying.] Oh! mercy! Oh! heaven! Let me die, but your highness makes me blush!

Duke. 'Tis the better: Nothing becomes beauty like blushing. [Exit.]

Cam. So, so! Such warmth! "Nothing becomes beauty like—" Let me die if his highness isn't a little smitten with me himself.

Steph. [Without.] Camilla! Signora Camilla!

Cam. It's Stephano; and quite tritonized, I protest.

Enter STEPHANO, dressed as a triton.

Cam. Charming, signor! charming! Well, let me die—But sea-green's a most becoming colour; and then that beard's so divinely *degagée*, the French have it.

Steph. Very likely. But come, come! the duke stays for you.

Cam. Stays for me? I fly, signor, I fly! Now then for the Nereid's island. [Ereunt.]

SCENE III.—A Grotto. In the centre, a large porch, with folding-doors.

The DUKE is seated under a canopy on an elevated throne; FALIERI stands on the steps of it, conversing with him. Two gothic seats below the throne.—CONTRARIO, MEMMO, and GONZAGA; LAURA, PISANI, Lords and Ladies, &c.

Con. Look, Gonzaga, how kindly the duke smiles on Falieri.

Gon. 'Tis plain that he suspects nothing.

Con. Now, Memmo, what are become of your fears?

Mem. Fears? I feel so bold, so desperate, that I quite long for midnight.

Con. [Laughing.] Oh, brave Memmo! [Music.] But the masque is beginning. Look! Pan and the sylvan deities are arriving in honour of the birthday of Thetis.

[A procession enters, Pan dancing, Satyrs and Hamadryads; Diana with her nymphs; Mars in his chariot; warriors; Bacchus seated on a ton; bacchanals. On one side, Venus with

Cupid descends; and Minerva on the other. The celestial palace comes down amidst thunder and lightning; Jupiter, Juno, &c. come out of the palace, which re-ascends; Pluto and Proserpine rise on a burning throne; they alight, and the car sinks.

Mem. Well, Pluto's as like Rugan—

Con. [Stopping his mouth.] Hush!

[Proserpine expresses her envy of the beauty of the three goddesses; she waves her sceptre, and a golden apple appears with this inscription, "For the fairest." She throws it before them. They contend for it. Marine music. At this moment a volley of musquetry is heard. All start in horror; the music stops abruptly; a dead silence for a moment.

All the Guests. What was that?

Duke. [Aside.] 'Twas the signal.

Ros. [Aside to CAMILLA.] My heart beats!

Mem. [To the DUKE.] Suffer me to inquire what noise—

[He opens the folding-doors; the Porch appears filled with Guards.

Guards. Back!

Mem. Guards?

The Guests. Guards? Guards?

Duke. Fear nothing, my friends! this precaution regards no one here; but know, before an hour expires, you will see in this saloon—the Bravo Rugantino.

All. How?

Duke. Yes! Flodoardo has engaged—

Rug. [Without.] Give us way.

Ros. 'Tis he, and safe!

[The Guards open to the right and left, and RUGANTINO, still as FLODOARDO, rushes in, wrapt in a large mantle.

Mem. Bless me! I'm afraid that—

Con. Be calm, signor! there is nothing to fear.

Rug. Signors, you all know my business here. Answer then, Duke of Venice; have you not sworn, that Rugantino once in your power, nothing shall prevent Rosabella from being my bride?

Duke. I have.

Rug. Know then, he is in your power—is in mine.

Duke. Dead or living?

Rug. He still lives.

All Consps. He lives!

Rug. He still lives, signors.

[Bowing.]

Ros. [Embracing CAMILLA.] Did'st thou hear that, Camilla? the villain still lives! Not one drop of blood has stained the innocent hand of Flodoardo.

Rug. Innocent? Ah! now then be prepared; I'll produce the Bravo before you, and—

Cam. Oh, heavens! not here, signor! I shall die of a thousand little fears, if you bring him here.

Mem. And I shall die of ten thousand little fears.

Rug. Fear nothing, good Camilla. Be seated, Andreas. Let the rest arrange themselves behind the duke—Rugantino's coming.

[The DUKE seats himself; ROSABELLA on one side leaning on CAMILLA; the Conspirators are on the other.

Rug. [Advancing towards the porch.] Rugantino! [A pause—he retires still further back.] Rugantino!

Ros. I tremble, lest—

Rug. [Within the porch, but still in sight, though his back is turned to the spectators.] Rugantino! I say.

Ros. [Rushing towards him.] Oh! venture not, Flodoardo.

[At the moment she lays her hand on his arm, he

throws off his cloak and helmet, and appears in the habit, and with the countenance of the Bravo.

Rug. Ho, ho.

[*ROSABELLA falls at his feet, ANDREAS starts from his chair. All utter a cry of surprise and terror.*

Rug. Now then, you wished to see the Bravo Rugantino? Here he stands, and is come to claim his bride.

Con. Without there! guards!

Rug. [*Presenting a pistol.*] That word again, and you never speak another!

Ros. [*Recovering.*] Dreadful illusion! Methought—Flodoardo—

Rug. Illusion? Rosabella, 'twas none; your beloved Flodoardo and the Bravo Rugantino are the same; in me you behold both.

Ros. 'Tis false, 'tis false! Flodoardo's actions were good and glorious as a demi-god's. Flodoardo and thou—Wretch, whom many a bleeding ghost has long since accused at the throne of heaven, dare not thou to profane the name of Flodoardo. 'Tis false, 'tis false!

Rug. Then mark, and be convinced. [*He turns away, and in a moment appears with FLODOARDO'S countenance and the Bravo's habit.*] Look on me now, Rosabella; you see me changed; but change as I may, of one thing be assured; I am the man whom you loved as Flodoardo. Rosabella, dost thou love me still?

Ros. [*Throwing herself on CAMILLA'S bosom.*] Man, man! Now God forgive you for torturing me so cruelly.

Duke. Guards, seize him! To the scaffold!

Rug. What? Have I not kept my promise? Duke of Venice, will you not keep your oath?

Duke. It was given to the virtuous Flodoardo; with the murderer Rugantino I made no compact. Speak, senators; ought I to keep an oath so made?

Senators. No, no! to the scaffold!

Mem. Aye, to the scaffold!

Rug. Is it so then? and will no one intercede? Signor Contarino! one word in my favour—

Con. Away! address not thyself to me.

Rug. Good Signor Memmo, plead for me. You know me well, and—

Mem. I? I know nothing at all about you. I never saw you before—never heard of you—and hope never to see or hear of you again.

Rug. What? and does no one pity the wretched Rugantino? No one? Are all silent—all? My fate then is decided. To the scaffold! [*Going.*

Ros. [*Springing forward, and falling at the DUKE'S feet, who is crossing to the Conspirators.*] Mercy, mercy! Pardon him—pardon—Rugantino.

Rug. Say'st thou so? Ha, an angel pleads for Rugantino in his last moments.

Ros. He is a sinner, but leave him to the justice of heaven! He is a sinner, but Rosabella adores him still!

Duke. [*Repulsing her.*] Away, unworthy girl!—he dies.

Rug. And can you look on with dry eyes, while that innocent dove bleeds at your feet? Go, barbarian, you never loved her as she deserved! [*Raising her from the ground.*] Now then she is yours no longer; thou art mine, Rosabella—art Rugantino's; thou lov'st me as I would be loved; I am blessed, and now to business. [*The DUKE returns to the throne. He places ROSABELLA in CAMILLA'S arms.*] Within there! [*He sounds a whistle; Guards rush in, and surround the Conspirators; the doors are*

closed after them.] Guard them well. You have your orders.

Duke. What means—

Rug. It means, that this night your life and the constitution of Venice were doomed to conclude together.

Con. Noble Andreas, believe not—

Rug. Silence! I know your whole plot, and the officers of justice by my orders have already seized the gentry with the crimson scarfs. Duke, still doubt you my truth? Mark then! [*Turning to the Conspirators.*] 'The first who acknowledges his guilt shall be freely pardoned! I swear it, I, the Bravo Rugantino.

Mem. [*Falling at the DUKE'S feet.*] Venetians, Rugantino has told you true.

Rug. Live!

[*MEMMO rises.*

Mem. So I will as long as I can.

[*Erit.*

Consp. 'Tis false, 'tis false!

Rug. False? Then hear me, and then tremble! Manfrone and Lomelino, the duke's friends are still alive. [*The doors fly open; MANFRONE and LOMELINO appear.*] Away with them!

[*The DUKE embraces MANFRONE and LOMELINO.*

Ros. Joy! joy! Camilla, joy! Rugantino is not then a murderer. Alas! and yet Foscari's death—

Rug. Fear nothing, my love. Chance led me to the cave, where Foscari lay robbed and wounded by banditti, and before the venerable man expired, I swore to revenge his murder: traced out the villains, in whose society I received some hints of the conspiracy. I made my plans for defeating it known to Lomelino, who assisted me in my designs; he taught me a private entrance to the Duke's chamber, and persuaded Manfrone to share his concealment, until it became needful that their deaths should be believed.

Duke. But the prince of Milan's murder—

Rug. Was imaginary. Stephano was in my secret, and acted by my orders.

Duke. And the prince of Milan himself—

Rug. [*Throwing off his Bravo's habit, and appearing splendidly dressed with several orders, &c.*] Be hold him!

Duke. Amazement!

Ros. You? you the prince of Milan?

Prince. Even so. The perfidy of one ungrateful woman had made me distrust the whole sex; and I swore never to unite my fate but to her who would be constant to me under every circumstance. Rosabella has stood the trial; and I now glory to salute as Milan's future mistress the Bravo's bride.

Ros. Oh, happy, happy Rosabella!

Duke. How bright a sunshine after a day so stormy. Forth, forth, my son! Let a thousand torches show Venice her preserver! Let a thousand voices join in the exulting shout, "Honoured be the Bravo!—Happy is the Bravo's bride!"

All. Huzza!

[*The folding-doors open—the back ground is lighted by the moon. Neptune and Amphitrite enter—then Nereids and Tritons, STEPHANO is among them—then CAMILLA and two other females as Syrens.—Last a machine representing a rock of red coral floating on a silver sea, whose waves are in motion. On the summit of the rock is a brilliant conch-shell, in which sits ROSABELLA. Artificial zephyrs hang over her, some seeming to fan her with their wings, others with their breath to impel the rock forwards, which is drawn by enormous Dolphins, spouting up water; while on the*

head of each stands a little Cupid, holding golden reins, with which he appears to guide the animal. The three rival Goddesses agree to give ROSABELLA the apple, even Proserpine applauding the decision. The Conch sinks gently, till it touches the earth, when ROSA-

BELLA quits the machine, and receives the apple from the Goddesses.—The PRINCE and ROSABELLA enter the Conch, which ascends to its former elevation; the machine moves on in triumph, and as it passes along the front of the stage, the curtain falls.

ANIMAL MAGNETISM;

A FARCE, IN THREE ACTS;

BY MRS. INCHBALD.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MARQUIS DE LANCY
DOCTOR
LA FLEUR
JEFFREY
PICCARD
FRANCOIS.

CONSTANCE
LISETTE
Servants.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in the Doctor's House.*

Enter CONSTANCE, hastily, meeting LISETTE.

Con. Lisette, Lisette! who do you think I have just seen?

Lis. Your old guardian, I suppose.

Con. Do you think I should look thus pleasant, if it were him I meant?

Lis. Who, then? our gaoler, who keeps the keys?

Con. What, poor Jeffrey? Ha, ha, ha! How you talk!

Lis. No, no; I guess who you mean: the young Marquis de Lancy; and he has passed so frequently under your window, within these few days, that I am amazed your guardian, with all his suspicions, has not observed him.

Con. He has walked by above ten times within

this hour, and every time with his eye fixed up to the lattice of my window, and I had no heart to remove from it, for every time he saluted me with a most respectful bow.

Lis. Was his valet with him?

Con. No; but I saw another person in deep conversation with him; a strange-looking man, who appeared like one of the faculty, for his dress very much resembled that of my guardian's.

Lis. Who could it be?

Con. But what most surprised me, he had a letter in his hand, which he respectfully held up to me, but I could not reach it.

Lis. I know who it is: La Fleur, valet to the Marquis, disguised as a doctor; and I have no doubt but, under that disguise, he will find means to introduce himself to your old guardian, and, perhaps, be brought into the very house; and if I can assist his scheme, I will; for is it not a shame, the Doctor should dare, here in Paris, to forbid you and your servant to stir from home; lock us up, and treat us as women are treated in Spain?

Con. Never mind, Lisette, don't put yourself in a passion; for we can learn to plot and deceive, and treat him as men are treated in Spain.

Lis. Right, madam; and to prove I am not less inclined than yourself to Spanish manners, I am as much in love as you are.

Con. Not with the Marquis?

Lis. Do you think I don't know better where it is my duty to love? I am in love with his man.

Con. I wish I knew the contents of that letter he held out to me.

Lis. That you are beloved—admired; I can tell every word in it; I know every sentence as well as

if I had read it; and now, madam, it is my advice you sit down and answer it directly.

Con. Before I have read it?

Lis. Yes, yes; give your answer at the time you receive his letter; consider how convenient it will be to give the one, while you take the other: we are so watched, you know, that we ought to let no opportunity pass, for fear we should never get another; and, therefore, when he finds means to send his letter, you must take the same to return your's.

Con. But if my guardian should ever know I had written to a gentleman—

Lis. I'll write for you: and, should there be any discovery, the letter will be in my hand-writing, not your's. We must lose no time; the Doctor is abroad at present, and it must be both written and delivered before his return.

[*Goes to the table, and writes.*]

Con. But, my dear Lisette—

Lis. Don't put me out.

Con. What are you saying?

Lis. [*Writing.*] What you are thinking.

Con. You don't know my thoughts.

Lis. I do. And here they are, in this letter.

Con. Let me look at it.

Lis. No, don't examine your thoughts, I beg you won't: [*Folds the letter.*] besides, you have no time to read it; I must run to the garden-gate and deliver it immediately. The worst difficulty is having, for near an hour, to supplicate this poor, simple, decrepit fool of the old Doctor's to open me the garden-gate for a moment. Jeffrey!

Con. The Doctor has lately appointed Jeffrey his apothecary; he is busy preparing of medicines, and will be angry at being disturbed.

Lis. No matter; it may save the life of some of his master's patients.

Enter JEFFREY, *with a bandage on his left eye, and one on his right leg.*

Jeff. You made me overthrow the whole decoction.

Lis. Great apothecary!

Con. And alone worthy the physician under whom you have received instructions!

Jeff. I am very sorry I overthrew the decoction, for it was for my use: my leg is in pain still, and I am not yet satisfied that the dog was not mad.

Lis. I tell you, I am sure he was not; and, had you suffered him to live, it would have proved so.

Jeff. My master ordered me to kill him.

Lis. Merely to make you believe he was mad, and to shew his skill by pretending to preserve you from the infection.

Jeff. Nay, don't speak against my master.

Lis. Who was it undertook to cure your eyes?

Jeff. He; and, thank heaven, Lisette, I shall not suffer any more from that!

Lis. Why, then, do you wear a bandage?

Jeff. To hide the place where it was.

Lis. And is it thus the Doctor cured you?

Jeff. He was so kind to put my left eye out, in order to save the right.

Con. Well, still you are more fortunate than the god of love; for he has no eyes at all.

Jeff. And I shall have two, very soon; for my master has promised to buy me one at the great manufactory, which will be much handsomer than either of my other—a very handsome glass one.

Lis. And if the Doctor will remake you thus, piece by piece, in time, my dear Jeffrey, you may become a very pretty man: but you know, Jeffrey, I love you even as you are.

Jeff. Love me! that's a good joke. Lisette, I am afraid you want something of me, you speak to me so pleasantly.

Lis. Want something of you! How could such an idea enter your head?

Jeff. Because when you don't want something of me, you huff me and cuff me from morning to night, eh, eh! you look no more as you do now. Why, if I were dying, I durst hardly speak to you.

Lis. Well, henceforward, you shall have no reason to complain. But do you know, Jeffrey, I have a little favour to ask of you.

Jeff. Ay, I thought so.

Con. My dear Jeffrey, we will make you any recompence.

Jeff. What is it you want? If I can do it without offending my master, I will.

Lis. If you don't tell him, he'll never know it.

Jeff. But I tell him everything; he pays me my wages for telling, and I must not take them without earning them.

Con. If money be of such value to you, here, take my purse.

Jeff. No; it is not money I want, it is something else.

Lis. What, what, then?

Jeff. Oh! Mrs. Lisette, you know what I want, but you always denied me.

Lis. Psha! if I could grant it, indeed, without my master knowing it—

Jeff. Oh! I won't tell him of that, I protest.

Con. Well, Jeffrey, what is your favour?

Jeff. Just one salute of Mrs. Lisette.

Lis. Oh! if that's all, after you have obliged us, you shall have twenty.

Jeff. But I had rather have one now, than the twenty you promise after.

Lis. Come, then, make haste, if it must be so.

Jeff. [*Salutes her.*] Oh! the first kiss of the girl one loves is so sweet!

Lis. Now you are ready to comply with our request?

Jeff. Tell me what it is?

Lis. To give us the key of the garden-gate.

Jeff. I am very sorry I can't oblige you.

Lis. Why not?

Jeff. For several reasons.

Lis. Tell me one.

Jeff. In the first place, I have not got the key—my master took it with him when he went out.

Lis. You know you tell a falsehood: he has not got it. Is this your bargain and your gratitude?

Jeff. Nay, if you are angry at that, give me the kiss again.

Lis. Ugly, foolish, yet artful and cunning wretch! leave the room. You make love to me, indeed! Why, I always hated you, laughed at you, and despised you.

Jeff. I know that. Did not I tell you, when you spoke so kindly to me, you wanted something? how, then, could you expect me to oblige you?

Lis. I shall ever detest the sight of you.

Jeff. Unless you want something, and then you'll call me again—and then I shall kiss you again. Ha, ha, ha!

[*Exit, shewing the key.*]

Lis. I never was so provoked in my life.

Con. My dear Lisette, if our two lovers, the Marquis and his servant, prove no more fortunate in their schemes, than we have been in ours, I fear I must, according to his desire, marry the Doctor, and you Jeffrey.

Lis. I marry Jeffrey! Here comes the Doctor.

Enter Doctor.

Doc. What an indignity! I can't put up with it; I can't bear it; I'm ready to choke with passion!

Con. Dear sir, what is the matter?

Doc. I am disgraced, ruined, undone!

Con. And what has caused it, sir?

Doc. A conspiracy of the blackest kind. Man's weakness has arrived to its highest summit; and there is nothing wanting but merit to draw upon us the most cruel persecution.

Lis. Ah! I understand: the faculty have been conspiring against you.

Doc. They have refused to grant me a diploma; forbid me to practise as a physician; and all because I don't know a parcel of insignificant words, but exercise my profession according to the rules of reason and nature. Is it not natural to die? Then, if a dozen or two of my patients have died under my hands, is not that natural?

Lis. Very natural, indeed.

Doc. But, thank heaven! in spite of the scandalous reports of my enemies, I have, this morning, nine visits to make.

Con. Very true, sir: a young ward has sent for you, to attend his guardian; three nephews have sent for you, to attend their uncles, very rich men; and five husbands have sent for you, in great haste, to attend their wives.

Doc. And is not that a sign they think what I can do? Is it not a sign they have the highest opinion of my skill? And the faculty shall see I will rise superior to their machinations. I have entered upon a project that, I believe, will tease them: I have made overtures to one of their professed enemies, a man whom they have crushed, and who is the chief of a sect just sprung up; of which perhaps, you never heard; for simply, by the power of magnetism, they can cure any ill, or inspire any passion.

Con. Is it possible?

Doc. Yes; and every effect is produced upon the frame merely by the power of the magnet, which is held in the hand of the physician, as a wand of a conjurer is held in his; and it produces wonders in physic, equally surprising.

Con. And will you become of this new sect?

Doc. If they will receive me; and, by this time, the president has, I dare say, received my letter, and I wait impatiently for an answer.

Enter JEFFREY.

Jef. A doctor, at the door, desires to speak with you.

Doc. A doctor in my house!

Lis. I dare say it is the magnetising doctor you have been writing to.

Doc. Very likely; I dare say 'tis Doctor Mystery; shew him in, Jeffrey.

Jef. Please to walk this way, sir.

[*Exit.*]

Enter LA FLEUR, dressed as a doctor.

La F. Doctor, I hope I have your pardon, that, though no farther acquaintance than by letter, I thus wait upon you to pay my respects—

Con. [To *Lis.*] It is the same I saw with the Marquis.

Lis. [*Aside.*] And it is La Fleur, his valet.

La F. And to assure you, that I, and all my brethren, have the highest respect for your talents, and shall be happy to have you a member of our society.

Doc. I presume, sir, you are Doctor Mystery,

author and first discoverer of that healing and sublime art, Animal Magnetism.

La F. I am.

Doc. And it will render you immortal: my curiosity to become acquainted with the forms and effects of your power is scarcely to be repressed a moment. Will you indulge me with the smallest specimen of your art, just to satisfy my curiosity?

La F. You are, then, entirely ignorant of it?

Doc. Entirely.

La F. And so am I. [*Aside.*] Hem—hem! you must know, Doctor—

Doc. Shall I send the women out of the room?

La F. By no means; no, no; but I will shew both you and them a specimen of my art directly. You know, Doctor, there is an universal fluid, which spreads throughout all nature.

Doc. A fluid?

La F. Yes, a fluid—which is—a fluid—and you know, Doctor, that this fluid—generally called a fluid—is the most subtle of all—that is, the most subtle. Do you understand me?

Doc. Yes, yes.

La F. It ascends on high, [*Looking down.*] and descends on low; [*Looking up.*] penetrates all substances, from the hardest metal to the softest bosom—you understand me, I perceive?

Doc. Not very well.

La F. I will give you a simile, then.

Doc. I shall be much obliged to you.

La F. This fluid is like a river—You know what a river is?

Doc. Yes, certainly.

La F. This fluid is like a river, that—that runs—that goes—that gently glides—so—so—so—while there is nothing to stop it; but if it encounter a mound or any other impediment—boo—boo—boo—it bursts forth—it overflows the country round—throws down villages, hamlets, houses, trees, cows, and lambs; but remove obstacles which obstruct its course, and it begins again, softly and sweetly, to flow, thus—thus—the fields are again adorned, and everything goes on, as well as it can go on. Thus it is with the animal fluid, which fluid obeys the command of my art.

Doc. Surprising art! But what are the means you employ?

La F. Merely gestures, or a simple touch.

Doc. Astonishing! give me some proof of your art directly; do satisfy my curiosity.

La F. I will; and by holding up this wand, in which is a magnet, in a particular position, I will so direct the fluid, that it shall immediately give you the most excruciating rheumatism, which will last you a couple of hours. I will then change it to the gout; then to strong convulsions; and after, into a raging fever; and in this manner shall your curiosity become satisfied.

[*Holds up his wand as if to magnetise.*]

Doc. Hold, Doctor! I had rather see the experiment on some one else.

La F. Oh! then, sir, I have now at my house, a patient whom the faculty have just given up as incurable; and notwithstanding his disorder is of a most violent and dangerous kind, I will have him brought here, and I will teach you to perform his cure yourself.

Doc. By the power of magnetism?

La F. By the power of magnetism.

Doc. That would do me infinite honour, indeed: but why bring him to my house? pray, who is he?

La F. A young man of quality.

Con. Dear sir, let him be brought hither, and let me see the cure performed.

Doc. [*Takes LA F. aside.*] I can't say I approve of a young man being brought into my house; for you must know, Doctor, that young lady is to be my wife; as we are not exactly of an age, another may make an impression.

LA F. Consider my patient's state of health; he is like a dying man.

Doc. But he'll be well after I have cured him.

LA F. Very true. [*Doctor whispers LA F.*] True; certainly it is. [*They whisper again.*]

Con. Why this whispering? I am ignorant what are the virtues of your art, Doctor; but I am sure it has not that of rendering you polite.

LA F. Pardon, madam; I was but instructing the Doctor in some particulars of which you may hereafter have reason to be satisfied.

Lis. I doubt that, sir; unless your art could render this solitary confinement we are doomed to, agreeable.

LA F. Before the end of the day, you shall prefer it to the false pleasures of the gay world; for what are more false than the pleasures derived from balls, masquerades, and theatres?

Doc. Very true.

Lis. Well, I must own I love a theatre.

LA F. The worst place of all, to frequent; once in my life I was present at a theatrical representation; but such a piece did I see!—ah! the most dangerous for a young woman to be present at.

Lis. Pray, sir, what was it?

LA F. An honest gentleman, of about seventy years of age, was before the audience in love with a young lady of eighteen, whom he had brought up from her infancy, and whom he meant to make his wife.

Doc. Very natural.

LA F. A young gentleman of the neighbourhood, because he was young, rich, and handsome, imagined he would suit the lady better.

Doc. Just like them all.

LA F. He, therefore, disguised his valet, who, under the mask of friendship, introduced himself to this good man, the guardian.

Doc. A villain! he deserved to be hanged.

LA F. And seized the moment when he embraced him, as I now embrace you, to stretch out his hand, while it was behind him, and convey a letter to the lady's waiting-maid.

[*Embraces the Doctor, and exchanges letters with LISETTE; LISETTE gives the letter she receives to CONSTANCE; LA FLEUR puts the other into his pocket.*]

Lis. And she gave him another. I have seen the play myself; and it was very well acted. [*Retires.*]

LA F. And is it not scandalous to put such examples before young people?

Con. And pray, Doctor, do you think I am not under sufficient confinement, that you take the same methods to make me still more unhappy.

LA F. [*To the Doctor.*] Why does your ward dislike confinement?

Doc. Because she dislikes me.

LA F. Are you sure of that?

Doc. Yes, I think I am.

Con. I am dying with curiosity to read my letter.

[*Aside, and exit.*]

LA F. This wand shall cause in her sentiments the very reverse. In this is a magnet which shall change her disposition. Take it; [*Gives the wand.*] and, while you keep it, she will be constrained to love you with the most ardent passion.

Doc. I thank you a thousand times.

Lis. Excellent!

[*Erit.*]

Doc. Her maid has overheard us.

LA F. No, no; but take me into another apartment, and I will explain to you what, at present, you are not able to comprehend: after which, you will permit me to step home, and fetch my patient hither.

Doc. Certainly: when I am in possession of my ward's affection, I can have nothing to apprehend from him. And you are sure she will now become favourable to me? You are sure I shall attract her?

LA F. Yes, sure—by the loadstone. [*Ereunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—Another Apartment in the Doctor's House.

Enter LISETTE and CONSTANCE.

Lis. I overheard it all; and he has given your guardian the wand in which you heard him say the magnet was contained; and while he keeps it, it is to magnetise you, and force you to love him in spite of yourself.

Con. All this agrees with the letter he has given me from his master, in which the Marquis informs me by what accident that letter my guardian sent to the doctor who professes magnetism, fell into his hands, and immediately gave him the idea of disguising his valet, and sending him hither under the name of that doctor. But where is La Fleur now?

Lis. Just left your guardian, and gone home to bring the patient you heard him speak of; and I would lay a wager, that very patient is no other than the Marquis himself.

Con. But for what end is all this?

Lis. That they have planned, you may depend upon it. For the present, you have nothing to do but to pretend an affection for your guardian.

Con. It will be difficult to feign a passion my heart revolts at.

Lis. Never fear your good acting: besides, I will take an equal share in it.

Con. How? you!

Lis. I'll fall in love with the Doctor as well as you. If the magnetism affect you, why not have the same power over me? and if it make you love him, it shall make me adore him.

Con. Hush! here he comes. [*They retire.*]

Enter Doctor, with the wand.

Doc [*Aside.*] What he has told seems so very surprising, that nothing but proofs can thoroughly convince me; and now for the proof.

[*Looks at CONSTANCE.*]

Lis. [*Aside to Con.*] He ogles you; cast a tender look, and accompany it with a sigh.

Con. [*Sighing.*] Alas!

Doc. My dear Constance, my lovely ward, what—what makes you sigh? Weariness of your confinement, I suppose?

Con. [*Sighing.*] Ah! sir.

Doc. Come, come; I confess, the restraint you have been under has been too much, and I am not surprised you have taken a dislike to me.

Con. A dislike to you! Ah, sir! [*Sighing.*] Oh! guardian!

[*Going to speak, turns away, and hides her face.*]

Doc. [*Aside.*] I believe it will do. Come, come, Constance, do not sigh and make yourself uneasy; you shall not live many weeks thus retired, for I am thinking of marrying you very soon [*She turns eagerly to him*] to a fine young gentleman.

[*She turns away from him.*]

Con. Ah! cruel.

Doc. What did you say? If I have the good fortune to be beloved by you, let me have the happiness to hear it from yourself.

Con. Yes, cruel man! some invincible power compels me, in spite of my resistance. Yes, I love you.

Lis. And I adore you.

Doc. What, you, too? I did not expect that.

Lis. No, mine is not merely a love, but a rage—a violence—I doat to distraction—love you to the loss of my health, of spirits, of rest and life.

Con. If you do not take pity on the passion which burns in my heart—

Lis. If you can be regardless of the flames which consume me with violence—

Con. Can you be insensible of my tender pleadings?

Lis. Take care how you turn my affection to hatred.

Doc. [*Aside.*] What a terrible situation I have got myself into! the effect of the magnetism is very natural; it acts upon one as well as another; but Lisette's love is very troublesome. I'll call Jeffrey in, and give up part of my power to him; he will take the wand for a few minutes, and charm Lisette.

Con. Why do you thus run from me? Is this the return my love demands? But be not uneasy; death shall deliver you from an object, whose passion you despise.

Doc. Oh! that you could but read what is written in my heart!

Lis. Ah! sir, behold the state [*Kneels.*] to which you have reduced a poor innocent. If I am treated with kindness, I am naturally soft, gentle, and tender; but, if I am neglected, [*Rising.*] by all that's great and precious, I will do some strange thing either to you or my rival!

Doc. This Lisette is so furious, she makes me tremble; I must put an end to her affection. [*Aside.*] Jeffrey!

Enter JEFFREY.

Jef. Here, sir; what do you want with me?

Doc. Take this, and carry it to my study.

[*Gives the wand.*]

Jef. Yes, sir; directly.

Doc. Stop a moment, Jeffrey; stop a moment!

Jef. Two or three moments, if you please.

Doc. [*Aside.*] Now we shall see what effect it has.

Lis. [*To Con.*] I see through this design; let us fall in love with Jeffrey.

Con. With all my heart.

Doc. Well, Jeffrey—and—and how do you do, Jeffrey?

Jef. Pretty well, considering my leg, where the dog bit me, and considering I can only see with one eye.

Lis. But even that misfortune does not prevent your looking very agreeable, Jeffrey.

Doc. [*Aside.*] It succeeds; she is taken.

Jef. What are you beginning to laugh at me again?

Lis. Laugh at you! No, Jeffrey. I now wonder how it was possible I should ever laugh at you: how becoming is that bandage! and the eye we do see has a thousand times more bewitching charms for

the absence of that we do not. Dear madam, only observe him.

Con. Who can resist that amiable figure, dearest Jeffrey.

Jef. Ha, ha, ha!

Doc. [*Aside.*] This is as bad as the other.

Jef. I think the mad dog has bit us all.

Lis. Is it possible you can love Jeffrey? No, no; your situation forbids it. Take, take my master; I resign him to you.

Con. No, I resign him to you.

Lis. I will not have him.

Doc. This is a very disagreeable situation.

Lis. Jeffrey, will you be deaf to my passion?

Con. Yes, I'm sure he will prefer me.

Jef. No, I won't: I have been in love with her this twelvemonths, and I'll make choice of her.

Con. Then what will become of me?

Doc. I can bear this no longer. Give me that; [*snatches the wand;*] and do you make up some medicines.

Jef. Ah! my dear Lisette, you have made me so happy, I must shake hands.

[*Offers to take her hand, he slaps his face.*]

Lis. Learn to behave with more reserve for the future.

Jef. Ecod! I think you have not behaved with much reserve. Did you not hang upon me, and say you loved me!

Lis. Love you! Behold my master, and do not imagine I can love any but him.

Con. No; who can love any but him?

Doc. This is worse and worse! Where is the Doctor? If he do not come, and give me some relief, I am a ruined man. [*Loud knocking.*] Jeffrey, see if that is him, [*Exit JEFFREY.*] I have no doubt but it is; and with him the young patient, on whom I am to prove my skill. Constance, and you, Lisette, leave the room for the present.

Con. Yes, if you will go with me. But how do you think it is possible for me to leave you? A feeling, which I cannot explain—

Lis. And one I cannot explain—

Doc. But I am going to prescribe, and it is improper.

Enter LA FLEUR, leading the MARQUIS DE LANCY, dressed in a handsome robe-de-chambre.

La F. This, Doctor, is your patient. This is the renowned physician, from whom you are to expect a cure.

Doc. He looks surprisingly well, considering how much he has suffered.

La F. That renders his case the more dangerous. I would rather a patient of mine should look ill, and be in no danger, than look well, and be in imminent danger.

Mar. To conceive the sufferings I have undergone, a being must be transformed! he must be more, before he can conceive what I have felt; for months have I led this agonizing life! But I am told, Doctor, you can put an end to my disorder; you have, in your possession, that which can give me ease; but by what science you are master of so great a power, I own, is beyond my comprehension.

La F. Dear sir, you know not all the resources in the art of medicine; trust firmly, that you are in the hands of persons well informed and well practised. We know how to give nature a filip!

Doc. Doctor Mystery, do you use your authority with these females, to leave us to ourselves.

Con. I can't go.

Lis. Nor I.

La F. I believe it is very true, [*Feels their pulse.*] No, they can't go; no, the force of the attraction will not suffer them to go. [*To Doctor.*] What do you think of the power of magnetism now?

Doc. It has double the power I desire, and I wish it not to act on Lisette.

Con. [*To Lis.*] I hope the Marquis is not really ill.

La F. I will remedy that. [*Whispers to the Doctor while the Marquis makes signs of love to Constance.*] Now attend to what I am going to do; I'll turn the whole affection of the maid upon myself.

Doc. I will be very much obliged to you.

[*LA FLEUR whispers to the Doctor again.*]

Mar. [*Apart to Constance.*] One word only:—will you be mine, should my scheme prove successful?

Con. What is it?

Mar. I have no time to say—but answer me, will you be mine?

Con. I will.

Doc. [*Apart to LA FLEUR.*] Very well, extremely well: this will do very well; and now deliver me from her love as soon as you can.

La F. I must approach her, and 'tis done. [*Goes to LISETTE, makes signs of magnetism, and speaks apart.*] I am in love with you, feign to be so with me.

Lis. I am in earnest, without feigning.

La F. So much the better; it will appear more natural. [*To the Doctor.*] It's done; observe how she looks at me.

Doc. What an art!

La F. But I will shew its power in a manner yet more astonishing.

Con. [*Apart to the MARQUIS.*] I was on the point of being married to my guardian.

Doc. Is it possible?

Mar. [*Forgetting himself, and in warmth.*] Distraction! that must never be!

[*DOCTOR turns to him in surprise, LISETTE perceives it.*]

Lis. Oh, heavens! look to the patient.

La F. One of his fits has seized him. [*MARQUIS pretends a fit.*] But it's nothing; it will soon be over.

Mar. Nay, do not hide yourself. Oh! oh! that I could plunge this steel [*holds up his handkerchief*] a hundred times in that detestable heart. Come on, monster, and acknowledge thy conqueror, expiring under this hand.

Doc. I'll go into the next room. It is me, I believe, he is going to kill.

La F. But he has no weapon; don't be afraid.

Con. [*To LA F.*] Oh! dear sir, relieve him from this terrible fit.

Doc. Do; I beg you will.

La F. I cannot wholly relieve him at present; but you shall see me change the manner of his raving. Behold my power! [*Pretends to magnetise.*] See, his countenance changes; his looks express tenderness. Now it is no longer fury that transports him; but the soft languor of love now pervades his senses.

Mar. [*Looking at CONSTANCE.*] Oh! charming Arpasia!

La F. Arpasia was the name of his first love: he fancies himself near to her.

[*The MARQUIS kneels to CONSTANCE.*]

Mar. Is it you, then, whom I behold? But, alas! you do not suspect what I have suffered in your absence; and I only retain my life, in the pleasing hope of one day passing it with you, and rendering your's as happy as my own. What am I to think of this silence? You do not answer to my tender com-

plaints. Ah! you hate me, you despise me! But dread the effects of this contempt; I feel it is in my power to accomplish all. [*Rising.*]

Lis. He is going into his raving fit again. Pray, madam, speak to him, if it be but a word.

Mar. Speak to me one word, if it be only one word!

La F. Your ward is afraid of disobliging you; but give her leave to speak to him, if it be but one word, only to be witness to a scene so nouvelle.

Doc. But, harkye!

La F. Psha, psha! She looks at you for consent: tell her, she may say yes—just yes.

Doc. But why suffer her to speak?

La F. Consider you are in possession of the magnet, and nothing can prevent the power of that charm.

Mar. Ah! cruel! Ought I thus to wait for a word from those lips? You wish, then, to behold me die?

Doc. Well, well; answer him, yes.

Mar. Do you love me?

Con. Yes.

Mar. [*Kisses her hand.*] I am transported!

Doc. [*Endeavouring to separate them.*] Hold, hold! This is a fit as powerful to me as it is to you.

Lis. Dear sir, let him alone; he may fall into his rage again.

Mar. What thrilling transport rushes to my heart! all nature appears to my ravished eyes more beautiful than poets ever formed! Aurora dawns; the feathered songsters chant their most melodious strains; the gentle zephyrs breathe their choicest perfumes, and the inspiring scene intoxicates my very soul!

Doc. Come, change this fit into another.

Mar. And you, who listen to me, partake my joy. Come and dwell with me under the shady branches of the river-side. Come, lovely shepherdess; [*takes hold of CONSTANCE*]; come, young shepherd; [*takes hold of the Doctor*]; mingle in the dance.

Lis. Come, young shepherd.

[*Takes hold of the Doctor with one hand, and*

LA FLEUR with the other.]

Doc. I can't dance.

Mar. In vain you refuse. Pass, with gentle steps, the mossy banks, and join in the rural pastime.

[*They all dance.—Ereunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—An Apartment in the Doctor's House.

Enter LISETTE and LA FLEUR.

Lis. But when is this farce to end?

La F. My master, now he is introduced, will take advantage of some circumstances, to obtain, either by force or stratagem, the Doctor's consent to his wishes; and as he finds he is beloved by the young lady, which, before, he was in doubt of—

Lis. Psha! he might easily have guessed her sentiments. A young woman, weary of confinement as she was, is easily in love with the first young man who solicits her affections.

La F. And may I hope you love me?

Lis. Ay, sir; I am weary of confinement, like my mistress.

La F. A thousand thanks, my dear Lisette!

Lis. But while Jeffrey keeps the keys of every door, no creature can either go out, or enter, without his leave.

La F. And is there no way to get rid of him?

Lis. Yes; a thought strikes me this moment: a couple of days ago, a neighbour's dog bit him, and our doctor, merely to shew his skill in the cure, persuaded him the dog was mad. Suppose we make the Doctor himself believe he was really so, and that poor—

Enter DOCTOR, with the wand.

Doc. He has had another fit; but I have just now left him in a sound sleep, which came upon him as suddenly as any of his waking paroxysms.

La F. If that be the case, he must be left alone; we will not disturb him.

Lis. [*Aside to LA F.*] When I return, be sure to confirm whatever I shall say. [*Exit.*]

Doc. What! have you persuaded her to leave you?

La F. Yes, for a little while.

Doc. Why, too much of love is something tedious. I come once more to talk with you, Doctor, upon this surprising art; which, though you have taken such great pains to explain, I am still far from comprehending so much as I think I ought.

La F. I will, before long, give you such proof.

Re-enter LISETTE, followed by JEFFREY.

Lis. Oh! save me! or I'm a dead woman!

Doc. What's the matter?

Jef. This is no joke, and I won't take it as such.

Lis. [*Goes between LA F. and DOCTOR.*] Have a care of him. Speak low; he'll be at us.

Doc. Will he be at us?

Lis. [*In a low voice.*] Jeffrey is mad!

Doc. What do you say?

Lis. I found him in his bed, gnawing the bed-clothes; and, when he saw me, he would have gnawed me. [*The Doctor turns to him.*] Don't look at him, sir! don't look at him!

Doc. Why, I don't think this possible; the dog that bit him was not—

Lis. Indeed, sir, he was as mad as ever—

La F. Indeed, the poor creature looks as if some horrible infection had seized him.

Doc. Why, I can't say but I think he does.

Lis. And I'll give you the true proof immediately.

[*Throws a glass of water at him.*]

Jef. What's that for? How dare you use me thus?

Lis. There! you see what a dislike he has to water.

La F. That is a symptom which confirms our suspicions.

Doc. An evident sign of the hydrophobia!

La F. Yes, of the hydrophobia.

[*LISETTE comes with another glass of water to throw at him; at the sight of which he starts.*]

Lis. See, see, how he looks, only at the sight of water.

Jef. If you dare throw any more upon—

[*Holds up his hand.*]

Doc. Lisette, let him alone. It is dangerous to push the poor creature to extremities. Doctor, suppose we magnetise him?

La F. No; magnetism, in cases like this, can have no effect.

Doc. What remedy, then?

La F. I know of but one: to smother him.

Lis. The only thing in the world.

Doc. And we ought to lose no time, if it must be done.

Jef. What, smother me? [*Falls on his knees to the DOCTOR.*] Oh! sir, have pity on me.

Doc. Don't be frightened; it will be over in ten minutes.

Jef. But I had rather not.

Doc. Ungrateful wretch! do you consider the consequence of living?

Lis. For shame, Jeffrey! don't ask such a thing.

Doc. But, since he won't consent with a good grace, we must seize him all three together.

Jef. Ah! mercy, what will become of me?

Lis. [*Aside to JEFFREY.*] Run out of the house, and never come back, if you would save your life.

[*JEFFREY runs off.*]

La F. He sha'n't escape. Stop him there! [*Exit.*]

Doc. Why, he has run into the street! What a deal of mischief he may cause; and, as I'm alive, he has run away with all the keys in his pocket.

Lis. But, luckily, the doors are open.

Doc. But, why does not the doctor come back?

Lis. Depend upon it, he will not leave him till he has secured him in some safe place where he can do no mischief.

Enter CONSTANCE.

Con. Dear sir, come to the assistance of your patient; he has followed me to my chamber, and frightened me out of my senses: I thought he were going to die. Indeed, sir, he is very ill; I am sure he can't live long.

Enter MARQUIS DE LANCY, creeping slowly to the couch, as if unable to walk.

Mar. Oh! Doctor, relieve me from this pressure, or I die.

Doc. I wish my brother physician were returned! Come, sir, lean your head this way. Where is your complaint?

Mar. Here, here it lies! [*Laying his hand on his stomach.*] I fear this will be the last hour of my life!

Doc. No, no; I hope not.

[*Magnetising him sometimes with one end of the wand, and sometimes with the other.*]

Mar. The malady changes its place. Oh! my head! remove it from my head! make it descend. Now it flies to my heart! it sets it on fire! it tears it to pieces!

Doc. I wish the doctor would return.

Mar. My tortures redouble! vultures gnaw me! Can't you remove them? [*Attempts again to magnetise.*] No, no; my strength fails me! my eyes lose their sight! I die!

[*Groans, sinks on the couch, and remains motionless.*]

Lis. Oh! he's dead! he's dead! he's dead!

Con. What will become of us all? He's dead! he's dead!

Doc. I am quite shocked at it! But, my dear children, don't make such a noise. The neighbours will hear you; and they will say I have killed him with some of my experiments.

Lis. It was that fatal wand you put upon his heart.

Doc. Yes; I suppose I directed the fluid the wrong way. But, perhaps, he only fainted. Who knows but we may recover him? I will go and find some of my newly-invented drops, which may, perhaps, restore him. [*Feels in his pockets.*] And that poor, unhappy Jeffrey has taken away the key of my cabinet, where all my drops are.

Con. Break open the locks, then; there is no time to lose.

Doc. And Doctor Mystery not to return! Everything conspires to ruin me! I was loth to receive this patient into my house: my heart forboded some ill consequence. Dear me! dear me! [*Exit.*]

Mar. If my scheme succeed, the consequence will be such as you little dream of. Where is La Fleur?

Lis. Gone to secure Jeffrey somewhere out of the house.

Mar. If he should not return soon, all my long-concerted plan will be overturned.

Lis. Here he is.

Enter LA FLEUR.

La F. I have lodged him safe for these two days.
Mar. [Takes off his robe.] Give me your clothes, and take this immediately, and be dead.

La F. Dead! What do you mean?

Mar. Ask no questions; but lie on that couch, and counterfeit being dead.

Lis. Your master has been doing it this half hour.

La F. [Putting on the robe.] It is very strange; but since you command it—

Mar. Dare not stir, or breathe! All depends on your acting well. You must have your face powdered, that he may not know you.

La F. Now I am in character.

Mar. Where are my people?

La F. At the tavern, in the next street, both disguised like doctors.

Mar. That's right; I fly to them directly.—

[Going.]

La F. Your night-cap, your night-cap!

[The MARQUIS throws it to him.]

Mar. And give me your wig. [Puts it on.] I hear the Doctor coming. Farewell! Play your part to a miracle.

[Exit.]

Con. And heaven prosper your designs!

La F. [Sitting on the couch.] But what does all this mean? I don't understand.

Lis. Hush! dead people never speak.

[Throws him down on the couch.]

Enter Doctor.

Doc. Well, how is he? what does he say?

Lis. Why, like all other persons in his state, he does not complain.

Doc. Hold this bottle to his nose, and sprinkle this on his face.

Con. Alas! he is gone, and nothing can be of use.

Doc. How a few moments have changed him! I should'n't have known him again. He's as white as ashes. Lay your hand upon his heart, Lisette, and feel if it beats at all: for my part, I am so disconcerted with the accident, I am fit for nothing.

Lis. [Lays her hand on his heart.] All is still, sir

Doc. Is there no motion?

Lis. None in the least. [Slaps his face.] Like marble—has little feeling in it.

Doc. Doctor Mystery not returning, I conceive this was a plot upon me.

Lis. And this poor creature was in the plot, you think, and died on purpose to bring it about?

Doc. No; but the other found he could not cure him, and so left the disgrace of his death to me; and my enemies will take the advantage of it, considering how many of my patients have died lately.

Lis. What are we to do with the body?

Doc. I have yet one hope left; it is my last; and I won't hesitate, but about it instantly.

Con. What resource?

Doc. [To Lis.] He is certainly dead, is he not?

Lis. Certainly; there can be no doubt of that.

Doc. And, do what we will, nothing worse can happen to him.

Lis. No, certainly; not in this world.

Doc. Well, then, I will try an experiment upon him, which I once read, and I have often had a vast

mind to try it upon Jeffrey; but, as he was alive, it might have proved fatal.

Lis. What is it?

Doc. No matter; you shall see it performed; and I can't say I have much doubt of its success. Begin to take off some of his garments, while I go and get all the apparatus ready.

La F. But I am not such a fool to stay till you come back. My master may say what he will; but I will go away.

Lis. Nonsense, man! Have you not undertaken to be dead? Come, finish your part with a good grace.

Con. Pray do, La Fleur.

La F. But what experiment is he going to try upon me? I always hated doctors, and would never let any one of them come near me.

Con. But this is not a doctor: the college have refused to admit him; so, don't be afraid.

La F. Oh! as that's the case—

Lis. [Throws him down, as before.] Hush! play your part.

Enter Doctor, with a bag of instruments.

Doc. Lisette, help me with these instruments, and then run and watch that skillet of oil on the fire; and, when it boils, bring it hither.

Lis. But, suppose anybody should come in while we are trying the experiment?

Doc. Right; I'll lock the door. My fright makes me forget everything.

[Exit.]

La F. Let me see the instruments

Lis. Psha! what signifies seeing them; a'n't you to feel them?

Doc. [Without.] What! force into a man's house, whether he will or no?

Con. I hear a noise! [Looks out.] It is the Marquis returned; and all his schemes, perhaps, will be fulfilled.

[LA FLEUR lies down again.]

Enter MARQUIS DE LANCY, PICCARD, and FRANCOIS, disguised as doctors, (the MARQUIS having changed his dress,) followed by the Doctor.

Mar. I have powerful reasons for entering this house. I came hither accompanied by these physicians, sent with me by the college, to demand a patient, who was this morning brought hither by a notorious professor of quackery; the young gentleman is of family, and nearly allied to me.

Doc. [Aside.] I am undone!

Mar. Where is he, sir? I must see him, and speak with him.

Lis. At present, you can't speak with him; he is in a better world.

[Pointing to LA FLEUR.]

Mar. Alas! behold him there, or am I deceived? No; it is he himself whom I see! and he is dead! Gentlemen, I call you as witnesses that he is dead, and that yonder stands the assassin.

[PICCARD and FRANCOIS examine the body;

PICCARD puts on his spectacles.

Fran. [Feeling his pulse.] Yes, he is dead; but he is not dead according to our rules.

Mar. Oh! my dear friend, and are you gone? But your death shall be revenged. [To the Doctor.] Villain, tremble! for thy life shall answer for this

Gentlemen, gentlemen, please to take notes of what you see and hear in this house. [The Doctors write

Lis. Dear sir, have pity on my poor master; he has killed the poor gentleman, to be sure; but it was without malice.

Doc. But you know, gentlemen, this is not the first patient that has been killed during an operation.

Pic. Ay, by the authority of the college.

Doc. [To the MARQUIS.] Dear sir, my only hope is in your mercy.

Mar. Then despair! for know, I am the Marquis de Lancy; and call to your remembrance with what insolence you rejected all my overtures to espouse your ward. Here is the advantageous contract I repeatedly sent to you, which you had the arrogance to return to me, without even deigning to look at.

Doc. Only deliver me from this trouble, and I will sign it without reading it at all.

Mar. But will the lady also sign it?

Con. No; for how can I wed another, when he [pointing to the Doctor] is the object of my love?

Doc. But consider, my dear Constance, that I am old and ugly, jealous and infirm. Indeed I am, indeed I am, I protest, Constance!

Con. But my love for you is so implanted in my heart—

Mar. If that be the case—Come, sir, follow us.

Doc. Stay; give me the contract, and let me sign it. [Aside.] I will once more have recourse to the wand.

Mar. What imports your signing, if your ward will not?

Doc. She will sign.

Con. Never!

Doc. Give me the contract, and hold that.

[Gives the wand to the MARQUIS, takes the contract, and signs it.]

Mar. What's this?

Doc. Keep it; never let it go from you.

Con. Yes, I feel a desire to sign; give me the contract.

Doc. Ay, I was sure of it. [CONSTANCE signs the contract.] And there, Marquis, is the contract.

[Giving the contract to the MARQUIS.]
La F. [Rising.] Ah! I breathe again! I am a little better!

Doc. [Starting.] Why, is he not dead?

La F. No; I am mending apace.

Doc. Gentlemen, tear in pieces the process. [To La F.] Oh! sir, what misery have you brought upon me!

La F. And what misery would your d—d instruments, and your boiling oil, have brought upon me?

Doc. How did you hear, in that fit, what I said?

La F. Very easily, sir. Return him the wand; and the ladies, I dare say, will fall in love with him again.

Doc. [Looking at La F. and then at the MARQUIS.] My eyes are open! I recollect them both! But this was the sick man! [To the MARQUIS.]

La F. But I was the dead one!

Doc. I am cheated, defrauded! What ho! neighbours! Here are thieves, murderers!

Mar. Nay, Doctor, reflect upon the arts you made use of, to keep my Constance yours, even in spite of her inclinations; then do not condemn the artifice I employed to obtain her with her own consent. A reward like this, urged me to encounter every hazard and every danger; for, believe me, Doctor, there is no magnetism like the powerful magnetism of love.

[Exeunt.]

THE REGISTER OFFICE;

A FARCE IN TWO ACTS

BY JOSEPH REED.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

CAPTAIN LE BRUSH
GULWELL
WILLIAMS
Scotchman
Irishman
Frenchman.

MRS. DOGGEREL
MARGERY
Girl.

ACT. DRAMA.—NOS. 103 & 104.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Register Office.

Enter WILLIAMS.

WIL. The business of the morning is partly over. What a crowd of deluded females have flocked here within these three hours, in expectation of the imaginary place we have advertised! A register-office, under the direction of so conscientious a person as Mr. Gulwell, instead of a public good, becomes a public evil. My upright master seldom feels any reflections of this kind! avarice is his leading prin-

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ciple; and so long as he can swell his bags by the folly or credulity of mankind, he will not suffer conscience to hinder him in the pursuit of gain. I think I hear him coming.

Enter GULWELL.

Gul. So, this advertisement has brought in two pounds, thirteen shillings! no very bad morning's work. Well, thanks to the memory of our witty founder, say I. Had he not hit on the scheme of a register-office, I might have dangled on at quill-driving without ever being worth a groat.

Wil. But, sir, do you think this calling of ours the most conscientious one in the world? I begin to imagine my old employment, the law, the more honest profession of the two.

Gul. Mr. Williams, there is roguery in all the employments under the sun. Every day's experience will convince you, that there is no getting through the world without a necessary portion of trick and chicanery.

Wil. Sir, if the imposture of this advertisement were found out and duly punished, one or both of us would stand a fair chance for the pillory. How many poor girls have been stripped of perhaps their last shilling, by being amused with the hopes of the place we have advertised. P'faith! sir, some of our professions are little better than downright pick-pockets. I am glad I shall have the good fortune to leave it so soon.

Gul. Mr. Williams, I am truly sorry for our separation, but rejoice at the occasion of it; however, if you hope to make a fortune in your altered condition of life, you must learn to keep your conscience in proper subordination. I can assure you, that fraud is as necessary a requisite in a stewardship as in an intelligence-office. Is there no message from Dr. Skinfint about the Welsh living?

Wil. Yes, sir; he says as curates are so cheap in Wales, he will not take less than a thousand guineas.

Gul. A spiritual curmudgeon! Why, it is not quite a hundred a year. I forgot to ask if you called at Captain Sparkle's last night?

Wil. I did, sir; and was surprised to see him so greatly recovered.

Gul. I thought he would grow better after the embarkation. I never supposed him in any very great danger, because he refused eight hundred guineas for his commission, when his life was despaired of. Have you finished the assignment of the surgeoncy.

Wil. No, sir.

Gul. Then get it done, Mr. Williams: stay, you must write an advertisement for the Daily, any time this afternoon will do, of an employment to be disposed of in Ireland, of a thousand pounds per annum, which requires little learning or attendance, and may be executed by a deputy. Remember to add, that secrecy is required, and none but principals need to apply.

Wil. I forgot to tell you, the young gentleman was here to know if you had received an answer about the secretary's place.

Gul. Truly, I am sorry I could not succeed: fifteen hundred guineas were insisted on; I pleaded the young gentleman's acknowledged merit, and the public services of his brave father, who lost his life in fighting for his country, which so softened my principal, that he sunk his demand from—

Wil. Fifteen to five hundred, I hope.

Gul. From guineas to pounds: I could get no further abatement.

Wil. It is a pity that such extraordinary merit should have no better success.

Gul. Ah! Mr. Williams, if places were given to persons of merit only, the Lord have mercy upon many a big-looking family. Away; here's company coming. [*Exit WILLIAMS.*] Heyday! who have we here? By his looks, he must be one of the tribe of the soup-maigres.

Enter a Frenchman.

French. Be votre nom Monsieur le Gulvelle?

Gul. It is, sir; your business?

French. Sire, me be tell dat dere be de grand nombres d'academies Françaises en Londres; and me vould be glad to be employé as un maitre de langues. Me speak a de Frens vid de vrai prononciation; and you see beside ma connoissance in de langue Angloise be not the most inconsiderable.

Gul. Oh! yes, sir; you speak very pretty English, I must own. Pray, what business have you been bred to?

French. Bisness; do you mean to front a me? me be von of de gens de qualité.

Gul. How, sir; a person of quality, and so poor as to be seeking after a livelihood.

French. Vy vere be de vonders of all dat? Nōting be more commun in France. Me dit, indeed, sometime, pour passer le temps, amuse mysel vid curl a de air, and cut a de corn of mine comrades de qualité of bot sex.

Gul. Sir, if you be a proficient in these sciences, I give you joy with all my heart, for I don't know a more profitable calling in London; nay, nor a more reputable one; for its professors are caressed by persons of the first fashion and distinction. There's your countryman, Monsieur Frizzellette de la Corneille, a hair and corn-cutter in St. James's, that keeps his chariot, though 'tis scarce half a score years since he would have made a bow to the ground for a bellyful of soup-maigre.

French. And begar, so would me too

Gul. Sir, I will cook you up an advertisement as long as a proclamation, that will effectually do your business. In the meantime, I shall give orders for one of the laconic kind, to hang in golden letters over your door: "Hair and corns cut after the French taste, by a person of quality."

French. Ay, dat vil do ver vell. Par un personne de qualité.

Gul. But, sir, as you are a man of rank, you may, perhaps, think it below your dignity to follow any profession that has the least appearance of business?

French. Non, non, monsieur; tout au contraire.

Gul. Then I dare venture to say, that in less than a dozen years you will be rich enough to return to your native country, and marry a princess of the blood. How, in the name of wonder, could you think of being a pitiful teacher of French for a livelihood, when you are possessed of talents superior to all the learning in the world?

French. Me vill tell you, monsieur: it be not more as dix, onze, douze, treize—ay, thirteen year, since mon cousin comed over to l'Angleterre, to teash a de Frens in de boarding-école. Vell, he dit engage de affection of de Angloise young lady, sa belle écolière, runned away wid her, and so, begar, he getted de vife vid not less as von hundred thousand livres. Now, as mon cousin could marry de lady vid so much of de l'argent, vy may not me hope to do the same?

Gul. True, sir; but there's an ugly act of parliament since that time, which hinders you fortune-

hunting gentlemen from gaining such wives. Well, sir, you will deposit a small sum; two or three guineas, or so; and I shall begu the advertisement.

French. Hey! vat you say? deposit! Je n'entends pas deposit.

Gul. Oh! sir, I'll soon explain it. Deposit signifies—

French. Non, non, mon cher ami! it be impossible for me to know vat you means; for me do not understand un mot de la langue Angloise.

Gul. Why, sir, I thought your connoissance in de langue Angloise had not been the most inconsiderable? [*Mimicking him.*]

French. Oh! monsieur—but dat—dat—dat was une autre chose—quite anoder ting.

Gul. Well, sir, I must have two or three guineas, by way of earnest, before I proceed any further in your business.

French. Two, tree guinee! begar; me could so soon give you two, tree million. Vat you take a me for? un grand voleur—von tief? You tink me ave rob your Inglisse exchequer; for all de world know dat de exchequer of my countree ave scarce so much to be rob of. Let a me see: me ave no more as von chelin, and von, two, three alpence.

Gul. Thirteen pence halfpenny! a very critical sum in England. Well, sir, you may leave that in part; I must give you credit for the remainder.

French. [*Gives his money.*] Dere, sir. And so, Monsieur le Gulvelle, you tink en verité me sal ride in my coach.

Gul. Not at all impossible. Call again in a week, and you shall see what I have done for you.

French. Begar! you have elevé mine heart. Sire, me be votre tres humble, tres obligé, and tres devoté serviteur. Oh! mon Dieu! ride in my carrosse! [*Erit.*]

Gul. Your most humble servant, good Monsieur le Carosse. If it were not for the credulity of mankind, what a plague would become of us office-keepers!

Enter MARGERY.

Mar. Sur, an I may be so bold, I've come to ax-an ye've sped about t'woman servant, 'at ye advertised for?

Gul. I have not. Come nearer, young woman.

Mar. Let me steek't deer first, an ye please.

[*Shuts the door.*]

Gul. What countrywoman are you?

Mar. I'se Yorkshire, by my truly! I was bred and bworn at little Yatton, aside Roseberry Topping.

Gul. Roseberry Topping! Where is that, my pretty maid?

Mar. Certainly God! ye know Roseberry? I thought ony fule had known Roseberry. It's t' biggest hill in oll Yorkshire; it's aboun a mile an a hofe high, and as coad as ice at top on't i't' hetttest summer's day; that it is.

Gul. You've been in some service, I suppose?

Mar. Ay, I'll uphole ye have I, ever sin I was neen year ald. Nay, makins, I'd a God's penny at Stowstah market, aboun hofe a year afore 'at I was neen; and as good a servant I've been, thof I say't myself, as ever came within pair o'deers. I can milk, kurn, fother, bake, brew, sheer, winder, card, spin, knit, sew, and do everything 'at belongs to a husbandman, as weel as ony lass 'at ever ware clog-sheen: and as to my karecter, I defy onybody, gentle or simple, to say black's my nail.

Gul. Have you been in any place in London?

Mar. Ay, an' ye please; I lived wi' Maadam Shrilpipp, in St. Pole's Kirk-garth, but was forced to leave my place afore 'at I had been a week o' days in't.

Gul. How so?

Mar. Marry, because she ommost flighted and scauded me out o' my wits. She was t' arrantest scaud 'at ever I met wi' in my bworn days. She had seerly sike a tongue, as never was in ony woman's head, but her awn. It wad ring, ring, like a larum frae mworn to neeght. Then she wad put hersel into sike flusters, that her face wad be as black as t' reeking-crook. Nay, for that matter, I was but rightly sarra'd, for I was telled aforehand, by some verra sponible fwoke, as she was a mere donnot; howsomever, as I fand my money grow less and less every day, (for I had brought my good seven-and-twenty shilling to neen groats and two-pence,) I thought it wad be better to take up wi' a bad place than nea place at oll.

Gul. And how do you like London?

Mar. Marry, sir, I like nowerth eger nor shell on't. They're sike a set of fwoke as I never saw with my eyen. They laugh and fier at a body like onything: I went no but t'other day ti t' baker's shop for a lafe of bread, and they fell a giggling at me, as I'd been yan o' t' greatest gawvions i' t' world.

Gul. Pray, what is a gawvion?

Mar. Why, you're a gawvion for not knowing what it is; I thought ye Londoners ha' known everything: a gawvion's a ninny-hammer. Now, do you think, sir, 'at I look ought like a gawvion?

Gul. Not in the least, my pretty damsel.

Mar. They may bwost as they will o' their manners, but they have nae mare manners than a miller's horse, I can tell them that; that I can. I wish I had been still at canny Yatton.

Gul. As you have so great a liking to the place, why would you leave it?

Mar. Marry, sur, I was forced, as yan may say, to leave 't: the 'squire wad not let me be. By my truly, sir, he was efer after me, mworn, noon, and neeght. If I wad but ha consented to his wicked ways, I might ha' had gould by goppins, that I might. "Lo' ye, 'squire," say I, "you're mista'en o' me; I'se none o' thea sort o' cattle; I'se a vartuous young woman, I'll assure ye; ye're other fwoke's fwoke; wad ye be sike a taystrel as to ruin me?" But oll wadn't do; he kept following and following, and teasing and teasing me: at length, run I to teit' my auld dame, and she advised me to gaug to London to be out of his way; that she did, like an onnest woman as she was. I went to my cousin Ishell, and says I to her, "Ishell," says I, "come, will you goway to London?" and telled her the hale affair atween me and the 'squire. "Odsbeed!" says she, "my lass, I'll gang wi' thee ti t' world's end." And away we come in good yearnest.

Gul. It was a very vartuous resolution. Pray, how old are you?

Mar. I'se nineteen come Collop-Monday.

Gul. Would you undertake a housekeeper's place? *Mar.* I'se flaid I cannot manage't, unless it were in a husbandman's house.

Gul. It is a very substantial farmer's in Buckinghamshire: I am sure you will do; I'll set you down for it. Your name?

Mar. Margery Moorput, an ye please.

Gul. How do you spell it?

Mar. Nay, makins, I know naught o' speldering. I'se nea schollard.

Gul. Well, I shall write to him this evening. What wages do you ask?

Mar. Nay, marry, for that matter, I wadn't be ower stiff about wage.

Gul. Then I can venture to assure you of it. You must give me half-a-crown, my pretty maid. Our fee is only a shilling for a common place, but for a housekeeper's we have always half-a-crown.

Mar. There's twa shilling, an' yan, tea, three, four, fave, six penn'orth o' bross, with a thousand thanks. God's prayer light o' you! for I've seer ye'r't best friend I have met wi' sin I come frae canny Yatton, that you are. When shall I coll again, sir?

Gul. About the middle of the next week.

Mar. Sir, an' ye please, gud m'worning to you.

[Exit.

Gul. Good morning to you, dear, virtuous Mrs. Margery Moorput. So, this is a specimen of Yorkshire simplicity, that it is—More customers!

Enter Scotchman.

Well, sir, your business with me?

Scotch. Gin ye be the maister o' this office, my business wi' ye is to spear at ye, gin ye can be o' any service till a peur distressit gentleman?

Gul. Sir, I shall be glad to do a gentleman in distress any service in my power, especially one of your country. I have a veneration for the very name of Scotchman; my father was one.

Scotch. Troth, ye speak vera mickle like a gentleman, and seem to hae a proper sense o' national honour. I'm glad that I've been sae fonsy as to fa' into sic hands. Ye maun ken that my family is as auncient as ony i' a' Scotland, and that by direct lineal deshent, I sprang frae the great Jamy Mackintosh, who was a peevy-councillor to King Sandy the second.

Gul. A very considerable origin, indeed! But, pray, sir, what may have been the cause of your present distress?

Scotch. I've tell ye the hale matter: when I was a laddie I was sae daft to get the ill wull o' a' my kin, by the disgrace I had brought upo' the Mackintoshes, by pitting myself 'prentice till a canker auld carle o' a sword-slipper in Aberdeen, whose bonny daughter I was so unsonsy as to click a fancy to.

Gul. Well, sir?

Scotch. When I was out o' my 'prenticeship, I wanted gear to begin the warld wi': I axed a' my friends, but they gruit at me like the vengeance. "Hald ye there, lad!" quo' they: "Ye maun e'en pickle i' your ain poke nuke." "As ye barked ye may brew." An' the de'il o' owther gowd or siller; nae no sae mickle as a plack or a bawbie wad they gi' me, unless I wad betak' myself to some mare gentleman-like occupation. Weel, sir, I was forcit to wale a new business. They ga' me graith enough to buy a pack; and I turned travelling merchant, whilk the English, by way o' derision, ca' a pedder, that I might nae langer be a disgrace to my kin.

Gul. Why, this was a way to retrieve the disgrace o' the Mackintoshes, indeed!

Scotch. Right, sir, verra right a truly. But wi' your permission, I've speed me to the tragical part o' my story: as I was ganging my gate towards Portsmouth, I was attackt by twa robbers, who gar'd me strip frae the muckle coat o' my back to my vera sark; an' rubbit me o' a', ay, an' mare nor a' I could ca' my ain. An' no content wi' taking my gades, they ruggit my hair; they pou'd me by the

lugs; they brisset and skelpit me to sic a gree, that the gore blude rin into my breeks, an' my skin was amaisht as black as pick; nay, when I graned i' meikle dool an' agony, the fallows leugh at my piti-fu' mains, ca'd me an ill-fared scabbit tyke; an' bad me begane into my ain crowdie country to sell butter an' brunstane.

Gul. The barbarous villains! Not only to rob and abuse you, but to insult your country.

Scotch. I wot, it was a downright national reflection; an' I'm sic a loo'er o' my country, that it hurt me mare nor a' the whacks they ga' me, an' the loss o' my pack into the bargain. Weel, sir, I am now brought to the maist ruefu' plight, that ever peur fallow was in, for I canna' git claiths to my back, or veetel to my wame: I'm sae blate that I maun starve to deid, or I can ax charity; albeit, I'm sae hungry that I could make a brow meal upo' a whin sour kail, an' a haggise, ta'en aff a middling, gif it e'en stank like a brock.

Gul. Poor gentleman! I pity your condition with all my heart.

Scotch. As I trudge along the wynds, I can hear the cawler waiter, I drink at the pump, gang jaup, jaup, jaup, i' my empty kyte. Except a bicker o' gud fat brose, an' a lunch o' salt beef, whilk I gat last Sabbath-day aboard o' a wee Scotch barkie, I ha' no had my peur wame weel steght this twa owks an' aboon; an' hunger, ye ken, is unco fare to bide.

Gul. It is so, indeed.

Scotch. Now, gin ye can pit me intill any creditable way o' getting my bread, I sall rackon it a very great kyndness.

Gul. For what station in life do you think yourself fittest?

Scotch. For any station, where learning is necessary. I care na' a pickle o' sneshing what it be. Ye may ken, by my elocation, I'm a man o' nae sma' lair. I was sae weel-leered, that ilka auld wife in Aberdeen wad turn up the whites of her e'en like a mass John at kirk, an' cry, "Ay, God guide us! what a pauky chiel is Donald! He's sae aldagabbit tha' a speaks like a print buke." I could like vera weel to be a Latin secretary till a minister o' state, an' can say, wi'out vanity, I'm as fit for an office as ony man i' the British dominions.

Gul. Then you understand Latin?

Scotch. Latin! Hoot awa' man! hoot awa', ye daft gowk! do ye jcer a body? a Scotchman, an' not unnerstan' Latin! Ha, ha, ha! A vera gude joke a truly! unnerstan' Latin. quo'he! Why, we speak it better nor ony o' his majesty's subjects, an' wi' the genuine original pronunciation, too. I've gi' you a specimen frae that wutty chiel, Maister Ovid:

Parve, nec invidia, sine me, liber, ibis in urbem,

Hei mihi, quod Domino non licet ire tuo!

Now, ken ye, man, whether I unnerstand Latin or no?

Gul. Oh! sir, I see you are a complete Latinist. Well, if we can't fall in for the secretary, suppose you should take up with translating awhile, till something better offer? there are pretty pickings, very comfortable pickings, now and then, to be had in that way.

Scotch. Anything at present to satisfy the cravings of my wame, there is no an under the dignity o' my family. Ye ken the auld saw, beggars munna be choosers: for that matter, I've no repine, gif I can but e'en git bannocks, an' sneeshing, till something better fa' out.

Gul. Give me your name and place of abode, and you may expect to hear from me very shortly.

Scotch. Donald Mackintosh, gentleman; at Maister Archibald Buchanan's, a tobacco-merchant, at the sign of the Highlander and snuff-bledder, ower anent King James's-stairs, Shadwell. [*GULWELL writes.*] What's your charge, sir?

Gul. Only a shilling, sir: 'tis a perquisite for my clerk.

Scotch. There it's for ye, sir. [*Gives money.*] I was fain to borrow't o' Sandy Ferguson, the coal-heaver; for the de'il a boddle had I o' my ain.

Gul. Have you got anybody to give you a character?

Scotch. In troth, I canna say I ha' e'en now. I ken no living saul in London but Sandy an' my landlord, that I would ax sic a favour o'; and abins their karecter o' me would no be thought sufficient.

Gul. Nay, sir, it is no very great matter: it would have saved you a trifle; for when we make characters, we must be paid for them. We have characters, as jockies have pedigrees, from five shillings to five guineas.

Scotch. Weel, sir, we may tauk o' that anither time: gin ye succeed, ye'll find me no ungratefu'. Ye sall see I ha' no sae mikle o' the fau'se Englishman wi' me, as to be forgetfu' o' my benefactors. I'm awear I've been vera fasheous; howe'er, I'se fash ye nae langer, but gang my wa's home. Sir, your vera abliged servant. Ik gude troth, this is a *rara avis in terris, nigroque similima cygno*. [*Exit.*]

Gul. Your most obedient, good Mr. Latin secretary. There goes one of the many fools that owe their ruin to family pride. Mr. Williams, give an eye to the office; I shall be back in a few minutes. [*Exit.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Register Office.

Enter GULWELL, meeting WILLIAMS.

Gul. Her ladyship hath released me sooner than I expected. Go, get the instrument finished, Mr. Williams. [*Exit WILLIAMS.*] A comb-brush for Lady Vixen. [*Writing.*] This, I believe, will be the one-and-twentieth she hath had from my office within these two years: a special customer, i'faith! Heyday! Who have we here? A spruce coxcomb of the military cast.

Enter Captain LE BRUSH.

Capt. Sir, your most obedient. Pray, a'n't you Mr. Geoffrey Gulwell, esquire?

Gul. The same, sir.

Capt. Then I am come to have a little talk with you.

Gul. Your business, good sir?

Capt. You must know, sir, I am an ensign in a new raised ridgmen, to which post I was advanced through the interest of my very good friend and acquaintance, Lord Pliant; whom I had the honour to serve many years in the capacity of valet-de-chambre. But, sir, though formerly a servant, I am a gentleman born, and have had the honour of an university iddication.

Gul. Sir, I make no doubt of it; you have the appearance of a man of consequence: may I crave your name and family?

Capt. My name, sir, is Le Brush. I am com-

monly called Brush, but Le Brush is the name my family was arriginally, nay, even so lately as Harry the Eight, known by: a name, sir, given by way of distinction to one of my auntsisters, that was general under All-afraid the Great, for so victoriously sweeping away hole armies of the enemy. Our family had all their estates confiscated in the broils between the Yorkshire and the Lancashire line; so that their predecessors have been a little out of repair to the present time, and the name regenerated into plain Brush.

Gul. Sir, as your family hath been so long reduced, how came you by the education you talk of?

Capt. Sir, I was taught to read and write free-gratis for nothing, at a charity-school; and attended Lord Pliant to the university; where, you know, there are many opportunities for a man of talons to improve himself.

Gul. Right, sir; such opportunities, that I have frequently known a valet return from thence full as wise as his master.

Capt. Egad! sir, I see very plainly you're a gentleman that knows what's what.

Gul. And pray, Captain, what were your favourite studies at college?

Capt. Logic and poetry; the only two studies fit for a gentleman: as the first will teach you to cheat the devil, and the other to charm the ladies.

Gul. I should be glad to have a little conference with you on the latter; for I am a bit of a dabbler in it.

Capt. Then, serously, as a friend, I would dissuade you to look out d—d sharp, or, upon my soul, you'll catch a Tartar! for I have not met with anybody that was fit to hold the candle to me in poetry, for a long series of time. But, sir, as I am in haste, we had better refer the dispute, at present. Any other time I am at your service for a confab of a few hours. I shall run through my business with as brief prolixity as possible.—At a country town, where I was recruiting, I had the good fortune to pick up a maiden lady, pretty well stricken in years, with a fortune of three thousand pounds in the stocks. Now, sir, as the interest of the money, and my present pay, will scarcely be sufficient to maintain me, (for you know, sir, a soldier and a gentleman is anonymous characters, and a man in my office must live up to his dignity,) I say, sir, as the interest of the money is d—d low, I have a desire to purchase a cornetcy, or a company of foot, that I may be better able to live like a gentleman.

Gul. Posts of that kind frequently fall under my disposal. I think it a prudent and honourable intention in you; as, in case of mortality, the provision for your lady will be larger.

Capt. Pooh! d—n the old hag! I don't care if the devil had her! I have been married above two months, and was as tired of her in the first fortnight, as a modern man of quality after a twelvemonth's cohabitation. I have, for these five weeks past, done everything in my power to break her heart; but, egad! it is made of such tough stuff, such penetrable stuff, (as my friend Shakspeare calls it,) that I believe I sha'n't be able to defect the business, d—e! In short, my disappointment has thrown me into such a devilish delima, that the devil fetch me, if I know, for the blood and soul of me, how to execrate myself out of it! For I want to be rid of her, most cursedly, that's certain!

Gul. There are many ways, Captain, by which such a business may be brought about.

Capt. True, sir; my sergeant, Tom Spatterdash,

who is a d—d cute dog, as any in the coppercan system—You don't know Tom, do you, sir?

Gul. I can't say I have the honour of his acquaintance.

Capt. Oh! the most drollest, comicallest fellow in the whole universe, egad! As I was a saying, Tom offered me, for ten guineas, to give her a dose; but, no, no; d—e, thinks I to myself, I'll not poison the old beldam, neither; it will be the more fashionable way to break her heart.

Gul. Sir, as you are a gentleman, I would beg leave to ask why you are so desirous of parting with a woman, who has been so great a benefactress to you? I should be afraid your patron and his lady would resent such behaviour. Will you be kind enough to answer my question with truth.

Capt. Truth, sir, is, to be sure, a most amable thing, and what every gentleman ought to make use of, as Mr.—what's his name?—one of the old Roman philosophers,—Pythagorus, I believe,—ay, 'Squire Pythagorus it was, who used to say, "Socratus is my friend, Pluto is my friend; but truth is more my friend." So say I; Lord Pliant is my friend, Lady Pliant is my friend; but truth is more my friend. And though some persons will affirm that truth ought not to be spoken at all times, yet no philosopher, nor nobody else, would ever venture to affirm, but that truth ought to be spoken at some times; which being granted,—I say, sir, which being granted, it must follow, necessarily follow, sir, that though truth ought not to be spoken at all times, occasions, and seasons, yet reasonable truths may be occasionally spoken at all times; but this, sir, is the very profundity of logic, and, consequently, out of the reach of every capacity; wherefore, I shall descend into the spear of common sense, to be the better understood.

Gul. Sir, I must acknowledge that your arguments are very sublime and logical; but yet they are no answer to my question. Perhaps I have been too rude to press you on the occasion; there may be some lady in the case, who—

Capt. Egad! sir, you're in the right! I had not been married above ten days, when I fell most consumedly in love with a niece of my wife's; a girl of fifteen, with a d—d large fortune: a most exquisit creature, upon my soul! In short, she is the hole tote of my desires. As that there black fellar in the play—Othello Moor, I think they call him, says—"Perdition catch my soul but I do love her; and when I love her not, chaos is come again!"

Gul. Pray, Captain, who is that Chaos?

Capt. "And when I love her not, chaos is come again!" Oh! a d—d fine sentiment as ever was uttered! the most sentimental sentiment in the world!

Gul. But, Captain, I ask who is that Chaos?

Capt. Chaos! Lard bless you! you partend you don't know; a man of your years and understanding, too! Fie, fie! Mr. Gulwell, none of your tricks upon travellers!

Gul. Sir, I seldom ask the meaning of a word I understand.

Capt. Then you must know, chaos is a—my dear, it is a—a—[*Aside.*] Zounds! what shall I say? The devil chaos him!—It is a—I can't find words to express myself properly—It is impossible to divine it literally; but chaos—when a man speaks of chaos in—a general way, it is as much as to say—chaos—chaos—I can't divine it otherwise, for the blood and soul of me!

Gul. You have not divined it at all; at least, not

to my satisfaction. I suppose, by the connexion, it signifies dislike.

Capt. Right, sir; it is a—a—kind of dislike; but not, as one may say, a—a—an absolute dislike.—But, sir, to proceed in my story: if I could but break my wife's heart, I should assuredly marry my niece in less than a month after her decease. A separate maintenance won't do, or Mrs. Le Brush should have it with all my soul; but, if we part, you know, all hopes of breaking her heart are over. She has offered to separate, if I would give her two hundred pounds in ready rhino, and annually allow her for life, an annual provision of fifty pounds per annum, every year.

Gul. Which you've refused, I suppose?

Capt. Refused! most certainly, sir. I was almost putrified with astonishment at the egregious impudence of her demand. I shall not consent to allow her a shilling more than fifteen a year. She may live comfortably, very comfortably on it, in the North.

Gul. Truly, sir, I think fifteen pounds a year a very genteel allowance; especially as she brought you so small a trifle as three thousand!

Capt. I think so too, egad! But these old devils have no conscience at all, d—e! Well, sir, you'll give me an answer as soon as possible. You may hear of me at Mrs. Dresden's, a milliner, under the Peeaches in Common Garden.

Gul. [*Writing.*] Very well, sir. I'll talk with a principal about your affair, this evening.

Capt. There, sir. [*Gives him money.*] You'll take care to beat him down as low as possible.

Gul. You may depend on my best endeavours; most noble Captain, [*Exit Captain LE BRUSH.*] scoundrel! I should have said, Why, this fellow's a greater rascal than myself! But what can be expected from a coxcomb of his stamp!—More company?

Enter an Irishman.

Irish. My dear honey, I am come to shée if you have commiseration enough in your bowelsh to a poor Irishman, to get him a plaish.

Gul. What sort of a place are you fit for?

Irish. Upon my shalvashion, joy, d'ye see? I am fit for any plaish alive! I have strenght and bonesh enough in this carcash of mine, to do all the work in the world.

Gul. Have you ever been in service?

Irish. In shervish! No, to be sure I have not!—Yes, by St. Patrick, ever since I was so big as a potato!

Gul. With whom did you last live?

Irish. With 'Squire Macellan, of Killybegs.

Gul. Killybegs! Where the deuce is that?

Irish. Why, where the devil should it be but in Ireland, my dear honey?

Gul. But what part of Ireland? what province? what county?

Irish. It is in the provinsh of Donègal, in the county of Ulster. It is an inland sea-port town, where they catch the best pickled herrings in England. By my fet! he was the best man of a maisher between Derry and Youghall. Arrah! I shall never live so well with nobody else, unless I go back to live with him again!

Gul. As he was so good a master, how came you to leave him?

Irish. Leave him, joy! because he wanted to make a bug and a fool of me. When I went to go to plough and harrow, he would insist on my yok-

ing the dear creatures, the mulesh, by the necks, instead of the tailsh.

Gul. The tails! Why, is that the Irish custom in ploughing?

Irish. Ay, upon my conscience, it is, joy! and the best cushtom, that ever was born in the world. I'll give you a reason for it, honey: you know, when the trashes are fastened to the tail, all the rest of the body is free; and when all the carcash but the tail goes along, the tail must follow of course: besides, honey, all the world knows that the strength of every human creature lies in the tail. Arrah! he wanted to bodder me with his d—d English tricks! but the devil burn me, if honest Paddy would not have left twenty places, if he had been in them, all at once, sooner than be put out of the way of his country.

Gul. You were certainly in the right; I commend your spirit. But, pray, how have you lived since you came to London?

Irish. Lived, honey! as a great many live in London—nobody knows how. By my shoul! I have only picked up five thirteens for these four weeks and a half!

Gul. [*Aside.*] A special raw-boned fellow this! he will do for America: I'll send word to my nephew Trappum.—Would you like to go abroad, friend?

Irish. Ay, my dear honey! any way in England, or in Scotland; but I do not like, d'ye see, to live out of my native kingdom.

Gul. Oh! it's only a very short voyage; a little round the Land's End. A gentleman has taken a very considerable farm in the west; and if I could prevail on him to hire you, you would have the sole management of it. 'Twould be the making of you. You can write, I suppose?

Irish. Yes, upon my conscience, that I can very well—my mark, honey, that's all. But that's nothing, my dear; I could get anybody to write for me, if they did but know how.

Gul. That's true. Well, I shall see the gentleman this evening, and have a little close talk with him about you.

Irish. Upon my shoul, the most shivilest person, d'ye see, that ever I met with, since I was an Irishman. [*Aside.*]

Gul. Where do you lodge, friend?

Irish. At the Harp and Spinning Wheel, in Farthing-fields, Wapping; in a room of my own, that I hire at nine-pence a week.

Gul. Your name?

Irish. Patrick O'Carrol.

Gul. O'Carrol! Give me your hand; we must be cousins. My great-grandmother was an O'Carrol!

Irish. Was she, by St. Patrick? Then we must be cushins, sure enough! Where was she born?

Gul. At what do you call the place, where 'Squire O'Carrol lives?

Irish. What, Provost O'Carrol?

Gul. Ay, the Provost.

Irish. Oh! you're a soft lad! you don't know it was Ballishanny?

Gul. Right; that is the very place! Well, cousin, I should like to be better acquainted with you.

Irish. And so should poor paddy by my fet! You cannot conceive how my heart dances in the inside of my bowelsh, to see a relation in this part of the world, where I expected to see nobody at all. Do, honey, put your head here to feel. Fet! joy, it beats, and beats, and beats, and jumps about in my belly, like a brusted pea in a fire-shovel. Arrah!

I knew you to be better than half an Irishman, by your shivility to strangers.

Gul. Ay, I wish I were wholly so; but it was my misfortune to be born in England.

Irish. Upon my conscience, that was almost poor Paddy's misfortune, too! I was begot in England; but, as good luck would have it, I went over to Ireland to be born.

Gul. Well, cousin, if you will call on me to-morrow morning, I hope I shall be able to give you joy of your place.

Irish. I shall, my dear cushin. Arrah! now, if I were but my father, who has been dead these seven years, I should be making a song upon you for this shivility.

Gul. Your father? What was he?

Irish. A true Irish poet, my dear; he could neither read nor write. By my fet! honey, he wrote many an excellent new song. I have one of his upon Moggy Maelachlen, a young virgin in Sligo, who he fell in love with, after she had two love-begs at one time to 'Squire Cannon.

Gul. I should be glad to see it, if you have it on you.

Irish. Oh! yes, my dear creature, I always carry it upon me: it is in my head, honey; you shall see it in a minute, if you will give me leave to sing it.

Gul. With all my heart, cousin.

Irish. The devil burn me, now, honey, if I can think of the right tune, because it never had any tune at all. However, it will go to Larry Groghrau.

Gul. By all means, let's have it.

AIR.—Irishman.

*My sweet pretty Mog, you're as soft as a bog,
And as wild as a kitten, as wild as a kitten;
Those eyes in your face—oh! pity my case!*

*Poor Paddy have smitten, poor Paddy have smitten.
Far softer than silk, and as fair as new milk,
Your lily-white hand is, your lily-white hand is:
Your shape's like a pail, from your heal to your tail,
You're straight as a wand is, you're straight as a wand is.*

*Your lips red as cherries, and your curling hair is
As black as the devil, as black as the devil;
Your breath is as sweet, too, as any potato,
Or orange from Seville, or orange from Seville.
When dress'd in your bodice, you trip like a goddess,
So nimble, so frisky; so nimble, so frisky;
A kiss on your cheek ('tis so soft and so sleek)
Would warm me like whisky, would warm me like whisky.*

*I grunt and I pine, like a pig or a swine,
Because you're so cruel, because you're so cruel;
No rest I can take, and asleep or awake,
I dream of my jewel, I dream of my jewel.
Your hate, then, give over, nor Paddy, your lover,
So cruelly handle, so cruelly handle;
Or Paddy must die, like a pig in a sty,
Or snuff of a candle, or snuff of a candle.*

Gul. I thank you very kindly; it is a most admirable song. Well, you will be here at nine to-morrow?

Irish. You may be certain of my coming, my dear cushin.

Gul. But, harkye! be sure not to mention a word of this affair to any person whatsoever. I would not have it get wind, lest anybody should be applying to the gentleman.

Irish. Oh! let Paddy alone for that, my dear creature; I am too cunning to mention it to nobody

but my nown shelf. Well, your servant, my dear cushion. [Exit.]

Gul. Your servant, your servant! We must have this fellow indented as soon as possible: he will fetch a rare price in the plantations.

Enter Mrs. DOGGEREL and a Girl.

Heyday! what whimsical figure is this? she appears to be of the family of the Slammekins. [Aside.]

Mrs. D. Mr. Office-keeper,—I forget your name, though I have seen it so often in print.

Gul. Gulwell, madam. Pray, be seated.

Mrs. D. I come, Mr. Gulwell, to inquire after a person that can write short-hand: I want an amanuensis.

Gul. An amanuensis, madam?

Mrs. D. Yes, sir; an amanuensis to take down my ideas: they flow upon me in such torrents, that I cannot commit them to paper, a tenth part so fast as I could wish. My name, sir, is not altogether unknown in the literary world. You have, undoubtedly, heard of the celebrated Mrs. Slaternella Doggerel, the dramatic poetess?—Eh! have not you?

Gul. Oh; yes, madam, ten thousand times!—[Aside.] Though the devil fetch me, if ever I heard of the name before!

Mrs. D. I have written Mr.—a—a—What's your name, sir?

Girl. Gulwell, mamma, is the gentleman's name.

Mrs. D. Ay, ay, child. I have written, Mr. Culwell, no less than nine tragedies, eight comedies, seven tragi-comedies, six farces, five operas, four masques, three oratorios, two mock-tragedies, and one tragi-comi-operatico-magico-farcico-pastoral-dramatic romance, making, in the whole, as Scrub says, five-and-forty.

Girl. Yes, sir, five-and-forty.

Gul. And pray, madam, how many of them have been brought upon the stage?

Mrs. D. Not one, sir; but that is no diminution of their merit; for while the stage is under the direction of people that scribble themselves, it is no wonder they are so backward in producing the works of others. As what-do-you-call-'em says in the play, "Who the devil cares for any man that has more wit than himself?" Eh! Mr. Culwell?

Gul. Very true, madam. But suppose we should beat about for a patron among the great!

Mrs. D. A patron, quotha! Why, the very word, applied as an encourager of literary merit, is almost obsolete. You might as soon find a real patriot, as a real patron. Our great men are too much engaged in the trifles and follies of the age, to give themselves any concern about dramatic genius. Indeed, if I could submit to write a treatise on the science of gaming, a new history of the peerage, or an essay on improving the breed of running-horses, perhaps some of our right honourable jockies might vouchsafe to give me a recommendation to their brother jockies of the theatrical turf.

Gul. Madam, I am of opinion, that a well-written pamphlet in favour of the ministry, could not fail of procuring you a patron.

Mrs. D. And so you would have me sacrifice my conscience to interest, you strange creature, you?

Gul. Conscience, madam! What have authors, that write for bread, to do with conscience? A learned professor in the law, though he has amassed even a ministerial fortune at the bar, will, for a few guineas, prostitute his eloquence, by pleading in a bad cause; then why should not a poor devil of an

author, against his conscience, brandish his pen in a political squabble, to keep himself from starving.

Mrs. D. But what author of true genius could ever stoop to write a parcel of dull stuff about ins and outs? No, no; depend on't, the most certain way to get my pieces on the stage, will be to go on the stage myself. Many ricketty, dramatic brats have been allowed to crawl on the stage, which would never have made their theatrical appearance, if they had not been of theatrical parentage.

Gul. Madam, your observation is very just.

Mrs. D. But, pray, what do you think of my person? With a large hoop instead of this trolloppee, should I not make a tolerably elegant figure in tragedy, nay, not to say magnificent one?

Gul. The most elegant and magnificent in the world.

Mrs. D. I once played Belvidera with some of my city acquaintance, and got such prodigious applause, that Mr. Alderman Loveturtle came waddling up to me, with a—"Madam, you have played the part so finely, that though I love good eating and drinking better than anything in the world, I would mortify upon bread and water a whole month, for the pleasure of seeing you play it again."

Gul. Madam, you are an excellent mimic.

Mrs. D. And what has raised the reputation of some performers so much as mimicry? But I'll give you a speech out of Belvidera's mad scene.

Gul. Madam, you will oblige me greatly.

Girl. My mamma speaks it delightfully, I assure you, sir.

Mrs. D. Take my cap, Melpomene; I must have my hair about my ears; there is no playing a mad scene without dishevelled hair.

"Ha! look there!

My husband bloody, and his friend too!—vanish'd!

Here they went down:—Oh! I'll dig, dig the den up!

Ho! Jaffier! Jaffier!"

Girl. Pray, don't cry, mamma; don't cry.

[Weeps.]

Mrs. D. Pray, Mr. Gulliver, lend me your hand to help me up. Well, what do you think of this acting?

Gul. I am astonish'd at it. Why don't you apply to the managers?

Girl. My mamma did apply to one of them.

Mrs. D. Yes, and spoke that very speech.

Gul. And what did he say? Was he not in raptures.

Mrs. D. So far from it, that he did nothing at the while but titter, and he! he! he!

Girl. Yes, he did nothing but he! he! he!

Gul. Titter, and he! he! he!

[They all force a laugh.]

Mrs. D. Yes, yes; I shall breed her up myself. With her own capabilities and my instructions, I don't doubt but she will make all our tragedy heroines turn pale; she will eclipse them all, I warrant her; I have already taught her the part of Sappho, in my two-act tragedy of that name. Give the gentleman a speech, Melpomene.

Girl. Yes, mamma. Where shall I begin?

Mrs. D. At "Oh! Phaon, Phaon!" You are to observe, sir, that all my tragedies are written in heroics; I hate your blank verse; it is but one remove from prose, and consequently not sublime enough for tragedy. Now, begin, Melly.

Girl. "Oh! Phaon, Phaon! could my eyes impart, The swelling throes and tumults of my heart—"

Mrs. D. "The swelling throes and tumults of my heart!" Child, you are too languid by ten thou-

sand degrees. Your sister, Calliope, would speak it abundantly better. Nay, little Clio, that is not quite three years old, could not speak it worse. Give it more energy, child. Set yourself a heaving like a tragedian out of breath. It should be spoken thus: "*The swelling throes and tumults of my heart.*"

Girl. "*The swelling throes and tumults of my heart, Thou never wouldst thy Sappho's love desert.*"

Mrs. D. There's a pathetic speech for you!

Gul. Very pathetic indeed. And this little dear hath spoken it like an angel.

Mrs. D. I'll now give you a touch of the pompous. "*By hell and vengeance—*" I forgot to tell you it is the turnkey's soliloquy in my tragedy of Betty Canning.

"*By hell and vengeance, Canning shall be mine!*

Her, but with life, I never can resign.

Should Ætna bar my passage to the dame,

Headlong I'd plunge into the sulphurous flame;

Or, like the Titans, wage a war with Jove,

Rather than lose the object of my love."

Gul. Madam, this must have a fine effect. It will certainly bring the house down, whenever it is played.

Mrs. D. You sensible creature, I must embrace you for the kind expression. Yes, yes, it must have a fine effect, or it never would have had a run of fifty nights. I assure you, it was played no less than fifty nights by Mr. Flockton's company.

Gul. Flockton's company! Pray, who is Flockton?

Mrs. D. He is master of the best company of puppets in England.

Gul. So, then, your piece has been played by wooden actors? Ha, ha, ha!

Mrs. D. Wooden actors! and why this sarcasm on wooden actors? Pray, sir, let me ask you, what piece is, now-a-days, played without wooden actors? Well, Mr.—a—Culpepper—

Girl. Lud! mamma, what a queer name is that! They call him Gulwell.

Mrs. D. My dear, I knew his name begun with either Gull or Cull—I ask your pardon, sir; I am so frequently enveloped in thought that I even forget my own name; I hope, therefore, you will not take it amiss that I should not remember your's.

Gul. No apology, madam.

Mrs. D. Well, Mr.—a—Gulcatcher, if you hear of an amanuensis, pray give me the most early intelligence.

Gul. But I hope, madam, I shall not offend you in asking you how he is to be paid?

Mrs. D. Paid! Why, I really did not think of this—Let me see: suppose—no, this won't do—hum—ay—He shall have a tenth part of the profit of my future productions: he shall tithe them.

Gul. Madam, I feel for your young muses, and can dissemble with you no longer. Take my advice: go immediately home, and burn all your pieces; for I am certain you will never make a shilling of them, unless you sell them for waste paper.

Mrs. D. Waste paper! Heaven and earth! such excellent compositions go for waste paper!

Girl. Waste paper, indeed! I should not have thought of waste paper!

Gul. Burn them all immediately. Give me your solemn promise to leave off scribbling; and if any place, worthy your acceptance, fall in my way, I will endeavour to fix you in it.

Mrs. D. What! sacrifice immortality for a place? I must tell you, sir, you're an envious, impertinent, self-sufficient puppy, to presume to advise me, who have a million times your understanding.

Girl. Yes, a million times your understanding!

Mrs. D. Waste paper! Oh, ye gods! if I had the wealth of Cræsus, I would give it all to be revenged on this affronting savage! [Exit.]

Girl. Ah! you're a naughty creature to vex my poor mamma in this manner! [Exit.]

Gul. So, this comes of my plain dealing! I am rightly served for endeavouring to wash the black-amour white.

Re-enter Mrs. DOGGEREL and Girl.

Mrs. D. I have returned to tell you, that I will have ample vengeance for this indignity. I will immediately set about writing a farce, to be called the Register Office, in which I will expose your tricks, your frauds, your cheats, your impositions, your chicaneries! I'll do for you! I'll make you repent the hour wherein you had the impudence and ill-nature to advise me to burn all my pieces! By all the gods! I'll write such a piece against you—

Then like thy fate superior will I sit,

And see thee scorn'd and laugh'd at by the pit;

I, with my friends, will in the gallery go,

And tread thee sinking to the shades below. [Exit.]

Girl. "And tread thee sinking to the shades below!" [Exit.]

Gul. The woman takes it mightily in dudgeon!

Enter an Irishman.

Irish. My dear cushin, after I went away before, I forgot to pay for your shivility; therefore, I am going to come back again to be out of your debt.

Gul. Never mind it, cousin; any other time.

Irish. Arrah! I am a person of more honour than to continue in nobody's debt, when I owe him nothing. You kidnapping rascal, you was going to send me into the other world, to be turned into a black negro. I had gone, sure enough, but for McCarroll O'Neil, whom I overtook, as we run against one another in your English St. Patrick's church-yard—St. Paul's. Besides, if I should be taken sick, and die of a consumption to-night, you might tell me to my face, the next time I see you, that I stole out of the world on purpose to cheat you. There, my dear cushin!

[Overturns the desks, &c. beats GULWELL off, and exit.]

THE SIEGE OF BELGRADE;

A COMIC OPERA, IN THREE ACTS;

BY JAMES COBB.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

THE SERASKIER
COLONEL COHENBERG
LEOPOLD
PETER
USEPH
ANSELM
ISMAEL
MICHAEL.

CATHERINE
LILLA
GHITA
FATIMA.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Village of Servia, with the Danube. On one side, the Turkish camp; on the other, the Austrian, which appears at a distance.*

Enter several Turkish Soldiers, who range themselves on each side the stage; then enter Turkish Peasants of both sexes, who dance; after the dance,

CHORUS.—TURKISH SOLDIERS.

*Wave our prophet's fam'd standard of glory on high,
Till the envious moon die away in the sky;
And, like the pale Christians, leave Danube's fair stream,
To reflect our victorious crescent's bright beam.*

Enter USEPH.

Useph. Be silent, you soldiers: his highness the Seraskier is coming; he has just arrived with the Turkish army under his command to relieve Belgrade. I have been conversing with him; I told him of your loyalty to the sublime Porte. "Sir—your highness—my dear highness," says I; for we talked it very familiarly: "I am the chief magistrate of this village; I know the Ottoman Porte has not more loyal subjects in all the province of Servia; and as for your highness—always talking of your highness—your highness's name is never out of our mouths." By-the-by, remember his name is Mohamed Aboubeker Ben Abdallah Ben Ali; I dare

say you never heard it before. So, says the Seraskier to me, "My dear Useph Ben Yacomb Ben Mustapha"—at the same time graciously laughing at me with great condescension—*[Flourish.]* Oh! here he comes: now you shall see how his highness is pleased to honour me; I shall certainly be created a pacha of three tails.

Enter SERASKIER, ISMAEL, and Attendants.

Seras. Useph, come hither.

Useph. Yes, your highness. *[Apart to the Peasants.]* Now he is going to consult me on some great military operation.

Seras. Are there many pretty girls in this neighbourhood?

Useph. Ha, ha, ha! That's a good joke. Ah! your highness will conquer every way, I see. Ha, ha, ha! Your highness is pleased to make me laugh. Ha, ha, ha!

Seras. You are too familiar.

Useph. My lord?

Seras. Begone. *[Ereunt USEPH and Peasants.]*

Enter LILLA, who kneels to the SERASKIER.

AIR.—LILLA.

*Lost, distress'd, thus driven from home,
Whither shall poor Lilla go?
Wheresoe'er my steps may roam,
Tyrant power will prove my foe.*

Seras. Who is this beautiful girl? Rise, lovely fair one.

Lilla. I humbly beg your highness' pardon for my boldness; I am not used to talk to great folks.

Seras. Speak, charming angel! bless me with the voice of nature; who are you?

TRIO.—SERASKIER, LILLA, and ISMAEL.

Seras. *Speak, I command thee; tell thy grief.
Say, can my power afford relief;
For my trembling heart must yield belief.*

[Aside.]

Lilla. *Ah! may I dare to tell my grief,
And, humbly, thus, implore relief;
To my falt'ring tongue, oh! yield belief.*

Ismael. *Beauty may boldly tell her grief;
Such fine eyes command relief;
And his trembling heart must yield belief.*

Lilla. I am but a poor country girl, sir; my name is Lilla; but I love Leopold, and Leopold loves me; yet my cross, ill-natured brother wants me to refuse

Leopold, to marry that ugly old miser, Useph, a justice of peace in our village.

Seras. Useph! Oh! the old poacher! [*Aside.*] does your brother object to Leopold?

Lilla. He says, and please your highness, that Leopold is too passionate to make a good husband; now, I own he is rather violent, but I don't like him a bit the worse for that.

Seras. Where is Leopold?

Lilla. Ah! my lord, my mind misgives me that some mischief has happened to him; but they locked me up to prevent my going in search of him.

Seras. Then how came you here?

Lilla. Please your highness, I jumped out of the window.

Seras. What a pleasing sample of rustic simplicity! how handsome she is! [*To ISMAEL.*]

Im. What, my lord, do you forget your Austrian captive?

Seras. Forget her! no; but why should I confine myself to a single rose, when I can form a bouquet of them. Well, charming Lilla, within this half-hour I promise you redress. Conduct her to my tent, and attend her well.

Lilla. A thousand thanks, your highness. [*Erit.*]

Seras. Is she not beautiful, Ismael?

Im. I own, my lord, she is beautiful; but—

Seras. But what?

Im. I beg your highness' pardon; but while I see the black eagle soar upon the walls of Belgrade, I cannot forget that I am a soldier.

Seras. Nor I, Ismael; but I have room in my heart for love and valour at the same time; I never fight better than when I am in love; Mars never smiles so propitiously upon me as when I am paying my adoration to Venus; so, if you wish me to conquer the Austrians, you must get me this girl. [*Erit ISMAEL.*] She is a charming creature, and shall be mine.

AIR.—SERASKIER.

The rose and the lily their beauties combining,

Delight in adorning a form so divine;

Such charms to a peasant consigning,

Ah! must I resign?

Forbid it, ye powers! to love 'tis a treason;

Yet, ambition, assuming the semblance of reason,

Commands me, with scorn, the mean thought to decline.

Wealth and power, what are your worth,

To pleasure if you give not birth?

Rich in ambition's gilded toys,

I barter them for real joys. [*Erit.*]

SCENE II.—*Inside of Peter's House.*

Enter PETER and GHITA.

DUET.

Ghita. *How the deuce I came to like you,*

I am sure I cannot tell;

Had my face ne'er chanc'd to strike you,

I'd been pleas'd, sir, just as well.

Peter. *Faith! as you say, I, too, wonder*

Why to like you I'm inclin'd:

Though in love we're apt to blunder;

Love, you know, they say, is blind.

Ghita. *You're ogling all the lasses.*

Peter. *You're simp'ring at each lad.*

Ghita. *Each hour in falsehood passes.*

Peter. *You flirt it quite as bad.*

Both. *You had better not provoke me;*

Though you think as you've bespoke me,

*I shall let you break my heart,
But I'm ready now to part.*

Peter. *Then, suppose I take my leave?*

Ghita. *Do; I'm sure I shall not grieve.*

Will you stay, or will you go?

Peter. *Shall I stay, or shall I go?*

Both. *As you please, say yes or no.*

Enter USEPH.

Useph. What, the deuce! quarrelling before marriage! Oh, fie! that is very irregular; wait till the ceremony is over, and then you will quarrel of course.

Peter. Indeed, sir!

Ghita. Hear me, sir.

Useph. No, I'll not hear you: am I to be talked to by you? I, who have conversed with his highness the Seraskier?—besides, I hate to hear both sides of the question; it perplexes me so, that I never know how to make a decision.

Peter. Why, then, sir, how can you decide?

Useph. Why, I decide that you are both in the wrong. I fancy that decision will hold good in most quarrels; my friend, his highness the Seraskier, could not make a better decision. But where is your sister? where is my dear Lilla? [*To PETER.*]

Ghita. Why, Peter has locked her up, to keep her from your rival, Leopold.

Useph. Ah! that's a desperate dog: he is always in a desperate passion, and always pretending to keep his temper; he is the very torch of sedition, and always in a blaze. [*LEOPOLD singing without.*] Eh! why, that's his voice. I—I—I don't much wish for meeting—Here he comes.

Enter LEOPOLD.

Leop. How are you? how do you do? Harkye! you, sir, where's your sister?

Peter. Why, as to that, Leopold—

Leop. Oh! I know what you are going to say; you mean to say that I am in a passion.—Ah! Ghita, how do you do? Very fine, pleasant, disagreeable, temperate weather, I think.

Useph. Rather cloudy.

Leop. What?

Useph. It was rather cloudy when I was talking to his highness the Seraskier just now. But I believe I can answer your inquiries: in the first place—

Leop. What do you mean by that? I'd have you know that I won't take an insult from any man living.

Useph. Why, there is no talking to you; I can't reason with you.

Leop. It's false! you—I say, you are mistaken. I insist upon your reasoning with me; d—e! you shall reason with me; ay, and coolly, too, though I know you are my rival.

Useph. But give me leave—

Leop. Well, I know what you are going to say, that people needn't quarrel because they are rivals.

Useph. Granted; and besides—

Leop. Well, I know, I know; and you mean to observe, that warmth and anger betray a weakness on these occasions, which, I trust, I am free from. Harkye! you rascal, [*To PETER.*] I know your sister is locked up; if you don't give me the key, d—e! I'll break your head; I will, by—

Useph. Sir, do you remember who I am? a magistrate and a courtier: do you respect my authority? [*Marching up to LEOPOLD, who draws back.*]

Leop. [*Marching up to USEPH, who draws back.*] No, I do not: that for your authority. [*Snaps his*

fingers.] A magistrate, indeed! Ha, ha, ha! Look at the magistrate. What have you to say now, magistrate?

Useph. Nothing: if you don't respect authority, there's an end of the matter.

Leop. [To *PETER*.] Give me the key.

Peter. Why, to say the truth, Leopold, I have lost it.

Leop. Lost it! Oh! very well. But it's no matter: I believe this right shoulder of mine will force any lock. I'll break open the door; and I'll do it without any violence, only to shew how I can keep my temper; now I defy any of you to say that I put myself in a passion. D—e! stand out of the way, or I'll knock you down, you old goat.

[Pushes violently against *USEPH* and exits.]

Ghita. What do you think, now, sir?

Useph. 'Faith! I don't know; my thoughts are rather confused; I—I—I—[Noise without.] There, there, he has broke the door all to smash. Good morning to you: perhaps his highness waits for me.

[Going.]

Peter. Consider, sir, you had better not leave us.

Useph. Indeed, I beg your pardon; our good humoured friend may come back and knock out my brains very coolly; only to shew what he can do without being in a passion. [Exit with *PETER*.]

Ghita. Poor Lilla! I hope Leopold will carry her off. I am sure she loves him, and that he loves her; the whole village will rejoice at their wedding.

AIR.—GHITA.

*All will hail the joyous day,
When love his triumph shall display;
The dance shall mingle old and young.
The rustic pipe assist the song;
The sprightly bells with welcome sound,
Shall spread the happy news around,
And give a hint to maidens coy,
That youth they should not misemploy.
Useph will, with sullen pride,
Envy joys to wealth denied;
And as we trip with merry glee,
Wish himself as poor as we.
The sprightly bells, &c.*

[Exit.]

SCENE III.—Outside of Peter's house; a garden-wall round it.

LEOPOLD discovered at the window, out of which is a veil hanging.

Leop. Poor Lilla! nowhere to be found: she's gone; and, by her veil hanging here out of the window, in a fit of despair. I'll after her. [Jumps out, and comes out of the door of the garden wall with the veil.] This relic of my beloved Lilla's shall serve to keep my resentment alive. But where's that cruel villain, Peter? d—e! I'll maul him.

[Retires into the garden.]

Enter *PETER*.

Peter. Ha! the window open! nay, then, madam's off: but where's that mad-brained Leopold?

Enter *LEOPOLD*.

Leop. Have I caught you, sirrah? Now, what have you to say for yourself?

[Seizes him by the throat.]

Peter. Why, nothing, to be sure, if you stop my breath.

Leop. Harkye! rascal, if you don't tell me where Lilla is—

Peter. Why, you are in such a passion, Leopold.

Leop. It's false; I'm not in a passion. If you say I'm in a passion, I'll kick you, you scurvy knave.

Enter *USEPH* and Officers.

Useph. Seize that fellow directly.

TRIO AND CHORUS.

Useph. Seize him, seize him, I say.

Peter. Seize him, seize him! • Why, pray?

Leop. Let me come at him, pray.

Chorus. Haste, let us bear him away.

Useph. Don't fear, I'll protect you.

Leop. You're a rogue; I suspect you.

Useph. Knock him down, I command it.

Chorus. Knock him down, he commands it.

Peter. How can justice demand it?

Hear me.

Chorus. Hear me.

Leop. No, hear me.

Useph. We are none of us safe—

Chorus. While that fellow is free. [Ereunt.]

SCENE IV.—Inside of Anselm's Cottage.

Enter *ANSELM*.

Anselm. The hour is almost come. I wonder if Colonel Cohenberg be yet arrived; perhaps he may be the chosen instrument of heaven to destroy this Turkish tyranny, that like a baneful weed, chokes up our every seed of freedom.

AIR.—ANSELM.

*The sapling oak lost in the dell,
Where tangled brakes its beauties spoil,
And every infant shoot repel,
Droops hopeless o'er the exhausted soil.
At length, the woodman clears around
Where'er the noxious thickets spread;
And high reviving from the ground,
The forest monarch lifts his head.*

Enter Colonel *COHENBERG*.

Ans. Colonel Cohenberg!

Col. My friend Anselm!

Ans. What could induce you, Colonel, to trust yourself so far within the enemy's camp?

Col. Two powerful motives, my Anselm, love and glory. Our general means to attack this post to-night, and I am honoured with the command of the detachment. Will the villagers assist us, think ye?

Ans. Assist ye! ay, Colonel, to the last drop of our blood, every man of us. We have groaned under Turkish oppression too long. But you mentioned the word love, Colonel: may I venture to inquire after the fair Catherine, whom I saw at Vienna last year?

Col. Adorable girl; she had just consented to be mine, when I was suddenly ordered to the siege of Belgrade.

Ans. That was unlucky. How did she bear the news?

Col. Like a heroine; when I attempted a faltering adieu, "What," says she, "will you now refuse the hand you have so often solicited? Should the bitter hour of misfortune overtake you, my Cohenberg, you will need the consolation of friendship; and have you a dearer friend than your Catherine? I will go with you, and shall find my happiness in fulfilling the duties of a wife."

Ans. You married her, then?

Col. Ay, but was immediately obliged to join my regiment. How shall I speak the remainder of our melancholy story? She attempted to follow me,

but was taken prisoner by a straggling party of the Turkish army, just arrived to the relief of Belgrade.

Ans. Then, I fear she is taken to the Seraskier's seraglio.

Col. That's what I dread. In what part of the camp is his seraglio?

Ans. You may have observed, about two miles from hence, a convent almost in ruins, which he has converted into his seraglio.

Col. I am not personally known to the Seraskier. By pretending business to him I may easily gain admittance to his presence. I have prepared two letters, one to the Seraskier, in my own name, another to my Catherine, informing her of my design.

Ans. And if you find her there, what then?

Col. What then! why, then I'll storm the Seraskier's tent, and carry her off this night.

Ans. Heaven prosper you! 'tis a hazardous enterprise.

Col. Hazardous, my Anselm! I scorn the thought. I have picked the gallant fellows whom I command; my brave bussars, the flower of the Austrian army; we have fought, we have bled, we have conquered together; and that leader bazards little, who has thought it his first duty to treat his soldiers as his friends.

Ans. But you know, Colonel, friends in all situations will sometimes desert.

Col. I am not speaking of the weathercock friendship that only shews which way the wind of caprice points. We have tried each other in adversity and prosperity, and have cemented our friendship with our blood on the field of battle. But come, lead me to the Seraskier; be diligent, confident, and secret;

*Then trust our cause to Providence above,
The never-failing hope of faithful love.* [Exeunt.

SCENE V.—The Seraskier's Tent.

Enter LILLA.

AIR.

*Blithe as the hours of May,
Were those I now deplore,
When first I own'd love's gentle sway;
They will return no more.
Every fond hope is lost;
No comfort can they bring;
Winter's untimely chilling frost
Destroy'd the infant spring.
Blithe as the hours, &c.*

Enter GHITA.

Ghita. Ah! my dear Lilla, I am glad I have found you. Do you know, the surly guard denied me admittance at first. Well, how did you come here? tell me all about it?

Lilla. Hush! some other time; here comes his highness; now, pray, don't leave me alone with him.

Enter SERASKIER.

Seras. Ha! a companion with her! that obstacle must be removed. [*Aside.*] Well, Lilla, you shall find me a man of my word; I promised you redress, and you shall have it, but I must first talk with Useph on the business, and this pretty maiden shall be my messenger, to say that I desire his immediate attendance on me.

Ghita. Yes, your highness. Come, Lilla.

Seras. Lilla, you may remain with me.

Ghita. [*Aside.*] Oh! yes, she's like to remain;

indeed, whilst his highness is so violently in love with justice; yes, yes, I understand it very well; ay, ay. [*Erit.*]

Seras. Lilla, why are you so much alarmed? you have nothing to apprehend: do you know, Lilla, it is in your power to make me very happy?

Lilla. Is your highness unhappy?

Seras. I am. Tell me, Lilla, are you sensible of love?

Lilla. Ah! that I am, indeed, sir

Seras. Suppose I were to love you.

Lilla. I should be sorry for that, my lord.

Seras. Why so?

Lilla. Because, my lord, I couldn't love you in return: pray, my lord, don't be angry.

Seras. I am not angry: but come, Lilla, I must inspire you with an ambition for grandeur.

Lilla. Will grandeur make me happy, sir?

Seras. Certainly.

Lilla. Then how can your highness be unhappy?

Seras. Oh! that is—that is—I cannot explain that to your comprehension—but say, Lilla, when you behold from your cottage-window the magnificent buildings and gardens of Belgrade, do you not—

Lilla. Oh! my lord, I own I admire them; but my favourite is a humble flower, which, I fear, I should not find in your highness's garden.

Seras. What's that?

Lilla. Heart's-ease, sir.

Seras. Come, come, you shall misunderstand me no longer— [*Takes hold of her.*]

Enter GHITA, hastily.

Ghita. Oh! my lord, my lord.

Seras. You are soon returned.

Ghita. Oh! yes, my lord; ill news, you know, flies apace. Some officers have seized poor Leopold, and are hurrying him to prison, for affronting that wicked old justice Useph.

Lilla. Ah! my lord, pray, have compassion on an unfortunate lover.

Seras. You must first set me an example: the law must have its course.

TRIO.—SERASKIER, LILLA, and GHITA.

Seras. When justice claims the victim due,
Her dictates I obey.

Lilla & Ghita. } Yet should distress for pity rue,

Ghita. } You'll own the gentle way.

Seras. Law must prevail.

Lilla. And so it may,

Except when love is in the way.

Seras. Your arts forbear,

No more I'll hear.

Lilla. When justice she attended,

Let her not find a foe.

Ghita. When justice I attended,

Let me not find a foe.

Lilla. In what has she offended?

Alas! I do not know.

Ghita. In what have I offended?

Alas! I do not know.

Seras. In what you have offended,
Dissembler, well you know.

Lilla & Ghita. } On what will he resolve?

All. My troubled bosom vearing,
In varied forms perplexing,
A thousand doubts revolve.

Lilla & Ghita. } Compassion thus entreating,

Ghita. } In vain shall we implore.

Seras. In vain shall they implore.

Lilla & } *May pity, sorrow greeting,*
 Ghita. } *Our happiness restore.*
 All. *In what have I offended, &c.*

Enter ISMAEL, USEPH, PETER, LEOPOLD, and Officers.

Useph. Please your highness, here's a most unruly, obstreperous country fellow, who has broken open a door, and attempted to knock down a magistrate; and all, forsooth, because he's under the influence of the tender passion; he is the most violent unmannerly—

Leop. It's false, I am not violent.

Ism. [*Aside to SERAS.*] This poor fellow has an honest heart; the magistrate is a villain; the villagers are already disaffected to us; be careful how you act in this affair, my lord. Subdue them by your justice—your clemency.

Seras. [*To ISMAEL.*] I will take your advice for the present, but I must have the girl, sooner or later. Hear me.

Ism. Silence; attend to his highness.

Seras. You all know my affection for the good people of this village—

Leop. [*Half aside.*] The women, I believe, know it very well.

Useph. Silence, sirrah!

Seras. I consider you all as my children—

Leop. [*Aside.*] If he were to stay amongst us much longer the whole village would be his children in another generation.

Useph. How dare you mutter, you reprobate?

Seras. [*Whispers ISMAEL, who goes off.*] I would willingly content you all, but that's impossible; let my sentence be publicly known.

[*The curtain at the back of the tent is drawn up; the Turkish camp is seen; Soldiers, Peasants, &c. enter through the tent, and place themselves on each side of the stage.*]

Ghita. [*Aside.*] Now for some terrible sentence.

Seras. Leopold, you are in love with Lilla?

Leop. Yes, my lord.

Seras. And loved by her in return?

Leop. Yes, your highness.

Seras. Then marry her.

Leop. Thanks to your highness.

Seras. You are in love with Lilla, Useph?

Useph. Yes, my lord.

Seras. And not beloved by her?

Useph. I fear not, my lord.

Seras. Leopold has offered you an affront?

Useph. He has, my lord.

Seras. You are a man of authority, and should set an example of moderation; you must forgive him.

Leop. How do you like that, old one?

[*Aside to USEPH.*]

Seras. [*To the Officers.*] Take off his chains.

Enter LILLA and ISMAEL.

Lilla. That be my task; it is my duty and happiness.
 [*Takes off his chains.*]

FINALE.

Lilla. *So kindly condescending,
 To our complaints attending,
 Your highness us befriending,
 No more shall wrongs assail.*

Chorus. *So kindly, &c.*

Leop. *Your highness, please to hear me—*

Lilla. *Be silent, I beseech.*

Leop. *Zounds! I'll be cool, don't fear me*

Peter. *Oh! let us hear his speech.*

Ghita. *We're bound to you for ever.* [*To SERAS.*]

Seras. *No silly compliments, I pray.*

Lilla. *To thank you I'd endeavour—*

Seras. *You soon, methinks, might learn the way.*
 [*To LILLA.*]

Chorus. *So kindly, &c.*

Seras. *Seemingly condescending,
 To their complaints attending,
 Though love my bosom's rending
 Yet shall my scheme prevail.*

Chorus. *May fate our prayers befriending,
 No disappointment sending;
 Let love and truth prevail.*

*Securely, bliss enjoying,
 All fear of power annoying,
 Your clemency destroying,
 Now justice shall prevail.*

[*During the finale, the SERASKIER takes hold of LILLA's hand and kisses it; LEOPOLD observes this, and takes LILLA's place; the SERASKIER takes LEOPOLD's hand, supposing it to be LILLA's, but finding his mistake, appears confused.*]
 [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Convent.

Enter CATHERINE.

AIR.

*My plaint in no one pity moves,
 Save echo, who in plaints replies:
 Like me, depriv'd of him she loves,
 With sympathy she counts my sighs.
 Pleas'd with the strain, the hapless maid
 Repeats the unavailing moan;
 And, while she lends her soothing aid,
 Laments my sorrows and her own.*

Unhappy as I am, it is some consolation to me that Cohenberg knows my heart, and will not wrong me so far as to doubt my constancy. But so, the Seraskier—he treats me with respect, though he is still ignorant who I am.

Enter SERASKIER.

Seras. Alas! madam, shall I never have the happiness of seeing you wear those smiles which nature, prodigal in adorning you, meant as her last gift to perfect your charms.

Cath. I am your prisoner, sir; my indignant heart swells whilst I avow it.

Seras. I am your prisoner; does not my every sigh—

Cath. You are a soldier, sir; do not disgrace that character by insulting a defenceless woman.

Enter ISMAEL.

Ism. My lord, a deserter of no vulgar rank, from the Austrian camp, desires to be admitted to your presence.

Seras. Conduct him hither. [*Exit ISMAEL.*] I presume, madam, you would wish to retire?

Cath. If I stay, I may hear some news of my friends. [*Aside.*] I request, sir, you will permit me to remain here.

Seras. I thank you, madam, for the request, since it, at last, gives me an opportunity of obliging you.

Re-enter ISMAEL with Colonel COHENBERG.

Cath. [*Aside.*] Oh, heavens! my Cohenberg!

Col. [*Aside.*] My Catherine!

SERAS. What are you?

COL. An Austrian.

SERAS. What have you to communicate?

COL. Colonel Cohenberg is not unknown to your highness.

CATH. [Aside.] What can he mean?

SERAS. His character is not unknown to me: what then?

COL. Your highness once wrote to him as to an exchange of prisoners; consequently, know his hand.

SERAS. Perfectly well.

CATH. [Aside.] I perceive some artifice; but what a hazard does he run!

COL. [Giving a letter.] Here, sir, is my commission.

SERAS. 'Tis his seal, his writing. [Reads.] "The bearer is in my confidence; if you wish for my aid, tell him on what terms you are willing to acquire my friendship and assistance.—Cohenberg." Is it possible that I shall be the happy means of gaining Cohenberg to the Ottoman cause? Tell the gallant Christian I deem his friendship invaluable; and in the name of my most illustrious sovereign, promise, as a debt of gratitude, whatever he shall ask. Do you know this Colonel Cohenberg, madam?

CATH. Yes, my lord, so well, that I have him now before me. [Looking at the COLONEL.] He married a lady who was dear to me as myself; they were separated by the chance of war, and Cohenberg now lives to see her he loves in slavery and sorrow.

COL. Take comfort, madam; he loves her more tenderly than ever, and vows to relieve her, or perish in the attempt.

SERAS. Say, Christian, if I write, when may I expect an answer?

COL. Within these few hours you may depend on seeing me again.

CATH. [Aside.] Indeed!

SERAS. Heavens! madam, how you are altered! To what am I to attribute this blissful change?

CATH. To the blessed tidings I have just now heard. I am charmed to hear of Cohenberg's inviolable constancy, and transported with the hope of his Catherine being, one day, restored to freedom, by the arms of the hero she adores.

SERAS. You take so warm an interest in his favour that, were he here, I should almost suspect myself reduced into his rival.

CATH. There would be no fear of that, for well he knows his Catherine will not suffer him to have a rival.

SERAS. I hardly comprehend you. But I must send my answer to Cohenberg's letter. [Sits down to write.] 'Tis done. Now, madam, if you have any kind things to say in behalf of your friend, I'll be your secretary; continue those smiles, and you shall find a Mussulman can be as complaisant a lover as any Christendom can boast. What shall I tell him?

CATH. Tell him—

DUET.—SERASKIER AND CATHERINE.

Of plighted faith so truly kept,

Of all love's dictators tell:

Of restless thoughts, that never slept,

Since when she bade farewell,

The rising sigh, the frequent tear,

The flush of hope, the chilling fear:

So may the sympathetic soul,

Direct kind fancy's wing,

Where future hours in transport roll,

And love's reward shall bring.

[During this scene the Colonel and CATHERINE shew their joy at seeing each other, unobserved

by the SERASKIER, who is between them. In the course of the duet, the Colonel makes an unsuccessful effort to give her a letter.

SERAS. [Gives the Colonel a letter.] There is my answer; and by our holy prophet do I swear faithfully to perform each article. [The Colonel gives a letter to CATHERINE, unperceived by the SERASKIER. A Slave enters, matches it from her, and presents it to the SERASKIER on his knee.] What's this? [Reads.] "I have ventured into the Turkish camp in hopes of seeing you, my beloved Catherine." Ha! Catherine! "This night I mean to storm the Seraskier's fort, and give you liberty.—Your true Cohenberg." What ho! a guard!

Enter ISMAEL and Guard.

Seize him.

CATH. Hear me, my lord.

SERAS. No more, dissembler! Bear her away.

CATH. My Cohenberg, I have undone thee.

SERAS. Away with her. [Exit Guards with CATH.] Slaves, on your lives I charge you, guard well this hypocrite, this liar. [The Colonel, in great agitation, feels for his sword, which the Guards have taken from him, and missing it, clasps his hands in agony.] Deep in the darkest dungeon of the fort let him be chained; there shall he stay till his associates in perfidy shall come to burst his bonds, and storm the post I guard.

COL. Alike I scorn thy menaces and taunts. I glory, though I failed, in the attempt. Heap cruelty on cruelty on me, I can bear it; my darkness is the loss of Catherine's eyes, my chains the despair of seeing her; and death were transport to the pangs I feel in knowing her a slave to thee, barbarian!

[Exit, guarded.

SERAS. Ismael!

ISM. My lord?

SERAS. Wilt thou not despise me when I tell thee neither Cohenberg's plot, nor Catherine's charms, can drive this rustic Lilla from my heart. I'll carry her off this night. Have you prepared the disguises as I commanded?

ISM. I have, my lord.

SERAS. Give orders that my tent be pitched in yonder wood, and my seraglio instantly removed thither.

ISM. Why so, my lord?

SERAS. To elude the search that will be made after Lilla: besides, Cohenberg's designs have taught me that I lie too near the frontiers of the Austrians. Away! and see my orders are obeyed.

[Exit ISMAEL.

AIR.—SERASKIER.

Confusion! thus defeated!

With bitter scorn thus treated!

Whatever thought pursuing,

Where'er I turn my eyes,

Surrounding mists of ruin

In dark'ning circles rise:

In frost, on fire, by turns,

My bosom freezes—burns—

'Tis fix'd—my rival finds a grave.

Yet honour bids me save

From death the captive brave.

Confusion! thus defeated!

With bitter scorn thus treated!

Whatever thought pursuing,

Where'er I turn my eyes,

Surrounding mists of ruin

In dark'ning circles rise.

[Exit.

SCENE II.—*A Wood.**Enter ANSELM and Peasants.*

Ans. It is as I suspected. I am sure 'twas Colonel Cohenberg I saw hurried to the fort. 'I fear the worst.

1 *Peas.* Is there no help, Anselm?

Ans. None but this: some of you must swim the river, and inform the Austrian out-posts of Cohenberg's danger; and, perhaps, their succour may arrive in time to free him. I will remain on this side, that, should they arrive, I may conduct them by short and secret paths to the Seraskier's tent.

2 *Peas.* I'll go.

1 *Peas.* And I, if I drown for it; let's all go.

Ans. Hear me, hear me, friends. You two shall undertake this message to the Austrians, the others stay with me to excite the villagers to revolt.

[*Ereunt.*]SCENE III.—*Another part of the Village.**Enter LILLA and GHITA.*

DUET.

Haste, gentle zephyrs, o'er the glade,

If there my love discerning,

Kindly with fluttering pinions aid

His weary steps returning.

So may thy wings (their wanton play

No scorching sun oppressing)

Still gladly fan the sultry day,

And prove the summer's blessing.

Ghita. Love they call a gentle passion,

Boast its power to calm the breast;

I prefer the jealous fashion;

Sweets when dash'd with sour are best.

While the ever-cooing doves,

In fond nonsense tell their loves;

Scarce existing, nought desiring;

Cloy'd with bliss, as well they may;

They, with languor half expiring,

Doze their stupid lives away.

Lilla. Let me in true pleasure's mirror

Tranquil view love's placid form;

Free from every jealous terror,

Give me the calm, take you the storm.

Lilla. Well, Ghita, now we are married, I hope our husbands will take their leave of jealousy.

Ghita. Psha! Lilla, how often must I tell you jealousy follows love like a shadow.

Lilla. Then love is a pretty thing and an ugly shadow. But I have seen my shadow often in the sun, and it appeared so tall and frightful that I am sure it couldn't be like me. But it begins to grow late, I wish our husbands would come home.

Ghita. There are two men coming this way.

Enter SERASKIER and ISMAEL, in long cloaks.

Seras. [To ISMAEL.] Desire my followers to keep back.

Ghita. [To LILLA.] See, they have wrapped themselves up in long cloaks that we shouldn't know them.

Lilla. Ah! this is another of Leopold's jealous frolics. But I'll not speak first, I am determined.

Seras. Lilla, Lilla!

Lilla. I can't bear to see him uneasy; I must speak to him.

SESTETTO.

Lilla & Ghita. } Night thus from me concealing
The form of him I love;
Oh! let his voice, revealing

Seras. & Ism. } Night thus from me concealing
The form of her I love;
Oh! let her voice, revealing

The truth, my fears remove.

Lilla & Ghita. } Oh, heavens! the Seraskier!

Seras. } A lover's accents hear;
With sympathetic passion,
Fond expectation cheer.

Lilla & Ghita. } Ah! should my husband hear us,
What could poor Ghita do?
What could poor Lilla do?

Enter LEOPOLD and PETER.

Leop. & Peter. } Hark! I'm sure there's some one near us.

Peter. Ghita!

Leop. Lilla!

Lilla & Ghita. } Our husbands near us!

Ghita. } My love, I'm here.

Leop. & Ghita. } You're here!

Peter. } Then, who is this so near?

Lilla & Ghita. } Honest peasants, homeward going

Ghita. } From their labour, I suppose.

Leop. & Ghita. } How, I pray, are you so knowing,

Peter. } Whether they be friends or foes?

Jealous fears perplexing,

Like whelming billows roll,

And wreck my tortur'd soul.

Begone; 'tis thy falsehood

[To LILLA and GHITA.]

Lilla & Ghita. } Distracts my tortur'd soul.

Lilla & Ghita. } Ah! can my dear suspect me?

Ghita. } My truth he cannot fear.

All. } Suspense, in clouds, shuts in the day.

Hope, cheering star, afford thy ray

Of silver light; and, to our eyes,

Oh! bid thy bright creation rise. [*Ereunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*Inside of Peter's House.**Enter PETER and LEOPOLD*

Peter. A pretty adventure this.

Leop. Yes, a very pretty adventure, indeed.

Peter. How do you feel, Leopold?

Leop. Oh! I'm composed, quite composed.

Peter. For my part, I own I am in a passion.

Leop. Oh! then you are wrong, my dear friend; you are wrong, Peter.

Peter. My suspicions are not easily roused, but now—

Leop. Oh! for shame, Peter, can't you be calm? Death and d—n! can't you be cool?

Peter. I confess I am angry, and—

Leop. But you sha'n't be angry, I tell you. You must be cool; d—e! you shall.

Peter. Must I?

Leop. Yes.

Peter. Why, then, I will; you know I am naturally very peaceable.

Leop. Peaceable! Here's a fellow, now, that would stand by quietly to have his horns fitted on; by my troth, if I must wear mine, I'll butt with them like a mad bull.

[*Erit.*]

Peter. Poor Leopold, he's angry with me for not

putting myself in a passion, desires that I will be cool, then flies in a rage because I follow his advice.

AIR.—PETER.

*How few know how to value life,
And taste its real joys,
Unmix'd with jealousy and strife,
With anger, pride, and noise!
Let riches, power, and pomp surpass,
And scorn me, if they please;
Let me love, laugh, and take my glass,
And lead a life of ease.
Limpid and pure life's current seems,
Till passion's wild mistake,
In madness, troubles all the streams
Of which he must partake.
Let riches, &c.*

Re-enter LEOPOLD.

Leop. I say, Peter, Ghita's coming this way. Now don't you say anything to her, because you won't keep yourself cool; leave me to manage her, I know more about these matters than you do.

Enter GHITA.

Well, Ghita, your husband and I have been laughing over the whimsical affair that happened just now.

Ghita. Yes, it was whimsical, indeed. All's safe, I find. [Aside.]

Leop. Well, and so they were countrymen returning from their day's labour, were they?

Ghita. Yes, countrymen returning from labour.

Leop. Oh! I dare say they were. Curse me, if I believe a word on't. [Aside.] Well, but who were they?

Ghita. I know no more of the matter than Lilla does.

Peter. Oh! here comes Lilla.

Enter LILLA.

Leop. Lilla, my dear, come here, I want to speak with you: now you know that I never put myself into a passion; but a lie provokes me, therefore, have a care; now I expect you to tell me the truth, for Ghita has confessed the whole matter.

Lilla. Has she, indeed?

Leop. She has; therefore, have a care.

Peter. [Aside to LEOP.] Now, Leopold, I tell you—

Leop. Be quiet, you fool; keep yourself calm.

[GHITA makes signs to LILLA that she has not told.

Lilla. [Aside.] Oh, oh! very well.

Leop. [To LILLA.] Come, why don't you speak? these countrymen.

Lilla. Ay, these countrymen—Who were they? Why don't you tell me? I am sure you know.

Leop. I know! here's a pretty piece of business.

Lilla. Well, if you won't tell me, Ghita will.

Leop. Harkye! Lilla, I am convinced you are wrong; therefore, I insist on your confession.

Lilla. Oh! you will have me confess?

Leop. Yes, I will; therefore, recollect yourself, I will have it. I say, Peter, this is the way to manage a wife. You see I have carried my point.

AIR.—LILLA.

*What can mean that thoughtful frown?
Why those eyes to earth cast down?
Tell me what amiss they see;
Let them kindly look on me.*

La ra la! la!

ACT. DRAMA.—NOS. 105 & 106.

*What, then, would my dearest have?
Come, indeed, I will be grave;
And, with melancholy face,
Calmly hear thy piteous case.*

La ra la! la!

[During the song she dances slowly between PETER, LEOPOLD, and GHITA.

Peter. I say, Leopold, this is the way to manage a wife; you see you have carried your point.

Leop. Why, I—I—I don't know how it is, but ecod! she has danced me into a good humour, I think.

Lilla. Now, Leopold, how could you serve me so? Why, Ghita says you have been laughing at her.

Leop. Why, yes, I believe I am in a merry humour.

Lilla. I don't think you are merry; you seem grumpy.

Leop. Psha! no such thing; I am not grumpy.

Ghita. Ah! you don't deserve the supper we have prepared for you. But come, Lilla, we must forgive 'em.

Lilla. Well, if we must, we must.

[Brings the table with supper forward.

Leop. [Aside to PETER.] Well, Peter, what do you think of this?

Peter. [Aside to LEOP.] Why, for my part, I think it looks like innocence.

Leop. So it does, so it does; but we'll watch them, though; so, mum! Peter. [All sit.] Egad! I never was happier in my life; come, let's have a toast.

Lilla. I'll give you one: may our happiness ever continue!

Leop. Very well; very well, indeed. [All drink.] So good a toast deserves a second bumper. [Drinks again.] Now away with suspicions for ever.

[SERASKIER sings without.

SERENADE.

*To mighty love, the trembling strings are pressing;
Sacred to him they praise, their sweet employ.
Ah! the fond heart, whose passion they're expressing,
Vibrates like them to love, but not to joy.*

Leop. What's that?

Peter. It sounds like music.

Ghita. What delightful harmony!

Leop. Curse harmony! I don't like it at all.

[Rises.

Lilla. Sit down, Leopold.

Leop. I won't sit down.

Lilla. Nay, don't be angry; here's a merry-thought for you.

Leop. Eat it yourself, then.

Lilla. You shall sit down. It is only the villagers amusing themselves: and you know, Leopold, that people of fashion often have music at supper.

[SERASKIER sings without.

Leop. Oh! choak your singing.

Lilla. [Aside to GHITA.] We are undone! 'tis the Seraskier.

Peter. Ah! Leopold, there's danger in that voice. How melodious!

Leop. Horribly melodious! Harkye! Peter, are you courageous?

Peter. Tolerably so.

Leop. [Takes two swords, and gives one to PETER.] Here, then, take this sword, and follow me. We'll join the concert; and if I don't put these gallants out of tune, I'll be—It's astonishing how I continue to keep my temper.

[Exit with PETER.

Lilla. What will become of us! Let's follow them; I fear there will be mischief. I wonder that Leopold keeps his temper. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter USEPH at a back door.

Useph. All quiet; then I'm sure Leopold can't be here; and I have such a dread of that d—d fellow, that—[*Seeing the supper.*] Eh! What have we here? a good supper, and nobody to eat it. I think my appetite returns, as my fright goes off. Egad! I'll pick a bit. There's nothing in the world I like better than a good supper, especially when anybody else pays for it. Ha, ha, ha! Eh! What's this? [*Holding a large slice of ham on his fork.*] Oh! the Christian dogs! what, eat pork! Oh, horrible! [*Eats the ham eagerly.*] Oh, fie! oh, fie! What have we here? Wine! worse and worse! Wine, indeed! How can people be so impious to drink—[*Drinks a large cupful.*] Though, I believe a Mahometan may take a cup of wine when nobody sees him. Egad! I'll take another. Here's to the founder of the feast. [*Drinks.*] Now, if I could but meet Lilla—Good cheer puts one in such excellent spirits, and makes one so valiant and so loving, that—[*Pistols fire.*] Oh, Lord! [*Starts up.*] They are firing pistols against the door. Oh, dear! oh, dear! What will become of me? [*Goes to the door at the back.*] Eh! this door is fast! Mercy on me!

[*Hides under the table.*]

Enter PETER and GHITA.

Ghita. Stay here, my dear Peter, if you love me; all opposition is fruitless. I am sure the Seraskier is amongst them.

Peter. Poor Leopold! he'll be overpowered by numbers. Run up to the house-top, Ghita, and alarm the neighbours.—[*Exit GHITA.*]—How unlucky that this accident should happen just at supper-time!

Enter LEOPOLD.

Leop. Confusion! they have carried off my Lilla. Plague on my sword for failing me, when I might have rescued her; but I'll raise the neighbourhood, and if I can but find that old scoundrel, Useph—[*Turns round, and sees USEPH.*] Ha! villain, what brought you here?

Useph. What brought me here? Why, I heard a riot, so I came to—to—

Leop. To what?

Useph. Why, to quell it, and defend your house; and, besides, I came to wish you joy on your marriage, my dear friend.

Leop. And how did you get into the house?

Useph. I came through the garden, and in at the back-door, quietly and peaceably as a magistrate should do, and agreeably to my function.

Peter. Yes, and you seem to have been eating some of our supper: was that agreeably to your function?

Leop. Ah! sirrah, who asked you to supper?

Useph. I only picked a bit.

Leop. Hold your tongue. Harkye, rascal! my Lilla's carried off; and I am almost sure that you are in the plot; so, come along, and if I find my suspicions right, I'll hang you on the next tree.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.—A Turkish Watch-tower.

Enter the SERASKIER, ISMAEL, and Guards from the Tower.

Seras. Well, Ismael; so far we have proceeded

successfully, and Lilla is safe within my power. The villagers fought manfully.

Isma. I fear, my lord, we shall experience other proofs of their valour.

Seras. To what am I to attribute these unusual apprehensions, Ismael?

Isma. My lord, I never before fought in a cause I was ashamed of.

Seras. No more: it's time to think of Cohenberg. Are the executioners prepared?

Isma. They are, my lord.

Seras. Are the horsemen ready to bear off Catherine?

Isma. They have their orders, my lord.

[*Retires back.*]

Seras. [*To the Guards.*] Strike off his chains, and bring your prisoner forth. Do you conduct the lady hither. [*To another Guard, who exits.*]

The Guards lift up a trap-door, one descends and returns with Colonel COHENBERG.

Col. To what new indignities am I reserved?

Enter Guard with CATHERINE.

Seras. Hear me, Christian; had the chance of battle made you my prisoner, I should have treated you as a soldier; but you have degraded yourself into a spy, and an ignominious death is, by the law of nations, your reward; yet life or death, on one condition, may still be yours.

Col. And if that one should be unworthy, learn, though life and liberty are dearer to me than all the treasures of your eastern world, I have a gem within my keeping, more valuable far,—my honour! which I scorn to barter for it.

[*Muffled drums are heard.*]

Seras. Hark! that is thy knell. When thrice those sounds, within a few short moments, shall have passed upon thy obstinacy, that instant is thy last. Attend: this night thy Austrians mean to attack my fort. Let the deceivers be deceived: deliver them to my sword. Renounce your Christian worship: do this; and, in my Sultan's name, I promise you power, wealth, honour, your Catherine, all your wishes can desire.

Col. My Catherine! she is a reward so valuable, so truly great, that—

Cath. Hear me, Cohenberg: should an unmanly tenderness for me make thee forget thy faith, thy country, and thy king, though that instant be my last, I'll tear thee, coward, from my bleeding heart, and cast thee off unworthy of my love.

Seras. [*Aside.*] Death to my hopes! she ruins all my purposes.—Christian, reflect; be quick, or both your lives shall expiate thy fault.

Cath. This is the greatest mercy thou canst shew. He dares to die, and I dare not live to see him dishonoured.

Seras. [*Muffled drums.*] Appear, ye ministers of death.

Enter Black Slaves.

Now, Christian, this moment is thy last.

Col. Oh, heavens!

Seras. Bear her away!

Cath. To torture—death. My Cohenberg, remember me.

Col. In life and death, my Catherine.

Seras. Away with her! [*Exit CATH. guarded.*]

Col. Come, tyrant, give me the fatal bow-string, and end at once this pageant of thy cruelty. Thy threats I boldly despise; thy offers thus I tread beneath my feet; and, though this worthless frame

may fall before thee, fixed as the founded rock, my soul shall stand, firm to my God, my king, and my country.

Seras. I'll hear no more.

Col. [*Kneels.*] Preserve my Catherine, heaven!

[*Muffled drums.* The Slaves put the cord round his neck, and prepare to strangle him.

Seras. Despatch him, slaves!

Col. Good angels, guard my Catherine!

Seras. Christian, thy prayers are vain.

[*A great shout is heard, and the drums beating to arms.*

Seras. Distraction! we are betrayed. [*Erit.*

Col. Off, off! ye slaves.

Enter ANSELM, PETER, LEOPOLD, &c.—ANSELM gives the Colonel a sword. Slaves go off. ANSELM, PETER, and LEOPOLD go into the tower. SERASKIER re-enters with his sword drawn; the Colonel fights with him, and drives him off. The Turks are driven from the tower; the Turkish flag is taken down, and the Austrian colours hoisted. A party of Austrians enter from the tower, with PETER, LEOPOLD, ANSELM, and Peasants. Col. COHENBERG enters. Drums and trumpets.

Col. The villain has escaped me in the throng. But, oh! Catherine is no where to be found.

Peter. A Turkish soldier told me, even now, some horsemen bore her over yonder plain.

Col. Ha! over yonder plain! [*Erit.*

FINALE.

Now victory has, like a mistress kind,

Put an end to all our quarrels;

In a brimming cup our joys we'll find,

From the vine we'll pluck our quarrels.

Let us drink as we fight; with loud huzzas,

We'll charge, and scorn all shrinking;

Till our wine, like the foe, retreats apace,

And we shew our valour in drinking.

[*Ereunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—Inside of the Seraskier's Tent.

Several Ladies discovered.

CHORUS.

On the warlike plains descending,

Night, in pity, casts her veil;

Hostile strife awhile suspending,

Short-lived peace and rest prevail.

Enter FATIMA and LILLA.—LILLA in an elegant Turkish habit.

Fat. Then you are resolved to leave us, Lilla?

Lilla. Yes, your ladyship, that I will as soon as I can.

Fat. And are you not sorry to part with your fine clothes, and quit the pleasures of the seraglio?

Lilla. Pleasures, madam, what are they?

Fat. Why, 'tis our pleasure to obey his highness, the Seraskier, who is our lord and husband.

Lilla. And have you no other husband?

Fat. Why, that's a very odd question.

Lilla. Nay, I beg your ladyship's pardon; but I understand there are five-and-twenty; if so, what a pity you should only have one husband amongst you.

Fat. Nay, nay; I ought not to be sorry at your going, or for the beautiful stranger leaving us. I have, hitherto, been the Seraskier's favourite; and you are two dangerous rivals.—Oh! here she comes.

Enter CATHERINE from the tent.

Cath. This intelligence of Cohenberg's safety, gives me new life. Now let fortune do her worst. Well, Fatima, are the sentinels bribed to let us pass?

Fat. I gave Selim the gold, as you desired; who, doubtless, has obeyed your orders.

Cath. So, Lilla, I find you are to be my guide to the castle. Are you sure you know the way?

Lilla. Yes, my lady; 'tis by the private path, which leads directly to it. I dare say we shall be safe. [*Trembling.*

Cath. Why do you tremble, Lilla?

Lilla. No, my lady—yes—yes—yes, I believe I am a little afraid.

Cath. Oh, for shame! You a lover! Consider.

Lilla. No, I won't consider. Now, pray, madam, talk finely to me, as you did a little while ago, and don't let me think of difficulties.

Cath. Difficulties! they are the test of virtue, the spur to courage: the noble mind would lose half its splendour, were it not for the pleasure of surmounting difficulties.

AIR.—CATHERINE.

No more I heave the heartfelt sigh;

No more I drop the briny tear;

Hope's promis'd hour of bliss is near.

Yet dangers surrounding,

My reason confounding

Ah! whether shall I fly!

Enter a Turkish Soldier.

Sold. The drums are beating to arms; we expect to be attacked every moment. [*Erit.*

Cath. Come, Lilla. Adieu, kind Fatima! [*Ereunt.*

Peter. [*Without.*] The enemy's camp's on fire. Plunder's the word.

Enter PETER, LEOPOLD, ANSELM, Peasants, and Austrian Soldiers, who cut down the SERASKIER's tent, and carry it off in pieces. The Turkish camp is seen on fire, at a distance. Drums and trumpets are heard. Re-enter LEOPOLD and PETER.

Leop. Lilla not to be found! Oh! she is in the plot; I am sure she is; she has done it on purpose. I knew she would run away when I married her: I was certain.

Peter. 'Tis a pity, indeed.

Leop. 'Tis false! 'tis not a pity.

Peter. Well, then, 'tis not a pity. What a plague, mustn't I be sorry for you?

Leop. Rot your sorrow! No.

Peter. Well, I won't be sorry, then

Leop. But are you really sorry for me, Peter?

Peter. To be sure I am: you know the friendship I have had for you, ever since we were boys together.

Leop. Give me your hand, then. I ask your pardon. But why will you provoke me?

Peter. Why was you provoked then?

Leop. No, I was not; but I mean that—I say I mean—Zounds! I don't know what I mean.

SONG.—LEOPOLD.

*How provoking your doubts! Do you think I'm a fool?
In the heat of the battle you know I was cool;*

*While ourselves and our neighbours
With guns, pistols, sabres,
Were cutting and slashing,
Mahomedans hashing.*

*But need I care for that, since time is on the wing;
You see I am merry, you hear how I sing.*

Tot de rol, &c.

You see I am merry, you hear how I sing.

*That jade, madam Lilla, that gipsy, afar,
Is jiggling away to the Turkish guitar;*

*While great smooth-chinn'd fribbles,
With vile squeaking trebles,
Chant her praises to cheer*

That cruel Seraskier!

*Till the handkerchief's thrown—But, then, what's
that to me?*

It can't make me uneasy—I'm happy, you see.

Tot de rol, &c.

It can't make me uneasy—I'm happy, you see.

[*Ereunt.*]

SCENE II.—*An Apartment at Col. Cohenberg's.*

Enter an Austrian Soldier, and LILLA, veiled.

Sold. Pray, walk this way; our colonel will be so glad to see you.

Lilla. Indeed, sir, he won't.

Sold. Oh! but I am sure he will, my lady.

Lilla. Sir!

Sold. I beg your ladyship's pardon; but, though bred in the ranks, I know good manners.

Lilla. Ah! that's my misfortune. I wish you did not; for, then, you would quit the room, and let me alone.

[*Soldier bows, and exit.*]

Useph. [*Without.*] Come along, Michael.

Lilla. Oh, heavens! that wretch, Useph! What shall I do! Though, perhaps, he won't know me in this dress

[*Retires.*]

Enter an Austrian Soldier, conducting in USEPH and MICHAEL. USEPH dressed as an Austrian officer.

Useph. Pray, don't disturb the noble Colonel; but when his honour is quite at leisure, let his honour know that I humbly wait to offer my congratulations. My name is Heon Joseph Wolfgang Baumboick Blandenkerstoon Schwartzenberg.

[*Exit Soldier.*]

Mich. Why, heyday! I thought your name had been Ben Yacomb Ben Mustapha.

Useph. Ay, that was my Turkish title; but it won't do now the Austrians are our masters. I think I have got a good name, eh! Michael?

Mich. Yes; and as you never had a good name before, I hope you will keep it, now you have got it.

Useph. Ha, ha! Very well; you are a sharp fellow, Michael; I'll recommend you to the Colonel, when I am appointed to some post of great emolument under him: you shall be my deputy, and do all the business for me,—[*Aside.*] and I'll take all the money.

Mich. So I will. I have often wondered where the deuce you could conceal your riches.

Useph. Ay, that's a secret I mean to let you into; for I don't think my hoards are quite safe in this time of warlike combustion. We'll remove them, Michael.

[*LILLA listens.*]

Mich. But where are they?

Useph. Why, you know the burying-place, about a mile off, which the Turks hold so sacred. In the middle of that ground stands a high and spacious tomb; there I have hid it. But, mum!

Enter an Austrian Soldier.

Sold. [*To LILLA.*] Our Colonel is not at home, madam; but I shall be happy to attend your ladyship.

Useph. [*To the Soldier.*] Harkye! my lad, pray, who is this pretty piece of camp furniture, eh?

Sold. Hush! 'tis our Colonel's lady. I was the first who saw her here, and expect to be made a corporal for it.

[*Erit.*]

Useph. [*Aside to MICHAEL.*] Oh, ho! then I know my cue.—Leave us, Michael. [*Exit MICHAEL.*—*USEPH bows to LILLA.*] How happy are we all to see your ladyship returned! The Colonel is a most amiable creature; he does me the honour to live in my house: it was mine yesterday. Indeed, he forgot to ask my leave; but true politeness overlooks trifles. He must have a number of very pretty things at his disposal. Oh! if ever I should live to be appointed a commissary—and if your ladyship would but stand my friend—Pray, is your ladyship fond of jewels?

Lilla. [*Aside.*] If I speak to him, he'll know my voice.

Useph. I have some of the most beautiful here, which I should be proud to present to your ladyship.

[*Offers a casket.*]

Lilla. [*Aside.*] I believe I had best take them, to prevent further questions.

[*Takes the casket.*]

Useph. [*Aside.*] I can see that she is used to bribery.

Enter a Soldier.

Sold. The Colonel is not returned yet, madam, till he do, we shall be proud to obey the wife of our noble commander.

Lilla. [*Throws open her veil.*] I am not his wife, sir.

Useph. Why, heyday! Zounds! this is my wife that ought to be.

Lilla. I'll not be the wife of any of you. But, since you say, sir, you will obey my commands, pray, be kind enough to turn that wicked old justice of peace out of the house.

Sold. Oh! that we will directly.

[*Erit.*]

Useph. What, turn me out of the house! that's a d—d good joke. Well, but, Lilla, I'll trouble you for my pearls again, dear.

Lilla. Why, I thought you gave them to me.

Useph. Yes, I gave them you to look at.

Lilla. Well, I have looked at them, and like them very well.

Useph. Come, come; I must have my jewels.

Enter two Soldiers.

Lilla. Turn him out.

Useph. I won't go without my pearls. At your peril, detain them. Lookye! my lads, I'm a magistrate; I see you are well-disposed persons, and so I'll explain to you the nature of justice as to private property. For instance: my pearls—I say, my pearls—

[*Soldiers push him out.*]

Lilla. Ha, ha, ha! I think I shall be even with you, Mr. Justice. I am glad I know where his money is hidden. I wish I had told that gentleman of the fine lady that came away with me: I dare say she is the Colonel's wife. Ah! but, then, perhaps, he would have been angry with me for losing her. Well, thanks to fortune, here I am at present; so, I'll think no more of past dangers.

AIR.—*LILLA*

*Domestic peace, my soul's desire,
The dearest bliss fate could bestow,*

*At length, to thee I may aspire;
 Misfortune's storms no longer blow.
 Escap'd their ire, now safe on shore,
 I listen to the tempest's roar;
 And while the billows idly foam,
 They but endear my long lost home.* [Exit.]

SCENE III.—*Outside of Colonel Cohenberg's House.*

USEPH discovered being pushed out of the house by two Soldiers.

Useph. Well, but hear me: I say, that—there! they have turned me out, and won't hear me. Nobody will attend to me. What a miserable dog I am! Never was there so unhappy a magistrate!

Enter LEOPOLD.

Leop. Cruel, cruel, Lilla!

Useph. What?

Leop. She has robbed me of my peace for ever?

Useph. She has robbed me, too; however, I am ready to make the matter up, if you'll pay me for the pearls.

Leop. What does the fellow mean?

Useph. I mean the pearls Lilla had of me.

Leop. What! had of you?

Useph. Hear me patiently, and I'll tell you all.

Leop. Zounds! I am patient.—Well?

Useph. I intended those pearls as a present to a certain person.

Leop. And you gave them to Lilla?

Useph. Yes, in my house—Colonel Cohenberg's, I mean; for there she is.

Leop. What, Lilla there! Oh, ho! [Knocks.

Sold. [Within.] What, you won't go along!—[Comes out, and sees LEOPOLD.] Ha! brother soldier, how are you?

Leop. Very well, thankye. Well, and so you are here. And how are you? Isn't there a young woman—I'm glad to see you—I say a young woman—How long have you been here?—Called Lilla, at this house?

Sold. Yes, she's within. Come with me.

[REënt LEOPOLD and Soldier. USEPH attempts to follow; but is pushed back, and the door shuts.

Useph. What, shut the door in my face! I see there is no chance of getting the pearls; and I shall be ruined if I stay here; so, I'll e'en pack up my remaining treasure, and go over to the Turks. I got all my money by changing sides, and I'll change sides to keep it.

AIR.—USEPH.

*Some time ago, I married a wife,
 And she, poor soul! was the plague of my life;
 I thought, when I lost her, my troubles were done,
 But, if faith, I found they're just begun.*

*Tho' she's gone,
 Still 'tis all one,
 My troubles, alas! are just begun.*

*A magistrate I next became,
 To be impartial was my aim;
 No distinction I made between great and small;
 Plaintiffs, defendants, I flee'd them all:
 Great and small, flee'd them all.*

*Turks and Christians, I cheated 'em all
 In praise of honesty, I've heard,
 As policy, 'tis much prefer'd;
 Then, if 'tis best, in life's repast,
 The daintiest dish I'll taste the last.*

*Honest at last,
 Tir'd of the past,
 Perhaps, as a change, I may try it at last.* [Exit.]

SCENE IV.—*A Room at Colonel Cohenberg's.*

Enter LEOPOLD and LILLA.

Lilla. My dear Leopold, how glad I am to see you! Was it not lucky that I heard Useph say where his riches were?

Leop. Yes, very lucky. [Aside.] Not a word of the pearls yet.—Well, but, Lilla,—I say this fine dress of yours—Zounds! I can't bear to look at it.

Lilla. What, more suspicions, Leopold?

Leop. No, my suspicions are vanished.

Lilla. I am glad of it.

Leop. Yes, I am convinced of your falsehood.—Where are the pearls that Useph gave you? I suppose you can explain that to me.

Lilla. I'll explain nothing, Leopold. Your want of confidence in me vexes me to the heart. I am sure we shall never be happy, if this be the case.

[Cries.
Leop. Oh! very well. I see what—you wish to part—Oh! with all my heart.

Lilla. And with all mine.

DUET.—LEOPOLD and LILLA.

Lilla. *Though you think by this to vex me,
 Love no more can give me pain.*

Leop. *Vainly strive not to perplex me,
 You shall dupe me ne'er again.*

Lilla. *Now your falsehood is requited,
 I'll enjoy a single life.*

Leop. *Hark! to glory I'm invited,
 By the cheerful drum and fife.*

Lilla. *By consent, then, now we sever,—*

Leop. *Love's all nonsense, freedom's sweet;*

Lilla. *And we take our leave for ever,*

Leop. *Never more again to meet*

Lilla. *Never more?*

Leop. *Never more.*

Lilla. *I don't want, sir, to allure you;*

I don't wish your stay, not I.

Leop. *I'm quite happy, I assure you;
 Gladly I pronounce good bye!*

Lilla. *You will change your mind, believe me—*

Leop. *No; I told you so before.*

Lilla. *Can you have the heart to leave me?*

Leop. *Yes: I'll never see you more.*

Lilla. *Never more?*

Leop. *Never more.*

Both. *Never more my love shall leave me;
 Never part—no, never more.* [Exeunt.]

SCENE V.—*A Turkish Burial-ground.*

Enter PETER, followed by LEOPOLD, with a small cane.

Peter. How fortunate that Lilla should overhear Useph discover where his treasures are hidden. But you say we are to carry this money to Colonel Cohenberg, who will deliver it to the lawful owners.

Leop. Yes; we are to commit a robbery for the public good. So, follow me, Peter. In we go.

Enter MICHAEL with a sack, and USEPH disguised in a long cloak.

Useph. Come along, Michael. But make no noise, that we may make our escape, undiscovered, to Belgrade. This is the spot where I buried my poor, dear wife, two years ago.

Mich. I recollect it.

Useph. Ah! many a time, in the dead of the night, have I visited this place.

Mich. What the plague, did you want to steal your wife?

Useph. No, no; I ran away with her once, when she was alive; and repented it ever afterwards. She was a good soul, but rather turbulent; never quiet, till she arrived here; and, now she is at rest, I should be sorry to disturb her. There, Michael; that tomb is my banking-house; and, perhaps, it is not the first banking-house where a fortune has been buried. However, this is an old established shop, and all the parties in it quiet, safe people.

Mich. Then we come to remove the treasure?

Useph. Even so, my boy: I shall take away my money, and leave my wife. Many a husband would think that no bad bargain. [*Going in, meets PETER and LEOPOLD.*] Oh, terrible! What do I see! my riches! Oh! you audacious robbers! Oh! you sacrilegious villains!

Leop. Now, don't make a noise; you must be cool.

Useph. Why, you impudent varlet! Do you plunder me, and preach to me at the same time? Zounds! I'll never be cool again.

Leop. Yes, you will. [*Strikes him with a cane.*] How do you find yourself, now? [*Strikes him again.*]

Useph. Oh! good, kind Leopold, I am cool—in-deed, I am quiet.

Leop. Now, then, let's hear what you have to say.

Useph. May I, then, without offence, ask what right you have to take my money? I don't ask this in anger; I am quite cool.

Leop. Your money! Why, your name is Heroon Joseph Wolfgang Baumbork Blandenkerstoon Schwartzbergen.

Peter. And this money belongs to one Ben Yacomb Ben Ali Ben Mustapha.

Leop. An old, roguish magistrate of this village, who used to cheat people of their property. Come, honest Michael, you shall carry this treasure for us to Colonel Cohenberg's.

Useph. To Colonel Cohenberg's! Why, what the devil—

Leop. What, you want the other dose?

Useph. No, no.

Leop. Well, then, assist Peter in loading Michael.

Useph. I tell you I will not assist. That—

Leop. [*Strikes him.*] Now be cool.

Useph. This is d—d hard to make a man accessary to robbing himself.

[*They put several bags, which PETER and LEOPOLD brought from the tomb, into the sack, then place it on MICHAEL's back, who carries it off. USEPH puts one of the bags into his pocket, unseen by PETER or LEOPOLD.*—*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI.—*Outer Wall of the Burial-ground.*—*Several voices are heard crying "Follow! Follow!"*

Enter CATHERINE, LEOPOLD, PETER, MICHAEL, and USEPH.

Cath. Oh, heavens! I am closely pursued!—Which way shall I escape? My friends, will you conduct me to Colonel Cohenberg's?

Leop. Ay, madam, at the hazard of our lives. Lead on, Useph. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter SERASKIER, ISMAEL, and Guards.

Seras. Confusion! My camp destroyed, and Catherine escaped!

Isma. Pray, my lord, return. You are near the frontiers of the Austrians.

Seras. Not till I recover Catherine. [*Trumpets.*] Hark! I am called to arms. Begone, and bear our crescent to the wars. [*Exit ISMAEL.*]

AIR.—SERASKIER.

*Love and honour now conspire
To rouse my soul with martial fire.
Holy prophet, hear my prayer,
Give me once more the charming fair
The Austrian trumpet's bold alarms
Breathe defiance to our arms.
Fir'd with ardour to engage,
Give me to dare the battle's rage,
When groans that shall be heard no more,
Echo to the cannon's roar.
Death stalks triumphant o'er the field:
On every side the Christians yield.
Still conquest doubly presses
The lover-soldier's arms,
In prospect he possesses
Complying beauty's charms.* [*Exit.*]

SCENE VII.—*Castle and view of Belgrade.*—*The siege commences. Guns firing balls of fire, supposed to be thrown to fire the citadel. A party of Turks are repulsed by a party of Austrians. An Austrian Soldier fights some time sword in hand with a Turkish Soldier; but, losing his sword, takes a pistol from his belt, and fires at him; the Turk falls, and is thrown into the ditch that surrounds the Castle.*—*Enter the SERASKIER and Col. COHENBERG fighting. The SERASKIER falls.*—*PETER, LEOPOLD, ANSELM, &c. fight with the Turkish Soldiers. USEPH enters, and flourishes his sword on the side of the Turks; but finding they are sure to be conquered, joins the Austrians. Drums and trumpets heard all the time.*

Col. [*To the SERASKIER, who is down.*] Rise, and learn Christian revenge.

Enter CATHERINE.

FINALE.—*In the course of which, enter GHITA and LILLA.*

Cho. Loud let the song of triumph rise,
Bless'd triumph o'er oppression's sway
Valour has gain'd the brightest prize,
For freedom's voice shall join the lay.

Cath. Fortune relenting, from her stores,
Her richest treasures lavish pours;
The bliss for which so long we strive
The joys of victory and love.

Seras. Vanquish'd, I boast my victor brave;
Light were the chains which valour gave;
More potent fetters now I find,
Kindness subdues his captive's mind.

Cho. Loud let the song of triumph rise,
Bless'd triumph o'er oppression's sway;
Valour has gain'd the brightest prize,
For freedom's voice shall join the lay.

DUET.—LILLA and GHITA.

*Now while music her strains most inviting,
Shall in sweet gratitude's cause display;
Tho' untutor'd in skill so delighting,
Our heartfelt thanks let us humbly pay.
Strains so artless tho' we proffer,
Hearts o'erflowing zest the offer*

Cho. Now while music, &c.

Leop. All ill-humour thus vented in fighting,
We are, as usual, good-humour'd and gay;

Lilla. *Happy liberty's blessings regaining,
They inspiring our simple lay ;*
Ghita. *Freedom's glorious cause sustaining,
The theme our humble song will raise.*
Lilla. *Strains so artless,—
Though we proffer,—
Hearts o'erflowing,
Zest the offer.*
Cho. *Freedom's glorious cause, &c.*
Cath. *From companions in danger, this greeting
Of friendship, how can we requite ?*

Trio. *A reception so gracious when meeting,
Our duty becomes our delight.*
Lil. } *Bright the laurel of victory gracing,*
& } *The manly brow merit marks it to wear ;—*
Ghi. }
Cho. *Doubly dear is that laurel while placing
By the lov'd hand of the favourite fair
Toils forgetting, pleasure courting,
Beauty beaming, smiles transporting.
Bright the laurel, &c.* [Exeunt.]

THE DOUBLE DEALER;

A COMEDY IN FIVE ACTS ;

BY WILLIAM CONGREVE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LORD TOUCHWOOD
LORD FROTH
SIR PAUL PLIANT
MASKWELL
MELLEFONT
CARELESS
BRISK
SAYGRACE
THOMAS
TIMOTHY.

LADY TOUCHWOOD
LADY FROTH
LADY PLIANT
CYNTHIA
Servants.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Gallery in Lord Touchwood's house,
with chambers adjoining.*

*Enter CARELESS, crossing the stage, as just risen from
table ; MELLEFONT following him.*

Mel. Ned, Ned, whither so fast ? What, turned
fincher ? Why, you wo' not leave us ?

Care. Where are the women ? I'm weary of
drinking, and begin to think them the better com-
pany.

Mel. Then thy reason staggers, and thou'rt almost
tipsy.

Care. No, 'faith ! but your fools grow noisy ; and
if a man must endure the noise of words without
sense, I think the women have more musical voices,
and become nonsense better.

Mel. Why, they are at the end of the gallery, re-
tired to their tea and scandal. But I made a pre-
tence to follow you, because I had something to say
to you in private, and I am not likely to have many
opportunities this evening.

Brisk. [Without.] Careless, Careless !

Care. And here's this coxcomb, most critically
come to interrupt you.

Enter BRISK.

Brisk. Boys, boys, lads, where are you ? What,
do you give ground ? Mortgage for a bottle, eh ?
Careless, this is your trick ; you're always spoiling
company by leaving it.

Care. And thou art always spoiling company by
coming into it.

Brisk. Pooh ! Ha, ha, ha ! I know you envy me.
Spite, proud spite, by the gods, and burning envy.
I'll be judged by Mellefont here, who gives and
takes rillery better, you or I. P'sha ! man, when
I say you spoil company by leaving it, I mean you
leave nobody for the company to laugh at. I think
there I was with you : ch ! Mellefont ?

Mel. O' my word, Brisk, that was a home thrust: you have silenced him.

Brisk. Oh! my dear Mellefont, let me perish, if thou art not the soul of conversation, the very essence of wit, and spirit of wine. The deuce take me, if there were three good things said, or one understood, since thy amputation from the body of our society. He, he! I think that's pretty and metaphorical enough: egad! I could not have said it out of thy company. Careless, eh!

Care. Hum! ay, what is it?

Brisk. Oh, *mon cœur!* What is it! Nay, 'gad! I'll punish you for want of apprehension: the deuce take me if I tell you.

Mel. No, no; hang him, he has no taste. But, dear Brisk, excuse me; I have a little business.

Care. Pr'ythee, get thee gone; thou seest we are serious.

Mel. We'll come immediately, if you'll but go in, and keep up good humour and sense in the company: pr'ythee, do; they'll fall asleep else.

Brisk. Egad: so they will. Well, I will, I will: 'gad! you shall command me from the zenith to the nadir. But, the deuce take me, if I say a good thing till you come. But, pr'ythee, dear rogue, make haste; pr'ythee make haste, I shall burst else. And yonder your uncle, my Lord Touchwood, swears he'll disinherit you; and Sir Paul Pliant threatens to disclaim you for a son-in-law; and my Lord Froth won't dance at your wedding to-morrow; nor, the deuce take me, I won't write your epithalamium; and see what a condition you're like to be brought to.

Mel. Well, I'll speak but three words, and follow you.

Brisk. Enough, enough. Careless, bring your apprehension with you. [Exit.

Care. Pert coxcomb!

Mel. 'Faith! 'tis a good-natured coxcomb, and has very entertaining follies: you must be more humane to him; at this juncture it will do me service. I'll tell you, I would have mirth continued this day at any rate; though patience purchase folly, and attention be paid with noise: there are times when sense may be unseasonable, as well as truth. Pr'ythee, do thou wear none to-day; but allow Brisk to have wit, that thou may'st seem a fool.

Care. Why, how now? Why this extravagant proposition?

Mel. Oh! I would have no room for serious design, for I am jealous of a plot. I would have noise and impertinence keep my Lady Touchwood's head from working.

Care. I thought your fear of her had been over. Is not to-morrow appointed for your marriage with Cynthia? and her father, Sir Paul Pliant, come to settle the writings this day, on purpose?

Mel. True; but you shall judge whether I have not reason to be alarmed. None, besides you and Maskwell, are acquainted with the secret of my aunt Touchwood's violent passion for me. Since my first refusal of her addresses, she has endeavoured to do me all ill offices with my uncle; yet has managed them with that subtlety, that to him they have borne the face of kindness; while her malice, like a dark lantern, only shone upon me, where it was directed: but whether urged by her despair, and the short prospect of time she saw to accomplish her designs; whether the hopes of revenge, or of her love, terminated in the view of this my marriage with Cynthia, I know not; but this morning she surprised me in my own chamber.

Care. Was there ever such a fury! Well, bless us! proceed. What followed?

Mel. It was long before either of us spoke; passion had tied her tongue, and amazement mine. In short, the consequence was thus: she omitted nothing that the most violent love could urge, or tender words express; which when she saw had no effect, but still I pleaded honour and nearness of blood to my uncle, then came the storm I feared at first; for, starting from my bed-side, like a fury she flew to my sword, and with much ado, I prevented her doing me or herself a mischief. Having disarmed her, in a gust of passion she left me, and in a resolution, confirmed by a thousand curses, not to close her eyes till they had seen my ruin.

Care. Exquisite woman! But, what the devil, does she think thou hast no more sense than to disinherit thyself? For, as I take it, this settlement upon you is with a proviso that your uncle have no children.

Mel. It is so. Well, the service you are to do me will be a pleasure to yourself. I must get you to engage my Lady Pliant all this evening, that my pious aunt may not work her to her interest; and if you chance to secure her to yourself, you may incline her to mine. She's handsome, and knows it; is very silly, and thinks she has sense; and has an old fond husband.

Care. I confess, a very fair foundation for a lover to build upon.

Mel. For my Lord Froth, he and his wife will be sufficiently taken up with admiring one another, and Brisk's gallantry, as they call it. I'll observe my uncle myself; and Jack Maskwell has promised me to watch my aunt narrowly, and give me notice upon any suspicion. As for Sir Paul, my wise father-in-law that is to be, my dear Cynthia has such a share in his fatherly fondness, he would scarce make her a moment uneasy to have her happy hereafter.

Care. So, you have manned your works; but I wish you may not have the weakest guard where the enemy is strongest.

Mel. Maskwell, you mean? Pr'ythee, why should you suspect him?

Care. 'Faith! I cannot help it: you know, I never liked him; I am a little superstitious in physiognomy.

Mel. He has obligations of gratitude to bind him to me; his dependence upon my uncle is through my means.

Care. Upon your aunt, you mean.

Mel. My aunt?

Care. I'm mistaken if there be not a familiarity between them you do not suspect, for all her passion for you.

Mel. Pooh, pooh! nothing in the world but his design to do me service; and he endeavours to be well in her esteem, that he may be able to effect it.

Care. Well, I shall be glad to be mistaken; but your aunt's aversion, in her revenge, cannot be any way so effectually shewn as in promoting a means to disinherit you. She is handsome and cunning, and naturally amorous; Maskwell is flesh and blood, at best, and opportunities between them are frequent. His affection to you, you have confessed, is grounded upon his interest; that you have transplanted; and should it take root in my lady, I don't see what you can expect from the fruit.

Mel. I confess the consequence is visible were your suspicions just. But see, the company is broken up: let's meet them.

Enter Lord TOUCHWOOD, Sir PAUL PLIANT, Lord FROTH, and BRISK.

Lord T. Out upon it, nephew! leave your father-in-law and me to maintain our ground against young people.

Mel. I beg your lordship's pardon; we were just returning—

Sir P. Were you, son? Gadsbud! much better as it is. Good, strange! I swear I'm almost tipsy; t'other bottle would have been too powerful for me, as sure as can be, it would. We wanted your company; but Mr. Brisk, where is he? I swear and vow he's a most facetious person, and the best company; and, my Lord Froth, your lordship is so merry a man! He, he, he!

Lord F. Oh, fie! Sir Paul, what do you mean? Merry! Oh, barbarous! I'd as lieve you called me fool.

Sir P. Nay, I protest and vow, now, 'tis true; when Mr. Brisk jokes, your lordship's laugh does so become you! He, he, he!

Lord F. Ridiculous! Sir Paul, you're strangely mistaken. I find champagne is powerful. I assure you, Sir Paul, I laugh at nobody's jest but my own, or a lady's; I assure you, Sir Paul.

[*Lord T., MELLEFONT, and CARELESS talk apart.*]

Brisk. How? how, my lord? What, affront my wit? Let me perish, do I never say anything worthy to be laughed at?

Lord F. Oh, fie! don't misapprehend me: I don't say so; for I often smile at your conceptions. But there is nothing more unbecoming a man of quality than to laugh; 'tis such a vulgar expression of the passion! everybody can laugh. Then, especially, to laugh at the jest of an inferior person, or when anybody else of the same quality does not laugh with him: ridiculous! to be pleased with what pleases the crowd! Now, when I laugh, I always laugh alone.

Brisk. I suppose that's because you laugh at your own jests, egad! Ha, ha, ha!

Lord F. He, he! I swear, though, your raillery provokes me to a smile.

Brisk. Ay, my lord, it's a sign I hit you in the teeth, if you shew them.

Lord F. He, he, he! I swear, that's so very pretty, I can't forbear.

Lord T. Sir Paul, if you please, we'll retire to the ladies, and drink a dish of tea to settle our heads

Sir P. With all my heart. Mr. Brisk, you'll come to us: or call me when you're going to joke; I'll be ready to laugh incontinently.

[*Exit with Lord T.*]

Mel. But does your lordship never see comedies?

Lord F. Oh! yes, sometimes; but I never laugh.

Mel. No!

Lord F. Oh! no. Never laugh, indeed, sir.

Care. No! why, what d'ye go there for?

Lord F. To distinguish myself from the commonalty, and mortify the poets; the fellows grow so conceited when any of their foolish wit prevails upon the side-boxes! I swear—he, he, he!—I have often constrained my inclinations to laugh—he, he, he!—to avoid giving them encouragement.

Mel. You are cruel to yourself, my lord, as well as malicious to them.

Lord F. I confess I did myself some violence at first; but now I think I have conquered it.

Brisk. Let me perish, my lord, but there is something very particular and novel in the humour; 'tis

true, it makes against wit, and I'm sorry for some friends of mine that write; but, egad! I love to be malicious. Nay, deuce take me, there's wit in't, too; and wit must be foiled by wit: cut a diamond with a diamond; no other way, egad!

Lord F. Oh! I thought you would not be long before you found out the wit.

Care. Wit in what? Where the devil's the wit, in not laughing when a man has a mind to't?

Brisk. Oh Lord! why, can't you find it out? Why, there 'tis, in the not laughing. Don't you apprehend me? My lord, Careless is a very honest fellow; but, harkye!—you understand me—something heavy; a little shallow, or so. Why, I'll tell you now: suppose now you come up to me—nay, pr'ythee, Careless, be instructed—suppose, as I was saying, you come up to me, holding your sides, and laughing as if you would—Well, I look grave, and ask the cause of this immoderate mirth: you laugh on still, and are not able to tell me: still I look grave; not so much as smile—

Care. Smile! no; what the devil should you smile at, when you suppose I can't tell you?

Brisk. Psha, psha! pr'ythee, don't interrupt me: but I tell you, you shall tell me at last; but it shall be a great while first.

Care. Well, but pr'ythee, don't let it be a great while, because I long to have it over.

Brisk. Well, then, you tell me some good jest, or very witty thing, laughing all the while as if you were ready to die, and I hear it, and look thus; would not you be disappointed?

Care. No; for if it were a witty thing, I should not expect you to understand it.

Lord F. Oh, fie! Mr. Careless; all the world allows Mr. Brisk to have wit: my wife says he has a great deal; I hope you think her a judge.

Brisk. Pooh! my lord, his voice goes for nothing. I can't tell how to make him apprehend. Take it t'other way: suppose I say a witty thing to you.

[*To CARELESS.*]

Care. Then I shall be disappointed, indeed.

Mel. Let him alone, Brisk; he is obstinately bent not to be instructed.

Brisk. I'm sorry for him, the deuce take me!

Mel. Shall we go to the ladies, my lord?

Lord F. With all my heart; methinks, we are a solitude without them.

Mel. Or, what say you to another bottle of champagne?

Lord F. Oh! for the universe, not a drop more, I beseech you. Oh! intemperate! I have a flushing in my face already.

[*Takes out a pocket-glass and looks in it.*]

Brisk. Let me see, let me see, my lord. I broke my glass that was in the lid of my snuff-box. Hum! Deuce take me, I have encouraged a pimple here, too.

[*Takes the glass and looks in it.*]

Lord F. Then you must fortify him with a patch; my wife shall supply you. Come, gentlemen, allons!

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter MASKWELL and Lady TOUCHWOOD.

Lady T. I'll hear no more. You're false and ungrateful; come, I know you false.

Mask. I have been frail, I confess, madam, for your ladyship's service.

Lady T. That I should trust a man whom I had known betray his friend!

Mask. What friend have I betrayed? or to whom?

Lady T. Your fond friend, Mellefont, and to me; can you deny it?

Mask. I do not.

Lady T. Have you not wronged my lord, who has been a father to you in your wants, and given you being? Have you not wronged him in the highest manner?

Mask. With your ladyship's help, and for your service, as I told you before; I can't deny that neither. Anything more, madam?

Lady T. More, audacious villain! Oh! what's more is most my shame. Have you not dishonoured me?

Mask. No, that I deny; for I never told in all my life; so that accusation's answered: on to the next.

Lady T. Death! do you dally with my passion? Insolent devil! But have a care; provoke me not; you shall not escape my vengeance. Calm villain! how unconcerned he stands, confessing treachery and ingratitude! Is there a vice more black? Oh! I have excuses, thousands, for my faults: fire in my temper; passions in my soul, apt to every provocation; oppressed at once with love and with despair. But a sedate, a thinking villain, whose black blood runs temperately bad, what excuse can clear?

Mask. Will you be in temper, madam? I would not talk to be heard. I have been a very great rogue for your sake, and you reproach me with it; I am ready to be a rogue still to do you service; and you are flinging conscience and honour in my face, to rebate my inclinations. How am I to behave myself? You know I am your creature; my life and fortune in your power; to disoblige you brings me certain ruin. Allow it, I would betray you, I would not be a traitor to myself: I don't pretend to honesty, because you know I am a rascal: but I would convince you, from the necessity of my being firm to you.

Lady T. Necessity, impudence! Can no gratitude incline you? no obligations touch you? Were you not in the nature of a servant? and have not I, in effect, made you lord of all, of me, and of my lord? Where is that humble love, the languishing, that adoration which was once paid me, and everlastingly engaged?

Mask. Fixed, rooted in my heart, whence nothing can remove them; yet you—

Lady T. Yet! what yet?

Mask. Nay, misconceive me not, madam, when I say I have had a generous and a faithful passion, which you had never favoured but through revenge and policy.

Lady T. Ha!

Mask. Look you, madam, we are alone, pray contain yourself, and hear me. You know you loved your nephew when I first sighed for you; I quickly found it: an argument that I loved; for, with that art you veiled your passion, 'twas imperceptible to all but jealous eyes. This discovery made me bold, I confess it; for by it I thought you in my power: your nephew's scorn of you added to my hopes; I watched the occasion, and took you, just repulsed by him, warm at once with love and indignation; your disposition, my arguments, and happy opportunity, accomplished my design. How I have loved you since, words have not shewn; then how should words express?

Lady T. Well, mollifying devil! and have I not met your love with forward fire?

Mask. Your zeal, I grant, was ardent, but misplaced; there was revenge in view; that woman's idol had defiled the temple of the god, and love was made a mock-worship. A son and heir would have

edged young Mellefont upon the brink of ruin, and left him nought but you to catch at for prevention.

Lady T. Again provoke me! Do you wind me like a larum, only to rouse my own stilled soul for your diversion? Confusion!

Mask. Nay, madam, I'm gone, if you relapse. What needs this? I say nothing but what yourself, in open hours of love, have told me. Why should you deny it? nay, how can you? Is not all this present heat owing to the same fire? Do not you love him still? How have I this day offended you, but in not breaking off his match with Cynthia? which ere to-morrow, shall be done, had you but patience.

Lady T. How! what said you, Maskwell? Another caprice to unwind my temper?

Mask. No, by my love, I am your slave, the slave of all your pleasures; and will not rest till I have given you peace, would you suffer me.

Lady T. Oh! Maskwell, in vain do I disguise me from thee; thou knowest me; knowest the very inmost windings and recesses of my soul. Oh! Mellefont!—Married to-morrow!—Despair strikes me. Yet my soul knows I hate him, too: let him but once be mine, and next immediate ruin seize him.

Mask. Compose yourself; you shall have your wish. Will that please you?

Lady T. How, how? thou dear, thou precious villain, how?

Mask. You have already been tampering with my Lady Pliant?

Lady T. I have: she is ready for any impression I think fit.

Mask. She must be thoroughly persuaded that Mellefont loves her.

Lady T. She is so credulous that way naturally, and likes him so well, that she will believe it faster than I can persuade her. But I don't see what you can propose from such a trifling design; for her first conversing with Mellefont will convince her of the contrary.

Mask. I know it. I don't depend upon it; but it will prepare something else, and gain us leisure to lay a stronger plot: if I gain a little time, I shall not want contrivance.

One minute gives invention to destroy

What, to rebuild, will a whole age employ.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The same.*

Enter Lady FROTH and CYNTHIA.

Cyn. Indeed, madam! is it possible your ladyship could have been so much in love?

Lady F. I could not sleep; I did not sleep one wink for three weeks together.

Cyn. Prodigious! I wonder want of sleep, and so much love, and so much wit as your ladyship has, did not turn your brain.

Lady F. Oh! my dear Cynthia, you must not rally your friend. But, really, as you say, I wonder, too. But then, I had a way; for, between you and I, I had whimsies and vapours; but I gave them vent.

Cyn. How, pray, madam?

Lady F. Oh! I writ; writ abundantly. Do you never write?

Cyn. Write! what?

Lady F. Songs, elegies, satires, encomiums, panegyrics, lampoons, plays, or heroic poems.

Cyn. Oh Lord! not I, madam: I'm content to be a courteous reader.

Lady F. Oh, inconsistent! In love, and not write! If my lord and I had been both of your temper, we should never have come together. Oh! bless me! what a sad thing would that have been, if my lord and I should never have met!

Cyn. Then neither my lord nor you would ever have met with your match, on my conscience.

Lady F. On my conscience, no more we should; thou say'st right; for sure, my Lord Froth is as fine a gentleman, and as much a man of quality!—Ah! nothing at all of the common air. I think I may say he wants nothing but a blue ribbon and a star to make him shine the very phosphorus of our hemisphere. Do you understand those two hard words? If you don't, I'll explain them to you.

Cyn. Yes, yes, madam, I'm not so ignorant. At least, I won't own it, to be troubled with your instructions. *[Aside.]*

Lady F. Nay, I beg your pardon; but being derived from the Greek, I thought you might have escaped the etymology. But I'm the more amazed, to find you a woman of letters, and not write. Bless me, how can Mellefont believe you love him?

Cyn. Why, 'faith! madam, he that won't take my word shall never have it under my hand.

Lady F. I vow, Mellefont's a pretty gentleman; but methinks he wants a manner.

Cyn. A manner! what's that, madam?

Lady F. Some distinguishing quality; as, for example, the *bel air*, or brilliant, of Mr. Brisk; the solemnity, yet complaisance, of my lord; or something of his own, that he should look a little *je ne sais quoi*-ish; he is too much a mediocrity, in my mind.

Cyn. He does not, indeed, affect either pertness or formality; for which I like him: here he comes.

Lady F. And my lord with him: pray, observe the difference.

Enter Lord Froth, Mellefont, and Brisk.

Cyn. Impertinent creature! I could almost be angry with her now. *[Aside.]*

Lady F. My lord, I have been telling Cynthia how much I have been in love with you; I swear I have; I'm not ashamed to own it now; ah! it makes my heart leap; I vow I sigh when I think on't. My dear lord—ha, ha, ha!—do you remember, my lord?

[Squeezes him by the hand, looks kindly on him, sighs, and then laughs out.]

Lord F. Pleasant creature! Perfectly well. Ah! that look; ay, there it is; who could resist? 'Twas so my heart was made a captive first, and ever since it has been in love with happy slavery.

Lady F. Oh! that tongue, that dear deceitful tongue! that charming softness in your mien and your expression! and then your bow! Good, my lord, bow as you did when I gave you my picture. Here, suppose this my picture. *[Gives him a pocket-glass.]* Pray, mind my lord; ah! he bows charmingly. *[Lord Froth bows profoundly low, then kisses the glass.]* Nay, my lord, you sha'n't kiss it so much; I shall grow jealous, I vow now.

Lord F. I saw myself there, and kissed it for your sake.

Lady F. Ah! gallantry to the last degree. Mr. Brisk, you're a judge; was ever anything so well bred as my lord?

Brisk. Never anything—but your ladyship, let me perish.

Lady F. Oh! prettily turned again! let me die but you have a great deal of wit. Mr. Mellefont, don't you think Mr. Brisk has a world of wit?

Mel. Oh! yes, madam.

Brisk. Oh dear! madam.

Lady F. An infinite deal.

Brisk. Oh heavens! madam.

Lady F. More wit than anybody.

Brisk. I'm everlastingly your humble servant, deuce take me, madam.

Lord F. Don't you think us a happy couple?

[To Cynthia.]

Cyn. I vow, my lord, I think you are the happiest couple in the world; for you're not only happy in one another, and when you are together, but happy in yourselves, and by yourselves.

Lord F. I hope Mellefont will make a good husband, too.

Cyn. 'Tis my interest to believe he will, my lord.

Lord F. D'ye think he'll love you as well as I do my wife? I'm afraid not.

Cyn. I believe he'll love me better.

Lord F. Heavens! that can never be: but why do you think so?

Cyn. Because he has not so much reason to be fond of himself.

Lord F. Oh! your humble servant for that, dear madam. Well, Mellefont, you'll be a happy creature.

Mel. Ay, my lord, I shall have the same reason for my happiness that your lordship has, I shall think myself happy.

Lord F. Ah! that's all.

Brisk. Your ladyship is in the right: *[To Lady F.]* but, egad! I'm wholly turned into satire. I confess I write but seldom; but when I do—keen iambics, egad! But my lord was telling me, your ladyship has made an essay toward an heroic poem.

Lady F. Did my lord tell you? Yes, I vow, and the subject is my lord's love to me. And what do you think I call it? I dare swear you won't guess—*The Syllabub.* Ha, ha, ha!

Brisk. Because my lord's title's Froth, egad! Ha, ha, ha! Deuce take me! very apropos and surprising. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady F. Eh! ay, is not it? And then, I call my lord, Spumoso; and myself—what d'ye think I call myself?

Brisk. Lactilla, may be: 'gad! I cannot tell.

Lady F. Biddy, that's all; just my own name.

Brisk. Biddy! Egad! very pretty: deuce take me, if your ladyship has not the art of surprising the most naturally in the world. I hope you'll make me happy in communicating the poem.

Lady F. Oh! you must be my confidant. I must ask your advice.

Brisk. I'm your humble servant, let me perish. I presume your ladyship has read Bossu?

Lady F. Oh! yes; and Rapin, and Dacier upon Aristotle and Horace. My lord, you must not be jealous, I'm communicating all to Mr. Brisk.

Lord F. No, no; I'll allow Mr. Brisk. Have you nothing about you to show him, my dear?

Lady F. Yes, I believe I have. Mr. Brisk, come, will you go into the next room? and there I'll show you what I have. *[Exit with Brisk.]*

Lord F. I'll walk a turn in the garden, and come to you. *[Exit.]*

Mel. You're thoughtful, Cynthia.

Cyn. I'm thinking that though marriage makes

man and wife one flesh, it leaves them still two fools; and they become more conspicuous by setting off one another.

Mel. That's only when two fools meet, and their follies are opposed.

Cyn. Nay, I have known two wits meet, and by the opposition of their wit, render themselves as ridiculous as fools. Matrimony is a hazardous game to engage in. What think you of drawing stakes, and giving over in time?

Mel. No, hang it, that's not endeavouring to win, because it's possible we may lose; since we have shuffled and cut, let's e'en turn up trump now.

Cyn. Then I find it's like cards; if either of us have a good hand, it is an accident of fortune.

Mel. No, marriage is rather like a game at bowls; fortune, indeed, makes the match, and the two nearest, and sometimes the two furthest are together; but the game depends entirely upon judgment.

Cyn. Still it is a game, and, consequently, one of us must be a loser.

Mel. Not at all; only a friendly trial of skill, and the winnings to be laid out in an entertainment.

Enter Sir PAUL and Lady PLIANT.

Sir P. Gadsbud! I am provoked into a fermentation, as my Lady Froth says. Was ever the like read of in story?

Lady P. Sir Paul, have patience, let me alone to rattle him up.

Sir P. Pray, your ladyship, give me leave to be angry; I'll rattle him up, I warrant you; I'll teach him, with a certiorari, to make love to my wife.

Lady P. You teach him! I'll teach him myself; so, pray, Sir Paul, hold you contented.

Sir P. Hold yourself contented, my Lady Pliant; I find passion coming upon me even to desperation, and I cannot submit as formerly, therefore give way.

Lady P. How now? will you be pleased to retire, and—

Sir P. No, marry, will I not be pleased; I am pleased to be angry, that's my pleasure at this time.

Mel. What can this mean?

Lady P. 'Gads my life! the man's distracted. Why, how now! who are you? What am I? Slid-ikins! can't I govern you? What did I marry you for? Am I not to be absolute and uncontrollable? Is it fit a woman of my spirit and conduct should be contradicted in a matter of this concern?

Sir P. It concerns me, and only me; besides, I'm not to be governed at all times. When I am in tranquillity, my Lady Pliant shall command Sir Paul; but when I'm provoked to fury, I cannot incorporate with patience and reason; as soon may tigers match with tigers, lambs with lambs, and every creature couple with its foe, as the poet says.

Lady P. He's hot-headed still! 'Tis in vain to talk to you; but remember I have a curtain-lecture for you, you disobedient, headstrong brute.

Sir P. No, 'tis because I won't be headstrong; because I won't be a brute, and have my head fortified, that I am thus exasperated. But I will protect my honour; and yonder is the violator of my fame.

Lady P. 'Tis my honour that is concerned, and the violation was intended to me. Your honour! you have none, but what is in my keeping, and I can dispose of it when I please; therefore, don't provoke me.

Sir P. Hum! gadsbud! she says true. [*Aside.*] Well, my lady, march on; I will fight under you,

then: I am convinced, as far as passion will permit. [*Sir P. and Lady P. come up to MELLEFONT.*]

Lady P. Inhuman and treacherous—

Sir P. Thou serpent and first tempter of woman-kind—

Cyn. Bless me! sir—madam—what mean you?

Sir P. Thy, Thy, come away, Thy; touch him not: come hither, girl: go not near him, there's nothing but deceit about him; snakes are in his looks, and the crocodile of Nilus in his wicked appetite; he would devour thy fortune, and starve thee alive.

Lady P. Dishonourable, impudent creature!

Mel. For heaven's sake, madam, to whom do you direct this language?

Lady P. Have I behaved myself with all the decorum and nicety befitting the person of Sir Paul's wife; have I preserved my honour as it were in a snow-house; have I, I say, preserved myself like a fair sheet of paper, for you to make a blot upon?

Sir P. And she shall make a simile with any woman in England.

Mel. I am so amazed, I know not what to say.

Sir P. Do you think my daughter—this pretty creature—Gadsbud! she's a wife for a cherubim—Do you think her fit for nothing but to be a stalking-horse, to stand before you while you take aim at my wife? Gadsbud! I was never angry before in my life, and I'll never be appeased again.

Mel. Confusion! this is my aunt; such malice can be engendered no where else. [*Aside.*]

Lady P. Sir Paul, teach Cynthia from his sight; leave me to strike him with the remorse of his intended crime.

Cyn. Pray, sir, stay; hear him; I dare affirm he's innocent.

Sir P. Innocent! why, harkye! come hither, Thy; harkye! I had it from his aunt, my sister Touchwood. Gadsbud! he does not care a farthing for anything of thee, but thy portion; why, he's in love with my wife; he would have tantalized thee, and dishonoured thy poor father, and that would certainly have broken my heart. I'm sure, if ever I should have horns, they would kill me; they would never come kindly; I should die of 'em, like any child that was cutting his teeth; I should, indeed, Thy; therefore, come away; but Providence has prevented all, therefore, come away when I bid you.

Cyn. I must obey. [*Exit with Sir P.*]

Lady P. Oh! such a thing! the impiety of it startles me; to wrong so good, so fair a creature, and one that loves you tenderly: 'tis a barbarity of barbarities, and nothing could be guilty of it—

Mel. But the greatest villain imagination can form, I grant it; and next to the villany of such a fact, is the villany of aspersing me with the guilt. How? which way was I to wrong her? for yet I understand you not.

Lady P. Why, gads my life! cousin Mellefont, you cannot be so preumptory as to deny it, when I tax you with it to your face; for, now Sir Paul's gone, you are *corum nobis*.

Mel. By heaven, I love her more than life, or—

Lady P. Fiddle, faddle! don't tell me of this and that, and everything in the world; but give me mathematic demonstration, answer me directly. But I have not patience. Oh! the impiety of it, as I was saying, and the unparalleled wickedness! Oh, merciful father! how could you think to reverse nature so, to make the daughter the means of procuring the mother!

Mel. The daughter procure the mother!

Lady P. Ay; for though I am not Cynthia's own mother, I am her father's wife; and that's near enough to make it incest.

Mel. Oh! my precious aunt, and the devil in conjunction!

Lady P. Oh! reflect upon the horror of that, and then the guilt of deceiving everybody; marrying the daughter, only to dishonour the father; and then seducing me—

Mel. Where am I? is it day? and am I awake? Madam—

Lady P. And nobody knows how circumstances may happen together. To my thinking now, I could resist the strongest temptation; but yet, I know 'tis impossible for me to know whether I could or no; there's no certainty in the things of this life.

Mel. Madam, pray give me leave to ask you one question.

Lady P. Oh, Lord! ask me the question! I'll swear, I'll refuse it; I swear I'll deny it, therefore, don't ask me; nay, you shan't ask me; I swear I'll deny it. Oh gemini! you have brought all the blood into my face; I warrant, I am as red as a turkey-cock. Oh fie! cousin Mellefont.

Mel. Nay, madam, hear me—

Lady P. Hear you? No, no; I'll deny you first, and hear you afterwards; for one does not know how one's mind may change upon hearing. Hearing is one of the senses, and all the senses are fallible; I won't trust my honour, I assure you; my honour is infallible and un-come-at-table.

Mel. For heaven's sake, madam—

Lady P. Oh! name it no more. Bless me, how can you talk of heaven, and have so much wickedness in your heart? May be, you don't think it a sin: they say, some of you gentlemen don't think it a sin. Indeed, if I did not think it a sin—But still, my honour, if it were no sin—But then, to marry my daughter, for the convenience of frequent opportunities: I'll never consent to that; as sure as can be, I'll break the match.

Mel. Death and amazement! Madam, upon my knee—

Lady P. Nay, nay, rise up: come, you shall see my good-nature. I know love is powerful, and nobody can help his passion: 'tis not your fault, nor I swear it is not mine. How can I help it, if I have charms? And how can you help it, if you are made a captive? Oh Lord! here's somebody coming; I dare not stay. Well, you must consider of your crime, and strive as much as can be against it: strive, be sure; but don't be melancholy, don't despair; but never think that I'll grant you anything—Oh! Lord! no; but be sure you lay aside all thoughts of the marriage; for though I know you don't love Cynthia, only as a blind for your passion to me, yet it will make me jealous—Oh Lord! what did I say? Jealous! no, no, I can't be jealous; for I must not love you; therefore, don't hope—but don't despair neither. Oh! they're coming, I must fly.

[*Exit.*]

Mel. So, then, in spite of my care and foresight, I am caught—in my security: yet this was but a shallow artifice, unworthy of my Machiavilian aunt; there must be more behind: destruction follows hard, if not presently prevented.

Enter MASKWELL.

Maskwell, welcome! Thy presence is a view of land appearing to my shipwrecked hopes: the witch has raised the storm, and her ministers have done their work; you see the vessels are parted.

Mask. I know it: I met Sir Paul towing away Cynthia. Come, trouble not your head, I'll join you together ere to-morrow morning, or drown between you in the attempt.

Mel. There's comfort in a hand stretched out to one that's sinking, though never so far off.

Mask. No sinking, nor no danger. Come, cheer up; why, you don't know that, while I plead for you, your aunt has given me a retaining fee; nay, I am your greatest enemy, and she does but journey-work under me.

Mel. Ha! how's this?

Mask. What d'ye think of my being employed in the execution of all her plots? Ha, ha, ha! Nay, it's true: I have undertaken to break the match; I have undertaken to make your uncle disinheritor you; to get you turned out of doors, and to—Ha, ha, ha! I can't tell you for laughing. Oh! she has opened her heart to me—I'm to turn you a grazing, and to—ha, ha, ha!—marry Cynthia myself: there's a plot for you.

Mel. Ha! Oh! see; I see my rising sun! Light breaks through clouds upon me, and I shall live in day. Oh! my Maskwell, how shall I thank or praise thee? thou hast outwitted woman. But tell me, how couldst thou thus get into her confidence, eh! how? But was it her contrivance to persuade my Lady Pliant to this extravagant belief?

Mask. It was; and, to tell you the truth, I encouraged it for your diversion: though it made you a little uneasy for the present, yet the reflection of it must needs be entertaining. I warrant, she was very violent at first.

Mel. Ha, ha, ha! Ay, a very fury.

Mask. Ha, ha, ha! I know her temper. Well, you must know, then, that all my contrivances were but bubbles; till at last I pretended to have been long secretly in love with Cynthia; that did my business; that convinced your aunt I might be trusted; since it was as much my interest as hers to break the match: then she thought my jealousy might qualify me to assist her in her revenge; and, in short, in that belief, told me the secrets of her heart. At length, we made this agreement: if I accomplish her designs, (as I told you before,) she has engaged to put Cynthia, with all her fortune, into my power.

Mel. She is most gracious in her favour. Well, and, dear Jack, how hast thou contrived?

Mask. I would not have you stay to hear it now; for I don't know but she may come this way. I am to meet her anon; after that, I'll tell you the whole matter. Be here in this gallery an hour hence: by that time, I imagine, our consultation may be over.

Mel. I will. Till then, success attend thee. [*Exit.*]

Mask. Till then, success will attend me; for when I meet you, I meet the only obstacle to my fortune. Cynthia, let thy beauty gild my crimes; and whatsoever I commit of treachery or deceit, shall be imputed to me as a merit. Treachery! what treachery? Love cancels all the bonds of friendship, and sets men right upon their first foundations. Duty to kings, piety to parents, gratitude to benefactors, and fidelity to friends, are different and particular ties; but the name of rival cuts 'em all asunder, and is a general acquittance. Rival is equal; and love, like death, an universal leveller of mankind. Ha! but is there not such a thing as honesty? Yes, and who-soever has it about him bears an enemy in his breast; for your honest man, as I take it, is that nice, scrupulous, conscientious person, who will cheat nobody but himself: such another coxcomb as

your wise man, who is too hard for all the world, and will be made a fool of by nobody but himself. Ha, ha, ha! Well, for wisdom and honesty, give me cunning and hypocrisy. Oh! 'tis such a pleasure to angle for fair-faced fools! Then that hungry gudgeon, credulity, will bite at anything. Why, let me see: I have the same face, the same words and accents, when I speak what I do think, and when I speak what I do not think; the very same: and dear dissimulation is the only art not to be known from nature.

*Why will mankind be fools, and be deceiv'd?
And why are friends and lovers' oaths believ'd?
When each, who searches strictly his own mind,
May so much fraud and power of baseness find.*

[Exit.]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The same.*

Enter Lord and Lady Touchwood.

Lady T. My lord, can you blame my brother Pliant, if he refuse his daughter upon this provocation? The contract's void by this unheard-of impiety.

Lord T. I don't believe it true; he has better principles: pho! 'tis nonsense. Come, come, I know my Lady Pliant; 'tis not the first time she has mistaken respect for love, and made Sir Paul jealous of the civility of an undesigning person, the better to bespeak his security in her unfeigned pleasures.

Lady T. You censure hardly, my lord: my sister's honour is very well known.

Lord T. Yes, I believe I know some that have been familiarly acquainted with it. This is a little trick wrought by some pitiful contriver, envious of my nephew's merit.

Lady T. Nay, my lord, it may be so, and I hope it will be found so; but that will require some time; for, in such a case as this, demonstration is necessary.

Lord T. There should have been demonstration of the contrary, too, before it had been believed.

Lady T. So, I suppose, there was.

Lord T. How? where? when?

Lady T. That I can't tell; nay, I don't say there was; I am willing to believe as favourably of my nephew as I can.

Lord T. I don't know that.

Lady T. How? Don't you believe that, say you, my lord?

Lord T. No, I don't say so. I confess I am troubled to find you so cold in his defence.

Lady T. His defence! Bless me! would you have me defend an ill thing?

Lord T. You believe it, then?

Lady T. I don't know; I am very unwilling to speak my thoughts in anything that may be to my cousin's disadvantage; besides, I find, my lord, you are prepared to receive an ill impression from any opinion of mine, which is not consenting with your own; but since I am like to be suspected in the end, and 'tis a pain any longer to dissemble, I own it to you: in short, I do believe it; nay, and can believe anything worse, if it were laid to his charge. Don't ask me my reasons, my lord; for they are not fit to be told you.

Lord T. I'm amazed! Here must be something more than ordinary in this. [*Aside.*] Not fit to be told me, madam? You can have no interests wherein I am not concerned; and, consequently, the same reasons ought to be convincing to me, which create your satisfaction or disquiet.

Lady T. But those which cause my disquiet, I am willing to have remote from your hearing. Good, my lord, don't press me.

Lord T. Don't oblige me to press you.

Lady T. Whatever it was, 'tis past; and that is better to be unknown, which cannot be prevented; therefore, let me beg of you to rest satisfied.

Lord T. When you have told me I will.

Lady T. You won't.

Lord T. By my life, my dear, I will.

Lady T. What if you can't?

Lord T. How? Then I must know; nay, I will: no more trifling; I charge you tell me—by all our mutual peace to come, upon your duty—

Lady T. Nay, my lord, you need say no more, to make me lay my heart before you; but don't be thus transported; compose yourself; it is not of concern, to make you lose one minute's temper: 'tis not, indeed, my dear. Oh Lord! I wish I had not told you anything. Indeed, my lord, you have frightened me. Nay, look pleased, I'll tell you.

Lord T. Well, well.

Lady T. Nay, but will you be calm? Indeed, it's nothing but—

Lord T. But what?

Lady T. But will you promise not to be angry? nay, you must not be angry with Meliefont. I dare swear he's sorry; and, were it to do again, would not—

Lord T. Sorry for what? Death! you rack me with delay.

Lady T. Nay, no great matter, only—well, I have your promise—pho! why, nothing, only your nephew had a mind to amuse himself sometimes with a little gallantry towards me. Nay, I can't think he meant anything seriously; but methought it looked oddly.

Lord T. Confusion! what do I hear?

Lady T. Or, may be, he thought he was not enough akin to me upon your account, and had a mind to create a nearer relation on his own; a lover, you know, my lord—Ha, ha, ha! Well, but that's all. Now you have it. Well, remember your promise, my lord; and don't take any notice of it to him.

Lord T. No, no, no.

Lady T. Nay, I swear you must not: a little harmless mirth—only misplaced, that's all. But if it were more, 'tis over now, and all's well. For my part, I have forgotten it; and so has he, I hope; for I have not heard anything from him these two days.

Lord T. These two days! Is it so fresh? Unnatural villain! I'll have him stripped, and turned naked out of my doors this moment, and let him rot and perish.

Lady T. Oh! my lord, you'll ruin me, if you take such public notice of it; it will be a town-talk: consider your own and my honour. Stay, I told you you would not be satisfied when you knew it.

Lord T. Before I've done, I will be satisfied. Ungrateful monster! How long—

Lady T. Lord! I don't know: I wish my lips had grown together when I told you. Almost a twelvemonth—nay, I won't tell you any more, till you are yourself. Pray, my lord, don't let the com

pany see you in this disorder: yet, I confess, I can't blame you; for I think I was never so surprised in my life. Who would have thought my nephew could have so misconstrued my kindness? But will you go into your closet, and recover your temper? I'll make an excuse of sudden business to the company, and come to you. Pray, good, dear my lord, let me beg you do now: I'll come immediately, and tell you all. Will you, my lord?

Lord T. I will. I am mute with wonder.

Lady T. Well, but go now; here's somebody coming.

Lord T. Well, I go. You won't stay; for I would hear more of this.

Lady T. I'll follow instantly. [*Exit Lord T.*]

Enter MASKWELL.

So!

Mask. This was a masterpiece, and did not need my help; though I stood ready for a cue to come in, and confirm all, had there been occasion.

Lady T. Have you seen Mellefont?

Mask. I have; and am to meet him here about this time.

Lady T. How does he bear his disappointment?

Mask. Secure in my assistance, he seemed not much afflicted, but rather laughed at the shallow artifice, which so little time must of necessity discover: yet he is apprehensive of some further design of your's, and has engaged me to watch you. I believe he will hardly be able to prevent your plot; yet I would have you use caution and expedition.

Lady T. Expedition, indeed; for all we do must be performed in the remaining part of this evening, and before the company break up, lest my lord should cool, and have an opportunity to talk with him privately: my lord must not see him again.

Mask. By no means; therefore, you must aggravate my lord's displeasure to a degree that will admit of no conference with him. What think you of mentioning me?

Lady T. How?

Mask. To my lord, as having been privy to Mellefont's design upon you, but still using my utmost endeavours to dissuade him: though my friendship and love to him has made me conceal it, yet, you may say, I threatened the next time he attempted anything of that kind, to discover it to my lord.

Lady T. To what end is this?

Mask. It will confirm my lord's opinion of my honour and honesty, and create in him a new confidence in me, which (should this design miscarry) will be necessary to the forming of another plot that I have in my head—to cheat you, as well as the rest. [*Aside.*]

Lady T. I'll do it.

Mask. You had best go to my lord, keep him as long as you can in his closet, and I doubt not but you will mould him to what you please: your guests are so engaged in their own follies and intrigues, they'll miss neither of you.

Lady T. When shall we meet? At eight this evening, in my chamber; there rejoice at our success, and toy away an hour in mirth.

Mask. I will not fail. [*Exit Lady T.*] I know what she means well enough. I have lost all appetite to her; yet she's a fine woman, and I loved her once; but I don't know, the case is altered; what was my pleasure is become my duty; and I am as indifferent to her now, as if I were her husband. Should she smoke my design upon Cynthia,

I were in a fine pickle. She has a penetrating head, and knows how to interpret a coldness the right way; therefore, I must dissemble ardour and ecstacy, that's resolved. How easily and pleasantly is that dissembled before fruition! Plague on't! that a man can't drink without quenching his thirst. Ha! yonder comes Mellefont, thoughtful. Let me think: meet her at eight—hum—ha! I have it. If I can speak to my lord before, I will deceive them all, and yet secure myself. 'Twas a lucky thought! Well, this double-dealing is a jewel. Here he comes: now for me.

Enter MELLEFONT, musing. MASKWELL, pretending not to see him, walks by him, and speaks as it were, to himself:

Mercy on us! what will the wickedness of this world come to!

Mel. How now, Jack? What, so full of contemplation that you run over?

Mask. I'm glad you're come, for I could not contain myself any longer; and was just going to give vent to a secret, which nobody but you ought to drink down. Your aunt's just gone from thence.

Mel. And having trusted thee with the secrets of her soul, thou art villainously bent to discover 'em all to me? eh!

Mask. I'm afraid my frailty leans that way; but I don't know whether I can in honour discover all.

Mel. All, all, man. What, you may in honour betray her as far as she betrays herself. No tragical design upon my person, I hope?

Mask. No, but it's a comical design upon mine.

Mel. What dost thou mean?

Mask. Listen, and be dumb: we have been bargaining about the rate of your ruin—

Mel. Like any two guardians to an orphan heirless. Well.

Mask. And whereas pleasure is generally paid with mischief, what mischief I shall do is to be paid with pleasure.

Mel. So, when you've swallowed the potion, you sweeten your mouth with a plum?

Mask. You are merry, sir; but I shall probe your constitution: in short, the price of your banishment is to be paid with the person of—

Mel. Of Cynthia, and her fortune. Why, you forget, you told me this before.

Mask. No, no; so far you are right; and I am, as an earnest of that bargain, to have full and free possession of the person of your aunt.

Mel. Ha! Pho! you trifle.

Mask. By this light, I'm serious, all railery apart. I knew 'twould stun you. This evening, at eight, she will receive me in her bed-chamber.

Mel. Hell and the devil! is she abandoned of all grace? Why, the woman is possessed.

Mask. Well, will you go in my stead?

Mel. Into a hot furnace sooner.

Mask. No you would not; it would not be so convenient, as I can order matters.

Mel. What dy'e mean?

Mask. Mean! not to disappoint the lady, I assure you. Ha, ha, ha! How gravely he looks. Come, come, I won't perplex you. 'Tis the only thing that Providence could have contrived to make me capable of serving you, either to my inclination or your own necessity.

Mel. How, how, for heaven's sake, dear Mask-well?

Mask. Why, thus: I'll go according to my appointment; you shall have notice at the critical

minute, to come and surprise your aunt and me together. Counterfeit a rage against me, and I'll make my escape through the private passage from her chamber, which I'll take care to leave open. 'Twill be hard if then you can't bring her to any conditions; for this discovery will disarm her of all defence, and leave her entirely at your mercy: nay, she must ever after be in awe of you.

Mel. Let me adore thee, my better genius! I think it is not in the power of fate now to disappoint my hopes—my hopes! my certainty!

Mask. Well, I'll meet you here, within a quarter of eight, and give you notice.

Mel. Good fortune ever go with thee!

[*Exit MASKWELL.*]

Enter CARELESS.

Care. Mellefont, get out o'the way. My Lady Pliant's coming, and I shall never succeed while thou art in sight, though she begins to tack about; but I made love a great while to no purpose.

Mel. Why, what's the matter? She's convinced that I don't care for her.

Care. I can't get an answer from her, that does not begin with her honour, or her virtue, or some such cant. Then she has told me the whole history of Sir Paul's nine years' courtship; how he has lain for whole nights together upon the stairs, before her chamber-door; and the first favour he received from her was a piece of an old scarlet petticoat for a stomacher; which, since the day of his marriage, he has, out of a piece of gallantry, converted into a night-cap; and wears it still, with much solemnity, on his anniversary wedding-night.

Mel. You are very great with him. I wonder he never told you his grievances: he will, I warrant you.

Care. Excessively foolish! But that which gives me most hopes of her is her telling me of the many temptations she has resisted.

Mel. Nay, then, you have her; for a woman's bragging to a man that she has overcome temptation, is an argument that they were weakly offered, and a challenge to him to engage her more irresistibly. Here she comes with Sir Paul. I'll leave you. Ply her close; and, by-and-by, clap a billet-doux into her hand; for a woman never thinks a man truly in love with her, till he has been fool enough to think of her out of her sight, and to lose so much time as to write to her. [*Exit.*]

Enter SIR PAUL and Lady PLIANT.

Sir P. Sh'a'n't we disturb your meditations, Mr. Careless? you would be private?

Care. You bring that along with you, Sir Paul, that shall be always welcome to my privacy.

Sir P. Oh! sweet sir, you load your humble servants, both me and my wife, with continual favours.

Lady P. Sir Paul, what a phrase was there! You will be making answers, and taking that upon you which ought to lie upon me: that you should have so little breeding, to think Mr. Careless did not apply himself to me. Pray, what have you to entertain anybody's privacy? I swear and declare, in the face of the whole world, I'm ready to blush for your ignorance.

Sir P. I acquiesce, my lady; but don't snub so loud. [*Apart.*]

Lady P. Mr. Careless, if a person that is wholly illiterate might be supposed to be capable of being qualified to make a suitable return to those obligations, which you are pleased to confer upon one that is wholly incapable of being qualified in all

these circumstances, I'm sure I should rather attempt it than anything in the world; (*courtesies*) for, I'm sure, there's nothing in the world that I would rather. (*Courtesies.*) But I know Mr. Careless is so great a critic, and so fine a gentleman, that it is impossible for me—

Care. Oh, heavens! madam, you confound me.

Sir P. Gadsbud! she's a fine person.

Lady P. Oh, Lord! sir, pardon me, we women have not those advantages: I know my own imperfections; but, at the same time, you must give me leave to declare in the face of the world, that nobody is more sensible of favours and things; for with the reserve of my honour, I assure you, Mr. Careless, I don't know anything in the world I would refuse to a person so meritorious. You'll pardon my want of expression.

Care. Oh! your ladyship is abounding in all excellence, particularly that of phrase.

Lady P. You are so obliging, sir.

Care. Your ladyship is so charming.

Sir P. So, now, now; now, my lady.

Lady P. So well bred.

Care. So surprising.

Lady P. So well-dressed, so *bonne mienne*, so eloquent, so unaffected, so easy, so free, so particular, so agreeable—

Sir P. Ay, so, so, there.

Care. Oh Lord! I beseech you, madam, don't—

Lady P. So gay, so graceful, so good teeth, so fine shape, so fine limbs, so fine linen; and I don't doubt but you have a very good skin, sir.

Care. For heaven's sake, madam—I'm quite out of countenance.

Sir P. And my lady's quite out of breath, or else you should hear. Gadsbud! you may talk of my Lady Froth—

Care. Oh! fie, fie! not to be named of a day. My Lady Froth is very well in her accomplishments, but it is when my Lady Pliant is not thought of; if that can ever be.

Lady P. Oh! you overcome me—that is so excessive.

Sir P. Nay, I swear and vow, that was pretty.

Care. Oh! Sir Paul, you are the happiest man alive. Such a lady! that is the envy of her sex, and the admiration of ours.

Sir P. Your humble servant. I am, I thank heaven, in a fine way of living, as I may say, peacefully and happily; and, I think, need not envy any of my neighbours, blessed be Providence! Ay, truly, Mr. Careless, my lady is a great blessing; a fine, discreet, well-spoken woman, as you shall see, if it become me to say so; and we live very comfortably together: she is a little hasty sometimes, and so am I; but mine is soon over; and then I'm so sorry. Oh! Mr. Careless, if it were not for one thing—

Enter TIMOTHY, with a letter, and offers it to Sir PAUL PLIANT.

Gadso! gadsbud! Tim, carry it to my lady; you should have carried it to my lady first.

Tim. 'Tis directed to your worship.

Sir P. Well, well, my Lady reads all letters first. *Lady P.* How often have you been told of that, you jackanapes?

Sir P. Child, do so no more; d'ye hear, Tim?

Tim. No, an please you. [*Exit.*]

Sir P. A humour of my wife's—you know, women have little fancies. But, as I was telling you, Mr. Careless, if it were not for one thing, I should

think myself the happiest man in the world; indeed, that touches me near, very near.

Care. What can that be, Sir Paul?

Sir P. Why, I have, I thank heaven, a very plentiful fortune, a good estate in the country, some houses in town, and some money, a pretty tolerable personal estate; and it is a great grief to me, indeed it is, Mr. Careless, that I have not a son to inherit this. 'Tis true, I have a daughter; and a fine dutiful child she is, though I say it; blessed be Providence, I may say; for, indeed, Mr. Careless, I am mightily beholden to Providence—a poor, unworthy sinner! But if I had a son—ah! that's my affliction, and my only affliction; indeed, I cannot refrain from tears when it comes in my mind.

[*Cries.*

Care. Why, methinks, that might be easily remedied; my lady's a fine likely woman.

Sir P. Oh! a fine likely woman as you shall see in a summer's day; indeed she is, Mr. Careless, in all respects.

Care. And I should not have taken you to have been so old—

Sir P. Alas! that's not it, Mr. Careless; ah! that's not it; no, no, you shoot wide of the mark a mile, indeed you do; that's not it, Mr. Careless; no, no, that's not it.

Care. No! what can be the matter, then?

Sir P. You'll scarcely believe me, when I shall tell you. Why, my lady is so nice. I am her husband, as I may say, though far unworthy of that honour; yet, I am her husband; but, alas-a-day! I have no more familiarity with her person, as to that matter, than with my own mother; no, indeed.

Care. Alas-a-day! this is a lamentable story; 'tis an injury to the world; my lady must be told on't; she must, i'faith! Sir Paul.

Sir P. Ah! would to heaven you would, Mr. Careless; you are mightily in her favour.

Care. I warrant you; what! we must have a son some way or other.

Sir P. Indeed I should be mightily bound to you if you could bring it about, Mr. Careless.

Lady P. Sir Paul, it's from your steward; here's a return of six hundred pounds; you may take fifty of it for your next half-year. [*Gives him the letter.*

Enter Lord FROTH and CYNTHIA.

Sir P. How does my girl? Come hither to thy father; poor lamb, thou'rt melancholy.

Lord F. Heavens! Sir Paul, you amaze me of all things in the world. You are never pleased but when we are all upon the broad grin; all laugh, and no company: ah! then, 'tis such a sight to see some teeth. Sure, you're a great admirer of my Lady Whiffler, Mr. Suer, and Sir Lawrence Loud, and that gang.

Sir P. I vow and swear she's a very merry woman; but I think she laughs a little too much.

Lord F. Merry! Oh Lord! what a character that is of a woman of quality! You have been at my Lady Whiffler's upon her day, madam? [*To CYN.*

Cyn. Yes, my lord. I must humour this fool.

[*Aside.*

Lord F. Well, and how, eh? What is your sense of the conversation there?

Cyn. Oh! most ridiculous! a perpetual concert of laughing without any harmony; for sure, my lord, to laugh out of time is as disagreeable as to sing out of time, or out of tune.

Lord F. He, he, he! right; and then, my Lady Whiffler is so ready, she always comes in three bars

too soon: and then, what do they laugh at? For, you know, laughing without a jest, is as impertinent—he! as, as—

Cyn. As dancing without a fiddle.

Lord F. Just, i'faith! that was at my tongue's end.

Cyn. But that cannot be properly said of them for, I think, they are all in good nature with the world, and only laugh at one another; and, you must allow, they have all jests in their persons, though they have none in their conversation.

Lord F. True, as I'm a person of honour: for heaven's sake, let us sacrifice 'em to mirth a little.

Re-enter TIMOTHY, and whispers Sir PAUL PLIANT.

Sir P. Gadso! Wife, wife; my Lady Pliant, I have a word—

Lady P. I'm busy, Sir Paul; I wonder at your impertinence.

Care. Sir Paul, harkye! I'm reasoning the matter, you know. Madam, if your ladyship pleases, we'll discourse of this in the next room.

[*Exit with Lady P.*

Sir P. Oh, ho! I wish you good success; I wish you good success. Boy, tell my lady, when she has done, I would speak with her below. [*Exit with TIM.*

Enter Lady FROTH and BRISK.

Lady F. Then you think that episode between Susan the dairy-maid and our coachman, is not amiss? you know, I may suppose the dairy in town, as well as in the country.

Brisk. Incomparable, let me perish! But, then, being an heroic poem, had not you better call him a charioteer? Charioteer sounds great; besides, your ladyship's coachman having a red face, and you comparing him to the sun—and, you know, the sun is called heaven's charioteer.

Lady F. Oh! infinitely better; I'm extremely beholding to you for the hint. Stay, we'll read over those half-a-score lines again. [*Pulls out a paper.*] Let me see here: you know what goes before; the comparison, you know.

[*Reads.*

"For as the sun shines ev'ry day,

So of our coachman I may say"—

Brisk. I'm afraid that simile won't do in wet weather, because you say the sun shines every day.

Lady F. No, for the sun it won't; but it will do for the coachman; for, you know, there's most occasion for a coach in wet weather.

Brisk. Right, right, that saves all.

Lady F. Then, I don't say the sun shines all the day; but, that he peeps now and then: yet he does shine all the day, too, you know, though we don't see him.

Brisk. Right; but the vulgar will never comprehend that.

Lady F. Well, you shall hear. Let me see.

[*Reads.*

"For as the sun shines every day,

So of our coachman I may say,

He shews his drunken fiery face,

Just as the sun does more 'r less."

Brisk. That's right; all's well, all's well: more or less.

Lady F. [*Reads.*]

"And when, at night, his labour's done,

Then, too, like heaven's charioteer, the sun"—

Ay, charioteer does better.

"Into the dairy he descends,

And there his whipping and his driving ends;

4 F

*There he's secure from danger of a bilk,
His fare is paid him, and he sets in milk."*

For Susan, you know, is Thetis, and so—

Brisk. Incomparably well and proper, egad! but I have one exception to make: don't you think bilk—
—I know it's good rhyme—but don't you think bilk and fare too like a hackney-coachman?

Lady F. I swear and vow I'm afraid so; and yet our Jehu was a hackney-coachman when my lord took him.

Brisk. Was he? I'm answered, if Jehu was a hackney-coachman. You may put that into the marginal notes, though, to prevent criticism: only mark it with a small asterism, and say, Jehu was formerly a hackney-coachman.

Lady F. I will. You'd oblige me extremely to write notes to the whole poem.

Brisk. With all my heart and soul; and proud of the vast honour, let me perish.

Lord F. He, he, he! My dear, have you done? Won't you join with us? we were laughing at my Lady Whiffler and Mr. Sner.

Lady F. Ay, my dear, were you? Oh! filthy Mr. Sner! he's a nauseous figure, a most fulsamic fop, pho! He spent two days together in going about Covent-garden to suit the lining of his coach with his complexion.

Lord F. Oh, silly! yet his aunt is as fond of him, as if she had brought the ape into the world herself.

Brisk. Who, my Lady Toothless? Oh! she's a mortifying spectacle; she's always chewing the cud, like an old ewe.

Cyn. Fie! Mr. Brisk, 'tis eringoes for her cough.

Lady F. Then she's always ready to laugh when Sner offers to speak; and sits in expectation of his no jest, with her mouth open.

Brisk. Like an oyster at low ebb, egad! Ha, ha, ha!

Lady F. Then that t'other great strapping lady; I can't hit of her name; the old fat fool that paints so exorbitantly.

Brisk. I know whom you mean; but deuce take me, I can't hit of her name neither. Paints, d'ye say? why, she lays it on with a trowel; then she has a great beard that bristles through it, and makes her look as if she were plastered with lime and hair, let me perish.

Lady F. Oh! you made a song upon her, Mr. Brisk.

Brisk. Eh! egad! so I did. My lord can sing it. 'Tis not a song, neither: it's a sort of an epigram, or rather, an epigrammatic sonnet; I don't know what to call it, but it's satire. Sing it, my lord.

SONG.—Lord Froth.

Ancient Phillis has young graces,

'Tis a strange thing, but a true one;

Shall I tell you how?

She herself makes her own faces,

And each morning wears a new one;

Where's the wonder now?

Brisk. Short, but there's salt in it; my way of writing, egad!

Enter THOMAS.

Lady F. How now?

Tho. Your ladyship's chair is come

Lady F. Is nurse and the child in it?

Tho. Yes, madam.

Lady F. Oh! the dear creature! let's go see it.

Lord F. I swear, my dear, you spoil that child

with sending it to and again so often; this is the seventh time the chair has gone for her to-day.

Lady F. Oh la! I swear it's but the sixth, and I haven't seen her these two hours. The poor dear creature! I swear, my lord, you don't love poor dear little Sappho. Come, my dear Cynthia; Mr. Brisk, we'll go see Sappho, though my lord won't.

Cyn. I'll wait upon your ladyship.

Brisk. Pray, madam, how old is Lady Sappho?

Lady F. Three quarters; but I swear she has a world of wit, and can sing a tune already. My lord, won't you go? won't you? what, not to see Saph? Pray, my lord, come see little Saph. I knew you could not stay. *[Exeunt.]*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The Same.*

Enter MELLEFONT and CYNTHIA.

Cyn. I heard him loud as I came by the closet-door, and my lady with him: but she seemed to moderate his passion.

Mel. Ay, as gentle breezes moderate a fire; but I shall counterwork her spells.

Cyn. It's impossible; she'll cast beyond you still. I'll lay my life it will never be a match.

Mel. What?

Cyn. Between you and I.

Mel. Why so? I don't know why we should not steal out of the house this moment, and marry one another without consideration or the fear of repentance. Hang fortune, portion, settlements, and jointures.

Cyn. Ay, ay, what have we to do with them? You know we marry for love.

Mel. Love, love, downright, very villainous love.

Cyn. Here, then, I give you my promise, in spite of my duty, any temptation of wealth, your inconstancy, or my own inclination to change—

Mel. To run most wilfully and unreasonably away with me this moment, and be married.

Cyn. Hold—never to marry anybody else.

Mel. That's but a kind of negative consent. Why you won't balk the frolic?

Cyn. If you had not been so assured of your own conduct, I would not. But 'tis but reasonable that, since I consent to like a man without the vile consideration of money, he should give me a very evident demonstration of his wit; therefore let me see you undermine my Lady Touchwood, as you boasted, and force her to give her consent, and then—

Mel. I'll do't.

Cyn. And I'll do't.

Mel. This very next ensuing hour of eight o'clock is the last minute of her reign, unless the devil assist her in *propria persona*.

Cyn. Well, if the devil should assist her, and your plot miscarry—

Mel. Ay, what am I to trust to, then?

Cyn. Why, if you give me very clear demonstration that it was the devil, I'll allow for irresistible odds. Here's my mother-in-law, and your friend Careless; I would not have 'em see us together, yet. *[Exeunt.]*

Enter CARELESS and Lady PLIANT.

Lady P. I swear, Mr. Careless, you are very alluring, and say so many fine things, and nothing is

so moving to me as a fine thing. Well, I must do you this justice, and declare in the face of the world, never anybody gained so far upon me as yourself; with blushes I must own it, you have shaken, as I may say, the very foundation of my honour. Well, sure if I escape your importunities, I shall value myself as long as I live, I swear.

Care. And despise me. [*Sighing.*]

Lady P. The last of any man in the world, by my purity; now you make me swear. Oh! gratitude, forbid that I should ever be wanting in a respectful acknowledgment of an entire resignation of all my best wishes, for the person and parts of so accomplished a person, whose merit challenges much more, I'm sure, than my illiterate praises can describe.

Care. Ah! heavens, madam, you ruin me with kindness. Your charming tongue pursues the victory of your eyes, while at your feet your poor adorer dies. [*In a whining tone.*]

Lady P. Ah! very fine.

Care. Ah! why are you so fair, so bewitchingly fair? Oh, let me grow to the ground here, and feast upon that hand! Oh, let me press it to my heart, my trembling heart! the nimble movement shall instruct your pulse, and teach it to alarm desire. [*Still whining.*] I'm almost at the end of my cant, if she does not yield quickly. [*Aside.*]

Lady P. Oh! that's so passionate and fine, I cannot hear it. I am not safe if I stay, and must leave you.

Care. And must you leave me? Rather let me languish out a wretched life, and breathe my soul beneath your feet. I must say the same thing over again, and can't help it. [*Aside.*]

Lady P. I swear, I'm ready to languish, too. Oh, my honour! whither is it going? I protest you have given me the palpitation of the heart.

Care. Can you be so cruel?

Lady P. Oh! rise, I beseech you; say no more till you rise. Why did you kneel so long? I swear I was so transported, I did not see it. Well, to shew you how far you have gained upon me, I assure you, if Sir Paul should die, of all mankind there's none I'd sooner make my second choice.

Care. Oh, heaven! I can't outlive this night without your favour. I feel my spirits faint, a general dampness overspreads my face, a cold deadly dew already vents through all my pores, and will, to-morrow, wash me for ever from your sight, and drown me in my tomb.

Lady P. Oh! you have conquered; sweet, melting, moving sir, you have conquered. What heart of marble can refrain to weep, and yield to such sad sayings? [*Cries.*]

Care. I thank heaven they are the saddest that I ever said. [*Aside.*] Oh!

Lady P. Oh! I yield myself all up to your uncontrollable embraces. Say, thou dear dying man, when, where, and how? Ah! there's Sir Paul.

Care. 'Slife! yonder's Sir Paul; but if he were not come, I'm so transported I cannot speak. This note will inform you. [*Gives her a note, and exit.*]

Re-enter CYNTHIA, with Sir PAUL PLIANT.

Sir P. Thou art my tender lambkin, and shalt do what thou wilt; but endeavour to forget this Mellefont.

Cyn. I would obey you to my power, sir; but, if I have not him, I have sworn never to marry.

Sir P. Never to marry! Heavens forbid! must I neither have sons nor grandsons? must the fa-

mily of the Pliants be utterly extinct for want of issue male? Oh, impiety! but did you swear? did that sweet creature swear, eh? How durst you swear without my consent, eh? Gadsbud! who am I?

Cyn. Pray, don't be angry, sir; when I swore I had your consent; and, therefore, I swore.

Sir P. Why, then, the revoking my consent does annul or make of non effect your oath; so you may unswear it again; the law will allow it.

Cyn. Ay, but my conscience never will.

Sir P. Gadsbud! no matter for that; conscience and law never go together; you must not expect that.

Lady P. Ay, but Sir Paul, I conceive, if she has sworn—d'ye mark me? if she has once sworn, it is most unchristian, inhuman, and obscene, that she should break it. I'll make up the match again, because Mr. Careless said it would oblige him. [*Aside.*]

Sir P. Does your ladyship conceive so? Why, I was of that opinion once, too. Nay, if your ladyship conceives so, I'm of that opinion again; but I can neither find my lord nor my lady, to know what they intend.

Lady P. I am satisfied that my cousin Mellefont has been much wronged.

Cyn. I'm amazed to find her of our side, for I'm sure she loved him. [*Aside.*]

Lady P. I know my Lady Touchwood has no kindness for him; and besides, I have been informed by Mr. Careless, that Mellefont had never anything more than a profound respect. That he has owned himself to be my admirer, 'tis true, but he was never so presumptuous to entertain any dishonourable notions of things; so that if this be made plain, I don't see how my daughter can, in conscience or honour, or anything in the world—

Sir P. Indeed, if this be made plain, as my lady your mother says, child—

Lady P. Plain! I was informed of it by Mr. Careless, and I assure you Mr. Careless is a person—that has a most extraordinary respect and honour for you, Sir Paul.

Cyn. And for your ladyship too, I believe, or else you had not changed sides so soon. [*Aside.*] Now I begin to find it.

Sir P. I am much obliged to Mr. Careless, really; he is a person that I have a great value for, not only for that, but because he has a great veneration for your ladyship.

Lady P. Oh, law! no, indeed, Sir Paul; 'tis upon your account.

Sir P. No, I protest and vow I have no title to his esteem, but in having the honour to appoint, in some measure, to your ladyship, that's all.

Lady P. Oh, law! now, I swear and declare, it sha'n't be so; you're too modest, Sir Paul.

Sir P. It becomes me, when there is any comparison made between—

Lady P. Oh, fie, fie! Sir Paul, you'll put me out of countenance. Your very obedient and affectionate wife, that's all, and highly honoured in that title.

Sir P. Gadsbud! I am transported. Give me leave to kiss your ladyship's little finger.

Lady P. My lip, indeed, Sir Paul; I swear you shall. [*He kisses her, and bows very low.*]

Sir P. I humbly thank your ladyship; I don't know whether I fly on ground, or walk in air. Gadsbud! she was never thus before. Well, I must own myself the most beholden to Mr. Careless; as sure as can be this is all his doing, something that

he has said; well, 'tis a rare thing to have an ingenious friend. Well, your ladyship is of opinion that the match may go forward?

Lady P. By all means. Mr. Careless has satisfied me of the matter.

Sir P. Well, why then, lamb, you may keep your oath; but have a care of making rash vows. Come hither to me, and kiss papa.

Lady P. I swear and declare, I am in such a twitter to read Mr. Careless's letter, that I can't forbear any longer; but though I may read all letters first by prerogative, yet I'll be sure to be unsuspected this time. [*Aside.*] Sir Paul.

Sir P. Did your ladyship call?

Lady P. Nay, not to interrupt you, my dear. Only lend me your letter which you had from your steward to-day; I would look upon the account again, and may be, increase your allowance.

Sir P. There it is, madam. Do you want a pen and ink? [*Bows, and gives the letter.*]

Lady P. No, no, nothing else, I thank you, Sir Paul. So, now I can read my own letter under the cover of his. [*Aside.*]

Sir P. Eh! and shall I have a grandson, a brave chopping boy, to perpetuate the line of the Pliants? I'll settle a thousand pounds a year upon the rogue as soon as ever he looks me in the face, I will. Gadsbud! I hope the young cherub will be like me; I would fain have some resemblance of myself in my posterity. Ha, Thy! should'nt you wish he was like his grand-papa?

Cyn. I'm glad to see you so merry, sir.

Sir P. Merry! Gadsbud! I'm serious. I'll give thee five hundred pounds for every feature of him that resembles me. Ah! this eye, this left eye; a thousand pounds for this left eye; this has done execution in its time, girl. Why, thou hast my leer, hussy; just thy father's leer; let it be transmitted to the young rogue by the help of imagination. Why, 'tis the mark of our family, Thy. Our house is distinguished by a languishing eye, as the house of Austria is by a thick lip.

Lady P. Oh, dear, Mr. Careless! I swear he writes charmingly, and he looks charmingly, and he has charmed me as much as I have charmed him; and so I'll tell him in the wardrobe, when 'tis dark. Oh, crime! I hope Sir Paul has not seen both letters. [*Aside.*—*Puts up the wrong letter, and gives him her own.*] Sir Paul, here's your letter; to-morrow morning I'll settle accounts to your advantage.

Sir P. I humbly thank your ladyship.

Lady P. So, now I'll retire, and study a complimentary rebuke to Mr. Careless, for the pathetic tender of his regards; but it shall not be too severe neither. [*Aside.*—*Exit.*]

Enter BRISK.

Brisk. Sir Paul, gadsbud! you're an unceivil person, let me tell you, and all that; and I did not think it had been in you.

Sir P. Oh, law! what's the matter now? I hope you are not angry, Mr. Brisk?

Brisk. Deuce take me, I believe you intend to marry your daughter yourself; you're always brooding over her like an old hen, as if she were not well batched, egad, eh!

Sir P. Good, strange! Mr. Brisk is such a merry facetious person. Ha, ha, ha! No, no, I have done with her, I have done with her now.

Brisk. The fiddles have stayed this hour in the hall, and my Lord Froth wants a partner; we can never begin without her.

Sir P. Go, go, child; go, get you gone, and dance and be merry; I'll come and look at you by-and-by. [*Exit CYNTHIA.*] Where's my son Mellefont?

Brisk. I'll send him to them; I know where he is; and, Sir Paul, will you send Careless into the hall, if you meet him?

Sir P. I will, I will; I'll go and look for him on purpose. [*Exit.*]

Brisk. So, now they are all gone, and I have an opportunity to practise. Ah! my dear Lady Froth! she's a most engaging creature, if she were not so fond of that d—d coxcomby lord of hers; and yet I am forced to allow him wit, too, to keep in with him. No matter, she's a woman of parts, and, egad, parts will carry her. She said she would follow me into the gallery. Now, to make my approaches:—Hem, hem! Ah! ma—[*Bows.*]—dam! Plague on't, why should I disparage my parts by thinking what to say? None but dull rogues think; witty men, like rich fellows, are always ready for all expenses; while your blockheads, like poor needy scoundrels, are forced to examine their stock, and forecast the charges of the day. Here she comes; I'll seem not to see her, and try to win her with a new airy invention of my own. Hem!

[*Sings, walking about.*]

Enter Lady FROTH.

I'm sick with love, ha, ha, ha! pr'ythee, come and cure me—I'm sick with—Oh, ye powers! Oh! my Lady Froth, my Lady Froth, my Lady Froth! Heigho, break heart! Gods, I thank you.

[*Stands musing with his arms across.*]

Lady F. Oh, heavens! Mr. Brisk, what's the matter?

Brisk. My Lady Froth! your ladyship's most humble servant. The matter, madam?—nothing, madam; nothing at all, egad! I was fallen into the most agreeable amusement in the whole province of contemplation, that's all. I'll seem to conceal my passion, and that will look like respect. [*Aside.*]

Lady F. Bless me, why did you call out upon me so loud?

Brisk. Oh, lord! I, madam? I beseech your ladyship, when?

Lady F. Just now, as I came in. Bless me, why, don't you know it?

Brisk. Not I, let me perish; but did I? Strange! I confess your ladyship was in my thoughts; and I was in a sort of dream, that did, in a manner, represent a very pleasing object to my imagination; but—but did I, indeed? To see how love and murder will out! But did I really name my Lady Froth?

Lady F. Three times aloud, as I love letters. But did you talk of love? Oh, Parnassus! who would have thought Mr. Brisk could have been in love? Ha, ha, ha! Oh, heavens! I thought you could have no mistress but the nine muses.

Brisk. No more I have, egad! for I adore 'em all in your ladyship. Let me perish, I don't know whether to be splenetic or airy upon't; the deuce take me, if I can tell whether I am glad or sorry, that your ladyship has made the discovery.

Lady F. Oh! be merry, by all means. Prince Volscius in love! Ha, ha, ha!

Brisk. Oh, barbarous, to turn me into ridicule! yet—ha, ha, ha! the deuce take me, I can't help laughing myself, ha, ha, ha! yet, by heavens! I have a violent passion for your ladyship, seriously.

Lady F. Seriously! ha, ha, ha!

Brisk. Seriously, ha, ha, ha! 'Gad! I have, for all I laugh.

Lady F. Ha, ha, ha! What d'ye think I laugh at? Ha, ha, ha!

Brisk. Me, egad! Ha, ha!

Lady F. No; the deuce take me if I don't laugh at myself; for, hang me, if I have not a violent passion for Mr. Brisk. Ha, ha, ha!

Brisk. Seriously?

Lady F. Seriously. Ha, ha, ha!

Brisk. That's well enough, let me perish. Ha, ha, ha! Oh! miraculous! what a happy discovery! Ah! my dear charming Lady Froth.

Lady F. Oh, my adored Mr. Brisk.

[They embrace.]

Enter Lord FROTH.

Lord F. The company are all ready. How now?

Brisk. Zoons, madam, there's my lord.

[Apart to Lady F.]

Lady F. Take no notice, but observe me. [Aside.] Now cast off, and meet me at the lower end of the room, and then join hands again. I could teach my lord this dance purely; but I vow, Mr. Brisk, I can't tell how to come so near any other man. Oh! here's my lord; now you shall see me do it with him.

[They pretend to practise part of a country dance. Lord F. Oh! I see there's no harm yet; but I don't like this familiarity.]

[Aside.]

Lady F. Shall you and I do our close dance, to shew Mr. Brisk?

[To Lord F.]

Lord F. No, my dear, do it with him.

Lady F. I'll do it with him, my lord, when you are out of the way.

Brisk. That's good, egad! that's good; deuce take me, I can hardly hold laughing in his face.

[Aside.]

Lord F. Any other time, my dear, or we'll dance it below.

Lady F. With all my heart.

Brisk. Come, my lord, I'll wait on you. My charming witty angel.

[Apart to Lady F.]

Lady F. We shall have whispering time enough, you know, since we are partners.

[Apart to BRISK.—Exeunt.]

Re-enter Lady PLIANT and CARELESS.

Lady P. Oh! Mr. Careless, Mr. Careless! I'm ruined, I'm undone!

Care. What's the matter, madam?

Lady P. Oh, the unluckiest accident! I'm afraid I sha'n't live to tell it you.

Care. Heaven forbid! What is it?

Lady P. I'm in such a fright; the strangest quandary and premonition! I'm all over in an universal agitation. Oh, your letter, your letter! By an unfortunate mistake, I have given Sir Paul your letter instead of his own.

Care. That was unlucky.

Lady P. Oh! yonder he comes reading of it; step in here, and advise me quickly, before he sees.

[Exeunt.]

Re-enter Sir PAUL PLIANT, with the letter.

Sir P. Oh, Providence! what a conspiracy have I discovered; but let me see to make an end on't. Hum! [Reads.] "After supper, in the wardrobe by the gallery. If Sir Paul should surprise us, I have a commission from him, to treat with you about the very matter of fact." Matter of fact! very pretty. It seems, then, I'm conducing to my own dishonour; why, this is the very traitorous position of taking up arms by my authority against my person! Well, let

me see [Reads.] "Till then I languish in expectation of my adored charmer.—Dying Ned Careless." Gadsbud! would that were matter of fact, too! Die and be d—d, for a Judas Maccabeus, and Iscariot both. Oh, friendship! what art thou but a name! Henceforward let no man take a friend into the bosom of his family; for if he does, oh! we know not what will follow, from the example of Sir Paul Pliant, and his bosom friend, Ned Careless. Have I, for this, been pinioned, night after night, for three years past? Have I approached the marriage-bed with reverence, as to a sacred shrine, and must I now find it polluted by foreign iniquity? Oh! my Lady Pliant, you were chaste as ice, but you are melted now, and false as water. But Providence has been constant to me in discovering this conspiracy; still I am beholden to Providence; if it were not for Providence, sure, poor Sir Paul, thy heart would break.

Re-enter Lady PLIANT.

Lady P. So, sir, I see you have read the letter. Well, now, Sir Paul, what do you think of your friend Careless? Has he been treacherous? or did you give his insolence a licence to make trial of your wife's suspected virtue? D'ye see here? [Snatches the letter as in anger.] Look, read it! 'Gad's my life! if I thought it were so, I would, this moment, renounce all communication with you. Ungrateful monster! Eh! is it so? Ay, I see it; a plot upon my honour; your guilty cheeks confess it. Oh! where shall wronged virtue fly for reparation? I'll be divorced this instant.

Sir P. Gadsbud! what shall I say? this is the strangest surprise. [Aside.] Why, I don't know anything at all; nor I don't know whether there be anything at all in the world or no.

Lady P. I thought I should try you, false man. I, that never dissembled in my life; yet, to make trial of you, pretended to like that monster of iniquity, Careless; and found out that contrivance to let you see this letter, which now I find was of your own inditing, I do, heathen, I do! See my face no more; I'll be divorced presently.

Sir P. Oh, strange! what will become of me? I'm so amazed, and so overjoyed, so afraid, and so sorry. But did you give me this letter on purpose, eh? Did you?

Lady P. Did I? Do you doubt me, Turk, Saracen? I have a cousin that's a proctor in the Commons; I'll go to him, instantly. [Going.]

Sir P. Hold, stay! I beseech your ladyship! I'm so overjoyed—stay, I'll confess all.

Lady P. What will you confess, Jew?

Sir P. Why now, as I hope to be saved, I had no hand in this letter. Nay, hear me, I beseech your ladyship, the devil take me now, if he did not go beyond my commission. If I desired him to do any more than speak a good word only just for me, gadsbud! only for poor Sir Paul, I'm an Anabaptist, or a Jew, or what you please to call me.

Lady P. Why, is not here matter of fact?

Sir P. Ay, but by your own virtue and continency, that matter of fact is all his own doing. I confess I had a great desire to have some honours conferred upon me, which lay all in your ladyship's breast; and he being a well-spoken man, I desired him to intercede for me.

Lady P. Did you so, presumption? Oh! he comes, he comes; I cannot bear his sight. [Exit.]

Re-enter CARELESS.

Care. Sir Paul, I'm glad I've met with you.

'Gad! I have said all I could, but can't prevail. Then my friendship to you has carried me a little further in this matter—

Sir P. Indeed! Well, sir. I'll dissemble with him a little.

Care. Why, 'faith! I have, in my time, known honest gentlemen abused by a pretended coyness in their wives, and I had a mind to try my lady's virtue; and when I could not prevail for you, 'gad! I pretended to be in love myself; but all in vain, she would not hear a word upon that subject; then I writ a letter to her; I don't know what effect that will have, but I'll be sure to tell you when I do; though, by this light, I believe her virtue is impregnable.

Sir P. Oh, Providence, Providence! what discoveries are here made! Why, this is better, and more miraculous than the rest.

Care. What do you mean?

Sir P. I can't tell you, I'm so overjoyed; come along with me to my lady; I can't contain myself; come, my dear friend.

Care. So, so, so! this difficulty's over.

[*Aside.*—*Exeunt.*]

Re-enter MELLEFONT, with MASKWELL.

Mel. Maskwell, I have been looking for you; 'tis within a quarter of eight.

Mask. My lady is just gone into my lord's closet; you had best steal into her chamber before she comes, and lie concealed there; otherwise, she may lock the door when we are together, and you not easily get in to surprise us.

Mel. Eh! you say true.

Mask. You had best make haste; for, after she has made some apology to the company for her own and my lord's absence all this while, she'll retire to her chamber instantly.

Mel. I go this moment. Now, fortune, I defy thee.

[*Exit.*]

Mask. I confess you may be allowed to be secure in your own opinion; the appearance is very fair; but I have an after-game to play that shall turn the tables; and here comes the man that I must manage.

Enter Lord TOUCHWOOD.

Lord T. Maskwell, you are the man I wished to meet.

Mask. I am happy to be in the way of your lordship's commands.

Lord T. I have always found you prudent and careful in anything that has concerned me, or my family.

Mask. I were a villain else. I am bound by duty and gratitude, and my own inclination, to be ever your lordship's servant.

Lord T. Enough; you are my friend; I know it; yet there has been a thing in your knowledge, which has concerned me nearly, that you have concealed from me.

Mask. My lord!—

Lord T. Nay, I excuse your friendship to my unnatural nephew thus far; but I know you have been privy to his impious designs upon my wife. This evening she has told me all; her good nature concealed it as long as it was possible; but he perseveres so in villany, that she has told me, even you were weary of dissuading him.

Mask. I am sorry, my lord, I can't make you an answer; this is an occasion in which I would not willingly be silent.

Lord T. I know you would excuse him; and I know as well that you can't.

Mask. Indeed I was in hopes it had been a youthful heat, that might have soon boiled over, but—

Lord T. Say on.

Mask. I have nothing more to say, my lord, but to express my concern; for I think his frenzy increases daily.

Lord T. How? Give me but proof of it, ocular proof, that I may justify my dealing with him to the world, and share my fortunes.

Mask. Oh! my lord, consider that is hard; besides, time may work upon him. Then for me to do it! I have professed an everlasting friendship to him.

Lord T. He is your friend—and what am I?

Mask. I am answered.

Lord T. Fear not his displeasure; I will put you out of his, and fortune's power; and, for that thou art scrupulously honest, I will secure thy fidelity to him, and give my honour never to own any discovery that you shall make me. Can you give me a demonstrative proof? speak.

Mask. I wish I could not. To be plain, my lord, I intended this evening to have tried all arguments to dissuade him from a design, which I suspect; and if I had not succeeded, to have informed your lordship of what I knew.

Lord T. I thank you. What is the villain's purpose?

Mask. He has owned nothing to me of late; and what I mean now is only a bare suspicion of my own. If your lordship will meet me a quarter of an hour hence—there—in that lobby by my lady's bed-chamber, I shall be able to tell you more.

Lord T. I will.

Mask. My duty to your lordship makes me do a severe piece of justice.

Lord T. I will be secret, and reward your honesty beyond your hopes.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—Lady Touchwood's Bed-chamber.

Enter MELLEFONT.

Mel. Pray heaven, my aunt keep touch with her assignation. Oh! that her lord were but sweating behind this hanging, with the expectation of what I shall see!—Hist! she comes. Little does she think what a mine is just ready to spring under her feet.—But to my post.

[*Retires.*]

Enter Lady TOUCHWOOD.

Lady T. 'Tis eight o'clock; methinks I should have found him here. Who does not prevent the hour of love, outstays the time; for, to be duly punctual, is too slow.

Enter MASKWELL.

I was accusing you of neglect.

Mask. I confess you do reproach me when I see you here before me; but 'tis fit I should be still behind-hand, still to be more and more indebted to your goodness.

Lady T. You can excuse a fault too well not to have been to blame! a ready answer shews you were prepared.

Mask. Guilt is ever at a loss, and confusion waits upon it; when innocence and bold truth are always ready for expression.

Lady T. Not in love; words are the weak support of cold indifference; love has no language to be heard.

Mask. Excess of joy has made me stupid. Thus—
Lady T. Hold! let me lock the door first.

[*Goes to the door.*]

Mask. That I did suppose. 'Twas well I left the private passage open. [*Aside.*]

Lady T. So, that's safe.

Mask. And so may all your pleasures be, and secret as this kiss.

Mel. [*Leaps out.*] And may all treachery be thus discovered.

Lady T. Ah!

[*Shrieks.*]

Mel. Villain!

[*Offers to draw.*]

Mask. Nay, then there's but one way. [*Runs out.*]

Mel. Say you so? Were you provided for an escape? Hold! madam, you have no more holes to your burrow. I'll stand between you and this sally-port.

Lady T. Shame, grief, and ruin haunt thee for this deceit! Oh! I could rack myself, play the vulture to my own heart, and gnaw it piecemeal, for not boding to me this misfortune.

Mel. Be patient.

Lady T. Patient!

Mel. Consider, I have you on the hook; you will but flounder yourself a-weary, and be, nevertheless, my prisoner.

Lady T. I'll hold my breath and die, but I'll be free.

Mel. Oh, madam! have a care of dying unprepared. I doubt you have some unrepented sins that may hang heavy and retard your flight.

Lady T. What shall I do? whither shall I turn? Hold in, my passion, and fall, fall a little, thou swelling heart! Let me have some intermission of this rage, and one minute's coolness to dissemble.

[*Aside.—Weeps.*]

Mel. You have been to blame. I like those tears, and hope they are of the purest kind—penitential tears.

Lady T. Oh! the scene was shifted quick before me; I had not time to think; I was surprised to see a monster in the glass, and now I find 'tis myself. Can you have mercy to forgive the faults I have imagined, but never put in practice? Oh! consider, consider how fatal you have been to me, you have already killed the quiet of this life. The love of you was the first wandering fire that e'er misled my steps; and while I had only that in view, I was betrayed into unthought-of ways of ruin.

Mel. May I believe this true?

Lady T. Oh! he not cruelly incredulous. How can you doubt these streaming eyes? Keep the severest eye o'er all my future conduct; and if I once relapse, let me not hope forgiveness; 'twill ever be in your power to ruin me. My lord shall sign to your desires; I will myself create your happiness, and Cynthia shall this night be your bride; do but conceal my failings, and forgive. [*Kneels.*]

Mel. Upon such terms, I will be ever yours in every honest way.

Lady T. Eternal blessings thank you!

Re-enter MASKWELL, with Lord TOUCHWOOD.

Mask. I have kept my word. He's here; but I must not be seen. [*Apart to Lord T.—Exit.*]

Lady T. Ha! my lord listening; then all's my own. [*Aside.*]

Mel. Nay, I beseech you, rise.

Lady T. Never, never! I'll grow to the ground, be buried quick beneath it, e'er I'll be consenting to such a sin as incest! unnatural incest! [*Aloud.*]

Mel. Ha!

Lady T. Oh, cruel man! will you not let me go? I'll forgive all that's past. Oh, heaven? you will not force me!

Lord T. Monster! dog! your life shall answer this.

[*Draws, and runs at MELLEFONT; is held by*

Lady T.

Lady T. Oh, my lord! hold, hold! for mercy's sake!

Mel. Confusion! my uncle! Oh, the cursed sorceress!

Lady T. Moderate your rage, good my lord; he's mad, alas! he's mad; indeed he is, my lord, and knows not what he does. See how wild he looks!

Mel. By heaven, 'twere senseless not to be mad, and see such witchcraft.

Lady T. My lord, you hear him; he talks idly.

Lord T. Hence from my sight, thou living infamy to my name! When next I see that face, I'll write villain in't with my sword's point.

Mel. Now, by my soul, I will not go till I have made known my wrongs; nay, till I have made known yours, which, if possible, are greater; though she has all the host of hell her servants.

Lady T. Alas! he raves, talks very poetry! For heaven's sake, away, my lord; he'll either tempt you to extravagance, or commit some himself.

Mel. Death and furies! will you not hear me? Why, she laughs, grins, points at you, makes you her mark of insult and derision.

[*As Lady T. is going, she turns back and smiles at him.*]

Lord T. I fear he's mad, indeed. Let's send Maskwell to him.

Mel. Send him to her.

Lady T. Come, come, good my lord; my heart aches so, I shall faint if I stay.

[*Re-ent Lord and Lady T.*]

Mel. Oh! I could curse my stars, fate, and chance; all causes and accidents of fortune in this life! But to what purpose? They talk of sending Maskwell to me; I never had more need of him. But what can he do? Imagination cannot form a fairer or more plausible design than this of his, which has miscarried. Oh, my precious aunt! I shall never thrive, without I deal with the devil or another woman.

*Women, like flames, have a destroying power,
 Ne'er to be quenched, till they themselves devour.*

[*Exit.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Gallery in Lord Touchwood's House.*

Enter Lady TOUCHWOOD and MASKWELL.

Lady T. Was't not lucky?

Mask. Lucky! fortune is your own, and 'tis her interest so to be; I believe you can control her power, and she fears it; though chance brought my lord, 'twas your own art that turned it to advantage.

Lady T. 'Tis true, it might have been my ruin; but yonder's my lord; I believe he's coming to find you; I'll not be seen. [*Exit.*]

Mask. So! I durst not own my introducing my lord, though it succeeded well for her; for she would

have suspected a design, which I should have been puzzled to excuse. My lord is thoughtful; I'll be so too; yet he shall know my thoughts, or think he does.

Enter Lord TOUCHWOOD.

What have I done?

Lord T. Talking to himself! [Aside.]

Mask. 'Twas honest; and shall I be rewarded for it? No, 'twas honest, therefore I sha'n't. Nay, rather, therefore I ought not; for it rewards itself.

Lord T. Unequaled virtue! [Aside.]

Mask. But should it be known, then I have lost a friend. He was an ill man, and I have gained; for half myself I lent him, and that I have recalled; so I have served myself; and what is better, I have served a worthy lord, to whom I owe myself.

Lord T. Excellent man! [Aside.]

Mask. Yet I am wretched. Oh! there is a secret burns within this breast, which, should it once blaze forth, would ruin all, consume my honest character, and brand me with the name of villain.

Lord T. Ha! [Aside.]

Mask. Oh! should it once be known I love fair Cynthia, all this that I have done would look like a rival's malice, false friendship to my lord, and base self-interest. Let me perish first, and from this hour avoid all sight and speech; and, if I can, all thought of that pernicious beauty.

[Seems to start at seeing Lord T.]

Lord T. Start not; let guilty and dishonest souls start at the revelation of their thoughts; but be thou fixed, as is thy virtue. Honest Maskwell, thy and my good genius led me hither; mine, in that I have discovered so much manly virtue; thine in that thou shalt have due reward of all thy worth. Give me thy hand; my nephew is the alone remaining branch of all our ancient family; him I thus blow away, and constitute thee in his room, to be my heir.

Mask. Now fate forbid—

Lord T. No more; I have resolved. The writings are ready drawn, and wanted nothing but to be signed, and have his name inserted; yours will fill the blank as well—I will have no reply. Let me command this time, for 'tis the last in which I will assume authority; hereafter, you shall rule where I have power.

Mask. I humbly would petition—

Lord T. Is't for yourself? *[MASKWELL pauses.]* I'll hear of naught for anybody else.

Mask. Then witness, heaven, for me, this wealth and honour was not of my seeking; nor would I build my fortune on another's ruin; I had but one desire.

Lord T. Thou shalt enjoy it. If all I'm worth in wealth or interest can purchase Cynthia, she is thine. I'm sure Sir Paul's consent will follow fortune; I'll quickly shew him which way that is going.

Mask. You oppress me with bounty.

Lord T. I will confirm it, and rejoice with thee.

[Exit.]

Mask. This is prosperous, indeed! Why, let him find me out a villain; settled in possession of a fair estate, and full fruition of my love, I'll bear the railings of a losing gamster. But should he find me out before! 'tis dangerous to delay. Let me think—Should my lord proceed to treat openly of my marriage with Cynthia, all will be discovered, and Mellefont can be no longer blinded. It must not be. Nay, should my lady know it—ay, then were fine work, indeed! her fury would spare no-

thing, though she involved herself in ruin. No, it must be by stratagem; I must deceive Mellefont once more, and get my lord to consent to my private management. He comes opportunely. Now will I, in my old way, discover the whole and real truth of the matter to him, that he may not suspect one word on't.

*No mask, like open truth, to cover lies;
As to go naked is the best disguise.*

Enter MELLEFONT.

Mel. Oh! Maskwell, what hopes? I am confounded in a maze of thoughts, each leading into one another, and all ending in perplexity. My uncle will not see nor hear me.

Mask. No matter, sir; don't trouble your head; all's in my power.

Mel. How, for heaven's sake?

Mask. Little do you think that your aunt has kept her word. How she wrought my lord into the dotage I know not; but he's gone to Sir Paul about my marriage with Cynthia, and has appointed me his heir.

Mel. The devil he has! What's to be done?

Mask. I have it: it must be by stratagem; for it's in vain to make application to him. I think I have that in my head that cannot fail. Where's Cynthia?

Mel. In the garden.

Mask. Let us go and consult her. My life for yours I cheat my lord. *[Ereunt.]*

Re-enter Lord and Lady TOUCHWOOD.

Lady T. Maskwell your heir, and marry Cynthia!

Lord T. I cannot do too much for so much merit.

Lady T. But this is a thing of too great moment to be suddenly resolved. Why, Cynthia? Why must he be married? Is there not reward enough in raising his low fortune, but he must mix his blood with mine, and wed my niece? How know you that my brother will consent, or she? Nay, he himself, perhaps, may have affections elsewhere.

Lord T. No; I am convinced he loves her.

Lady T. Maskwell love Cynthia? Impossible.

Lord T. I tell you he confessed it to me.

Lady T. Confusion! How's this? *[Aside.]*

Lord T. His humility long stifled his passion, and his love of Mellefont would have made him still conceal it; but, by encouragement, I wrung the secret from him; and know, he's no way to be rewarded but in her. I'll defer my further proceedings in it till you have considered it; but remember how we are both indebted to him. *[Exit.]*

Lady T. Both indebted to him! Yes, we are both indebted to him, if you knew all. Villain! Oh, I am wild with this surprise of treachery! it is impossible, it cannot be. He love Cynthia! What, have I been dupe to his designs; his property only? Now I see what made him false to Mellefont. What shall I do? How shall I think? I cannot think. All my designs are lost, my love unsated, my revenge unfinished, and fresh cause of fury from unthought-of plagues.

Enter Sir PAUL PLIANT.

Sir P. Madam—sister, my lady, sister! did you see my lady, my wife?

Lady T. Oh, torture!

Sir P. Gadsbud! I can't find her high nor low. Where can she be, think you?

Lady T. Where she's serving you as all your sex ought to be served, making you a beast. Don't you know that you're a fool, brother?

Sir P. A fool! ha, ha, ha! you're merry. No, no, not I; I know no such matter.

Lady T. Why, then, you don't know half your happiness.

Sir P. That's a jest, with all my heart, faith, and troth. But harkye! my lord told me something of things; I don't know what to make on't; gadsbud! I must consult my wife. He talks of disinheriting his nephew, and I don't know what. Look you, sister; I must know what my girl has to trust to, or not a syllable of a wedding, gadsbud! to shew you that I am not a fool.

Lady T. Hear me:—consent to the breaking off this marriage, and the promoting any other, without consulting me, and I'll renounce all blood, all relation, and concern with you for ever; nay, I'll be your enemy, and pursue you to destruction; I'll tear your eyes out, and tread you under my feet.

Sir P. Why, what's the matter now? Good Lord, what's all this for? Pho! here's a joke, indeed. Why, where's my wife?

Lady T. With Careless, fool! most likely.

Sir P. Oh, if she be with Mr. Careless, 'tis well enough.

Lady T. Fool, sot, insensible ox! But remember what I said to you, or you had better see my face no more; by this light, you had. [Exit.]

Sir P. You're a passionate woman, gadsbud! but, to say truth, all our family are choleric; I am the only peaceable person amongst 'em. [Exit.]

Re-enter MELLEFONT and MASKWELL, with CYNTHIA.

Mel. I know no other way but this he has proposed, if you have love enough to run the venture.

Cyn. I don't know whether I have love enough, but I find I have obstinacy enough to pursue whatever I have once resolved, and a true female courage to oppose anything that resists my will, though 'twere reason itself.

Mask. That's right. Well, I'll secure the writings, and run the hazard along with you.

Cyn. But how can the coach be got ready without suspicion?

Mask. Leave it to my care; that shall be so far from being suspected, that it shall be got ready by my lord's own order.

Mel. How?

Mask. Why, I intend to tell my lord the whole matter of our contrivance, that's my way.

Mel. I don't understand you.

Mask. Why, I'll tell my lord I laid this plot with you on purpose to betray you; and that which put me upon it, was the finding it impossible to gain the lady any other way but in the hopes of her marrying you.

Mel. So—

Mask. So! why so: while you're busied in making yourself ready, I'll wheedle her into the coach, and instead of you, borrow my lord's chaplain, and so run away with her myself.

Mel. Oh! I conceive you; you'll tell him so.

Mask. Tell him so! ay. Why, you don't think I mean to do so?

Mel. No, no. Ha, ha! I dare swear thou wilt not.

Mask. Therefore, for our further security, I would have you disguised like a parson, that, if my lord should have curiosity to peep, he may not discover you in the coach, but think the cheat is carried on as he would have it.

Mel. Excellent Maskwell!

Mask. Well, get yourselves ready, and meet me in half an hour, yonder in my lady's dressing-room; I'll send the chaplain to you with his robes; I have made him my own, and ordered him to meet us to-morrow morning at St. Alban's; there we will sum up this account to all our satisfactions.

Mel. Should I begin to thank or praise thee, I should waste the little time we have. [Exit.]

Mask. Madam, you will be ready?

Cyn. I will be punctual to the minute. [Going.]

Mask. Stay, I have a doubt. Upon second thoughts, we had better meet in the chaplain's chamber here; there is a back way into it, so that you need not come through this door, and a pair of private stairs leading down to the stables. It will be more convenient.

Cyn. I am guided by you; but Mellefont will mistake.

Mask. No, no; I'll after him immediately, and tell him. [Exit CYNTHIA.] Why, *qui vult decipi decipiatur*. 'Tis no fault of mine; I have told 'em in plain terms how easy 'tis for me to cheat 'em; and if they will not hear the serpent's hiss, they must be stung into experience and future caution. Now to prepare my lord to consent to this. But first, I must instruct my little Levite; he promised me 'to be within at this hour. Mr. Saygrace, Mr. Saygrace! [Goes to the chamber-door, and knocks.]

Say. [Within.] Sweet sir, I will but pen the last line of an acrostic, and be with you in the twinkling of an ejaculation, or before you can—

Mask. Nay, good Mr. Saygrace, do not prolong the time, by describing to me the shortness of your stay; rather, if you please, defer the finishing of your wit, and let us talk about our business; it shall be tithes in your way.

Enter SAYGRACE.

Say. You shall prevail; I would break off in the middle of a sermon to do you a pleasure.

Mask. You could not do me a greater, except the business in hand. Have you provided a habit for Mellefont?

Say. I have; it is ready in my chamber, together with clean starched band and cuffs.

Mask. Good. Let them be carried to him. Have you stitched the gown sleeve, that he may be puzzled, and waste time in putting it on?

Say. I have; the gown will not be endued without perplexity.

Mask. Meet me in half an hour, here in your own chamber. When Cynthia comes, let there be no light, and do not speak, that she may not distinguish you from Mellefont. I'll urge haste, to excuse your silence.

Say. You have no more commands?

Mask. None; your text is short.

Say. But pithy; and I will handle it with discretion. [Exit.]

Mask. It will be the first you have so served.

Re-enter Lord TOUCHWOOD.

Lord T. Sure, I was born to be controlled by those I should command! my very slaves will shortly give me rules how I shall govern them!

Mask. I am concerned to see your lordship discompos'd.

Lord T. Have you seen my wife lately, or dis-obliged her?

Mask. No, my lord. What can this mean? [Aside.]

Lord T. Then Mellefont has urged somebody to incense her. Something she has heard of you, which carries her beyond the bounds of patience.

Mask. This I feared. [*Aside.*] Did not your lordship tell her of the honours you designed me?

Lord T. Yes.

Mask. 'Tis that; you know my lady has a spirit; she thinks I am unworthy.

Lord T. Unworthy! 'tis an ignorant pride in her to think so. Honesty to me is true nobility. However, 'tis my will it shall be so, and that should be convincing to her as much as reason. I'll not be wife-ridden. Were it possible, it should be done this night.

Mask. Ha! he meets my wishes. [*Aside.*] Few things are impossible to willing minds.

Lord T. Instruct me how this may be done, and you shall see I want no inclination.

Mask. I had laid a small design for to-morrow, (as love will be inventing,) which I thought to communicate to your lordship; but it may be as well done to-night.

Lord T. Here's company; come this way, and tell me. [*Exeunt.*]

Re-enter CYNTHIA, with CARELESS.

Care. Is not that he, now gone out with my lord?

Cyn. I am convinced there's treachery. The confusion that I saw your father in, my Lady Touchwood's passion, with what imperfectly I overheard between my lord and her, confirm me in my fears. Where's Mellefont?

Care. Here he comes.

Re-enter MELLEFONT.

Cyn. Did Maskwell tell you anything of the chaplain's chamber?

Mel. No, my dear. Will you get ready? The things are all in my chamber; I want nothing but the habit.

Care. You are betrayed, and Maskwell is the villain I always thought him.

Cyn. When you were gone, he said his mind was changed, and bid me meet him in the chaplain's room, pretending immediately to follow you, and give you notice.

Care. There's Saygrace tripping by with a bundle under his arm. He cannot be ignorant that Maskwell means to use his chamber; let's in, and examine him.

Mel. 'Tis loss of time, I cannot think him false.

[*Exeunt CARELESS and MELLEFONT.*]

Re-enter Lord TOUCHWOOD.

Cyn. My lord musing!

[*Aside.*]

Lord T. He has a quick invention, if this were suddenly designed. Yet, he says, he had prepared my chaplain already.

Cyn. How's this? Now I fear, indeed. [*Aside.*]

Lord T. Cynthia here! Alone, fair cousin, and melancholy.

Cyn. Your lordship was thoughtful.

Lord T. My thoughts were on serious business, not worth your hearing.

Cyn. Mine were on treachery concerning you, and may be worth your hearing.

Lord T. Treachery concerning me! Pray be plain. What noise?

Mask. [*Within.*] Will you not hear me?

Lady T. [*Within.*] No, monster! traitor. No.

Cyn. My lady and Maskwell! This may be lucky. My lord, let me entreat you to stand behind this screen, and listen; perhaps this chance will give you proof of what you never could have believed from my suspicions.

[*They retire behind the screen.*]

Re-enter MASKWELL, and Lady TOUCHWOOD with a dagger.

Lady T. You want but leisure to invent fresh falsehood, and sooth me to a fond belief of all your fictions; but I will stab the lie that's forming in your heart, and save a sin in pity to your soul.

Mask. Strike, then, since you will have it so.

Lady T. Ha! a steady villain to the last.

Mask. Come, why do you dally with me thus?

Lady T. Thy stubborn temper shocks me, and you knew it would. This is cunning all; I know thee well; but thou shalt miss thy aim.

Mask. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady T. Ha! do you mock my rage? Then this shall punish your fond rash contempt. Again smile? And such a smile as speaks in ambiguity! Ten thousand meanings lurk in each corner of that various face; oh! that they were written in thy heart, that I with this might lay thee open to my sight. But then 'twill be too late to know—Thou hast, thou hast found the only way to turn my rage; too well thou knowest my jealous soul could never bear uncertainty. Speak, then, and tell me! Yet are you silent? Oh! I am bewildered in all passions! But thus my anger melts. [*Weeps.*] Here, take this poniard; for my very spirits faint, and I want strength to hold it; thou hast disarmed my soul. [*Gives him the dagger.*]

Mask. So, 'tis well; let your wild fury have a vent; and when you have temper tell me.

Lady T. Now, now, now I am calm, and can hear you.

Mask. Thanks, my invention; and now I have it for you. [*Aside.*] First, tell me what urged you to this violence? for your passion broke in such imperfect terms, that yet I am to learn the cause.

Lady T. My lord himself surprised me with the news, you were to marry Cynthia; that you had owned your love to him; and his indulgence would assist you to attain your ends.

Mask. I grant you, in appearance, all is true; I seemed consenting to my lord, nay, transported with the blessing; but could you think that I, who had been happy in your loved embraces, could e'er be fond of an inferior slavery?—No. Yet, though I dote on each last favour more than all the rest, though I would give a limb for every look you cheaply throw away on any other object of your love; yet, so far I prize your pleasures o'er my own, that all this seeming plot that I have laid, has been to gratify your taste, and cheat the world, to prove a faithful rogue to you.

Lady T. If this were true; but how can it be?

Mask. I have so contrived, that Mellefont will presently, in the chaplain's habit, wait for Cynthia in your dressing-room: but I have put the change upon her, that she may be otherwise employed. Do you muffle yourself, and meet him in her stead. You may go privately by the back stairs, and unperceived; there you may propose to reinstate him in his uncle's favour, if he'll comply with your desires. His case is desperate, and I believe he'll yield to any conditions; if not, here, take this; you may employ it better than in the heart of one, who is nothing when not yours. [*Gives her the dagger.*]

Lady T. Thou canst deceive everybody; nay, thou hast deceived me. But 'tis as I would wish. Trusty villain! I could worship thee.

Mask. No more. It wants but a few minutes of the time; and Mellefont's love will carry him there before his hour.

Lady T. I go, I fly, incomparable Maskwell!

[*Erit.*

Mask. So! This was a pinch indeed! My invention was upon the rack, and made discovery of her last plot. I hope Cynthia and my chaplain will be ready. I'll prepare for the expedition.

[*Erit.* CYNTHIA and Lord T. come forward.

Cyn. Now, my lord!

Lord T. Astonishment binds up my rage! Villany upon villany! Heavens! what a long track of dark deceit has this discovered. I am confounded when I look back, and want a clue to guide me through the various mazes of unheard-of treachery. My wife! oh, torture! my shame, my ruin!

Cyn. My lord, have patience; and be sensible how great our happiness is, that this discovery was not made too late.

Lord T. I thank you. Yet it may be still too late, if we don't presently prevent the execution of their plots. She'll think to meet him in that dressing-room; was't not so? And Maskwell will expect you in the chaplain's chamber. For once, I'll add my plot, too. Let us haste to find out, and inform my nephew; and do you, quickly as you can, bring all the company into this gallery. I'll expose the traitress and the villain. [*Exeunt.*

Re-enter Sir PAUL PLIANT, with Lord FROTH.

Lord F. By heavens! I have slept an age. Sir Paul, what o'clock is it? Past eight, on my conscience! My lady's in the most inviting couch, and a slumber there is the prettiest amusement!—But where's all the company?

Sir P. The company? Gadsbud! I don't know, my lord; but here's the strangest revolution! all turned topsy-turvy, as I hope for Providence!

Lord F. Oh, heavens! what's the matter?—Where's my wife?

Sir P. All turned topsy-turvy, as sure as a gun!

Lord F. How do you mean? My wife?

Sir P. The strangest posture of affairs!

Lord F. What, my wife?

Sir P. No, no; I mean the family.—Your lady! I saw her go into the garden with Mr. Brisk.

Lord F. How, where, when, what to do?

Sir P. I suppose they have been laying their heads together.

Lord F. How?

Sir P. Nay, only about poetry, I suppose, my lord: making couplets.

Lord F. Couplets!

Sir P. Oh! here they come.

Enter Lady FROTH and BRISK.

Brisk. My lord, your humble servant; Sir Paul, yours.—The finest night!

Lady F. My dear, Mr. Brisk and I have been star-gazing I don't know how long.

Sir P. Does it not tire your ladyship? Are you not weary with looking up?

Lady F. Oh! no; I love it violently. My dear, you're melancholy.

Lord F. No, my dear, I'm but just awake.

Lady F. Snuff some of my spirit of hartshorn.

Lord F. I've some of my own, thank you, my dear.

Lady F. Well, I swear, Mr. Brisk, you understand astronomy like an old Egyptian.

Brisk. Not comparable to your ladyship; you are the very Cynthia of the skies, and queen of stars.

Lady F. That's because I have no light, but what's by reflection from you, who are the sun.

Brisk. Madam, you have eclipsed me quite, let me perish! I can't answer that.

Lady F. No matter.—Harkye! shall you and I make an almanac together?

Brisk. With all my soul. Your ladyship has made me the man in't already, I'm so full of the wounds which you have given.

Lady F. Oh! finely taken! I swear now you are even with me. Oh, Parnassus! you have an infinite deal of wit.

Sir P. So he has, gadsbud! and so has your ladyship.

Re-enter CARELESS and CYNTHIA, with Lady PLIANT.

Lady P. You tell me most surprising things.—Bless me! who would ever trust a man? Oh! my heart aches for fear they should be all deceitful alike. *Care.* You need not fear, madam; you have charms to fix inconstancy itself.

Lady P. Oh, dear! you make me blush.

Lord F. Come, my dear, shall we take leave of my lord and lady?

Cyn. They'll wait upon your lordship presently.

Lady F. Mr. Brisk, my coach shall set you down.

[*Lady TOUCHWOOD shrieks from within.*

All. What's the matter?

Lady TOUCHWOOD, muffled up, runs in affrighted; followed by Lord TOUCHWOOD, dressed like a parson, with a dagger in his hand.

Lady T. Oh! I'm betrayed.—Save me! help me!

Lord T. Now what evasion, wicked woman?

Lady T. Stand off! let me go! [*Erit.*

Lord T. Go, and thy own infamy pursue thee! You stare, as you were all amazed. I don't wonder at it; but too soon you will know mine, and that woman's shame. [*Throws off his gown.*

Re-enter MELLEFONT, disguised in a parson's habit, with two Servants, bringing in MASKWELL.

Mel. Nay, by heaven! you shall be seen. [To MASKWELL.] Careless, your hand. Do you hold down your head? [To MASKWELL.] Yes, I am your chaplain. Look in the face of your injured friend, thou wonder of all falsehood!

[*Throws off his disguise.*

Lord T. Are you silent, monster?

Mel. Good heavens! how I believed and loved this man! Take him hence, for he's a disease to my sight.

Lord T. Secure the manifold villain.

[*Servants take MASKWELL off.*

Care. Miracle of ingratitude!

Sir P. Oh! Providence, Providence, what discoveries are here!

Brisk. This is all very surprising, let me perish!

Lady F. You know I told you Saturn looked a little more angry than usual.

Lord T. We'll think of punishment at leisure. But let me hasten to do justice, in rewarding virtue and wronged innocence. Nephew, I hope I have your pardon, and Cynthia's.

Mel. We are your lordship's creatures.

Lord T. And be each other's comfort. Let me join your hands. Uninterrupted bliss attend you both! May circling joys tread round each happy year of your long lives!

*Let secret villany from hence be warn'd,
How'er in private mischiefs are conceiv'd,
Torture and shame attend their open birth.
Like vipers in the breast, base treachery lies,
Still gnawing that whence first it did arise;
No sooner born, but the vile parent dies.*

[*Exeunt.*

LOVE FOR LOVE;

A COMEDY IN FIVE ACTS;

BY WILLIAM CONGREVE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SIR SAMPSON LEGEND
VALENTINE
BEN
SCANDAL
TATTLE
FORESIGHT
JEREMY
TRAPLAN
SNAP.

MRS. FORESIGHT
MRS. FRAIL
MISS PRUE
ANGELICA
NURSE
JENNY
Servants.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—Valentine's Lodgings.

VALENTINE *discovered reading*; JEREMY *waiting*.
Several books upon the table.

Val. Jeremy!

Jer. Sir?

Val. Here, take away; I'll walk a turn, and digest what I have read. [*Rises.*]

Jer. You'll grow devilish fat upon this paper diet! [*Aside, and taking away the books.*]

Val. And, d'y'e hear? go you to breakfast: there's a page doubled down in Epictetus, that is a feast for an emperor.

Jer. Was Epictetus a real cook, or did he only write receipts?

Val. Read, read, sirrah, and refine your appetite; learn to live upon instruction; feast your mind, and mortify your flesh. Read, and take your nourishment in at your eyes; shut up your mouth, and chew the cud of understanding: so Epictetus advises.

Jer. Oh, lord! I have heard much of him, when I waited upon a gentleman at Cambridge. Pray, what was that Epictetus?

Val. A very rich man—not worth a groat.

Jer. Humph! and so he has made a very fine feast, where there is nothing to be eaten?

Val. Yes.

Jer. Sir, you're a gentleman, and probably understand this fine feeding; but, if you please, I had rather be at board-wages. Does your Epictetus, or your Seneca here, or any of these poor rich rogues, teach you how to pay your debts without money? will they shut up the mouths of your creditors? will Plato be bail for you? or Diogenes, because he understands confinement, and lived in a tub, go to prison for you? 'Slife! sir, what do you mean, to mew yourself up here with three or four musty books, in commendation of starving and poverty?

Val. Why, sirrah, I have no money, you know it; and therefore resolve to rail at all that have; and in that I but follow the examples of the wisest and wittiest men in all ages—these poets and philosophers, whom you naturally hate, for just such another reason; because they abound in sense, and you are a fool.

Jer. Ay, sir, I am a fool, I know it; and yet, heaven help me! I'm poor enough to be a wit. But I was always a fool, when I told you what your expenses would bring you to; your coaches and your liveries; your treats and your balls; your being in love with a lady, that did not care a farthing for you in your prosperity; and keeping company with wits, that cared for nothing but your prosperity, and now when you are poor, hate you as much as they do one another.

Val. Well! and now I am poor, I have an opportunity to be revenged on them all; I'll pursue Angelica with more love than ever, and appear more notoriously her admirer in this restraint, than when I openly rivalled the rich fops that made court to her. So shall my poverty be a mortification to her pride, and perhaps make her compassionate the love, which has principally reduced me to this lowliness of fortune. And for the wits, I'm sure I am in a condition to be even with them.

Jer. Nay, your condition is pretty even with theirs, that's the truth on't.

Val. I'll take some of their trade out of their hands.

Jer. Now heaven of mercy continue the tax upon paper! You don't mean to write?

Val. Yes, I do; I'll write a play

Jer. Hem! Sir, if you please to give me a small

certificate of three lines; only to certify those to whom it may concern, "That the bearer hereof, Jeremy Fetch by name, has, for the space of seven years, truly and faithfully served Valentine Legend, esquire; and that he is not now turned away for any misdemeanor, but does voluntarily dismiss his master from any future authority over him."

Val. No, sirrah! you shall live with me still.

Jer. Sir, it's impossible; I may die with you, starve with you, or be damned with your works: but to live, even three days, the life of a play, I no more expect it, than to be canonized for a muse after my decease.

Val. You are witty, you rogue; I shall want your help. I'll have you learn to make couplets, to tag to the end of acts. D'ye hear? get the maids to crambo in an evening, and learn the knack of rhyming; you may arrive at the height of a song sent by an unknown hand, or a chocolate-house lampoon.

Jer. But, sir, is this the way to recover your father's favour? Why, Sir Sampson will be irreconcilable. If your younger brother should come from sea, he'd never look upon you again. You're undone, sir; you're ruined; you won't have a friend left in the world, if you turn poet: I never think of the trade but the spirit of famine appears to me; sometimes like a decayed porter, worn out with pimping, and carrying billet-doux and songs; not like other porters, for hire, but for the jest's sake: now like a thin chairman, melted down to half his proportion, with carrying a poet upon tick, to visit some great fortune; and his fare to be paid him, like the wages of sin, either at the day of marriage, or the day of death.

Enter SCANDAL.

Scand. What! Jeremy holding forth?

Val. The rogue has (with all the wit he could muster up) been declaiming against wit.

Scand. Ay! Why, then, I'm afraid Jeremy has wit: for wherever it is, it's always contriving its own ruin.

Jer. Why so I have been telling my master, sir. Mr. Scandal, for heaven's sake! sir, try if you can dissuade him from turning poet.

Scand. Poet! he shall turn soldier first, and rather depend upon the outside of his head, than the lining! Why, what the devil! has not your poverty made you enemies enough? must you needs shew your wit to get more?

Jer. Ay, more indeed; for who cares for anybody that has more wit than himself?

Scand. Jeremy speaks like an oracle. Don't you see how worthless great men and dull rich rogues avoid a witty man of small fortune? Why he looks, like a writ of inquiry, into their titles and estates; and seems commissioned by heaven to seize the better half.

Val. Therefore, I would rail in my writings, and be revenged.

Scand. Rail! at whom? the whole world? Impotent and vain! Who would die a martyr to sense, in a country where religion is folly? You may stand at bay for a while; but, when the full cry is against you, you sha'n't have fair play for your life. If you can't be fairly run down by the hounds, you will be treacherously shot by the huntsman. No; turn flatterer, quack, lawyer, anything but a poet: a modern poet is worse, more servile, timorous, and fawning, than any I have named; without you could retrieve the ancient honours of the name, recall the

stage of Athens, and be allowed the force of open honest satire.

Val. You are as inveterate against our poets, as if your character had been lately exposed upon the stage. Nay, I am not violently bent upon the trade. [*A knock.*] Jeremy, see who's there. [*Exit JEREMY.*] But tell me what you would have me do? What does the world say of me, and my forced confinement?

Scand. The world behaves itself, as it uses to do on such occasions. Some pity you, and condemn your father; others excuse him, and blame you. Only, the ladies are merciful, and wish you well; since love and pleasurable expense have been your greatest faults

Re-enter JEREMY.

Val. How now?

Jer. Nothing new, sir. I have despatched some half a dozen duns with as much dexterity as a hungry judge does causers at dinner-time.

Val. What answer have you given them?

Scand. Patience, I suppose—the old receipt?

Jer. No, faith, sir: I have put them off so long with patience and forbearance, and other fair words, that I was forced to tell them in plain downright English—

Val. What?

Jer. That they should be paid.

Val. When?

Jer. To-morrow.

Val. And how the devil do you mean to keep your word?

Jer. Keep it? not at all: it has been so very much stretched, that I reckon it will break of course by to-morrow, and nobody be surprised at the matter! [*Knocking.*] Again! Sir, if you don't like my negotiation, will you be pleased to answer these yourself?

Val. See who they are. [*Exit JEREMY.*] By this, Scandal, you may see what it is to be great. Secretaries of state, presidents of the council, and generals of an army, lead just such a life as I do; have just such crowds of visitants in a morning, all soliciting of past promises; which are but a civil sort of duns, that lay claim to voluntary debts.

Re-enter JEREMY.

Jer. Oh! sir, there's Trapland, the scrivener, with two suspicious fellows, like lawful footpads, that would knock a man down with pocket tipstaves; and there's your father's steward; and the nurse, with one of your children, from Twit'nam.

Val. Plague on her! could she find no other time to fling my sins in my face? Here! give her this, [*Gives money.*] and bid her trouble me no more: bid Mr. Trapland come in. If I can give that Cerberus a sop, I shall be at rest for one day.

[*Exit JEREMY.*]

Re-enter JEREMY, with TRAPLAND.

Oh! Mr. Trapland, my old friend, welcome! Jeremy, a chair quickly; a bottle of sack and a toast. Fly—a chair first.

[*Exit JEREMY.*]

Trap. A good morning to you, Mr. Valentine; and to you, Mr. Scandal.

Scand. The morning's a very good morning, if you don't spoil it.

Val. Come, sit you down: you know his way.

Trap. [*Sits.*] There is a debt, Mr. Valentine, of fifteen hundred pounds, of pretty long standing—

Val. I cannot talk about business with a thirsty palate. Sirrah! the sack.

Re-enter JEREMY, with wine, &c.

Trap. And I desire to know what course you have taken for the payment.

Val. Faith and troth, I am heartily glad to see you. My service to you! fill, fill, to honest Mr. Trapland—fuller!

Trap. Hold! sweetheart, this is not to our business. My service to you, Mr. Scandal! [*Drinks.*] I have forborne as long—

Val. T'other glass, and then we'll talk. Fill, Jeremy.

Trap. No more, in truth. I have forborne, I say—

Val. And how does your handsome daughter?—Come, a good husband to her. [*Drinks.*]

Trap. Thank you—I have been out of this money—

Val. Drink first. Scandal, why do you not drink? [*They drink.*]

Trap. And, in short, I can be put off no longer.

Val. I was much obliged to you for your supply: it did me signal service in my necessity. But you delight in doing good. Scandal, drink to me my friend Trapland's health. An honest man lives not, nor one more ready to serve his friend in distress; though I say it to his face. Come, fill each man his glass.

Scand. What! I know Trapland has been a wench, and loves a girl still. You never knew a wench, that was not an honest fellow.

Trap. Fie! Mr. Scandal, you never knew—

Scand. What don't I know? I know the buxom black widow in the Poultry—eight hundred pounds a-year jointure, and twenty thousand pounds in money. Ha, ha! old Trap!

Val. Say you so, i'faith? Come, we'll remember the widow; I know whereabouts you are; come, to the widow.

Trap. No more, indeed.

Val. What! the widow's health? off with it. [*They drink.*] A lovely girl, i'faith, black sparkling eyes, soft pouting ruby lips! Better sealing there, than a bond for a million, eh?

Trap. Ha, ha, ha! Verily, give me a glass. You're a wag; and here's to the widow. [*Drinks.*]

Scand. He begins to chuckle; ply him close, or he'll relapse into a dun. [*Exit JEREMY.*]

Enter SNAP.

Snap. By your leave, gentlemen. Mr. Trapland, if we must do our office, tell us. We have half a dozen gentlemen to arrest in Pall-mall and Covent-garden; and if we don't make haste, the chairmen will be abroad, and block up the chocolate-houses; and then our labour's lost.

Re-enter JEREMY.

Trap. Odso! that's true. Mr. Valentine, I love mirth; but business must be done; are you ready to—

Jer. Sir, your father's steward says he comes to make proposals concerning your debts.

[*Exit JEREMY.*]

Val. Bid him come in: Mr. Trapland, send away your officer; you shall have an answer presently.

Trap. Mr. Snap, stay within call. [*Exit SNAP.*]

Enter JEREMY and Steward, who whispers VALENTINE.

Scand. Here's a dog now, a traitor in his wine! Sirrah! refund the sack; Jeremy, fetch him some

warm water; or I'll rip up his stomach, and go the shortest way to his conscience.

Trap. Mr. Scandal, you are uncivil. I did not value your sack; but you cannot expect it again, when I have drunk it.

Scand. And how do you expect to have your money again, when a gentleman has spent it?

Val. You need say no more. I understand the conditions; they are very hard, but my necessity is very pressing: I agree to them. Take Mr. Trapland with you, and let him draw the writing. Mr. Trapland, you know this man; he shall satisfy you.

Trap. Sincerely, I am loth to be thus pressing; but my necessity—

Val. No apology, Mr. Scrivener; you shall be paid.

Trap. I hope you forgive me: my business requires—

[*Exeunt TRAPLAND, Steward, and JEREMY.*]

Scand. He begs pardon, like a hangman at an execution.

Val. But I have got a reprieve.

Scand. I am surprised. What! does your father relent?

Val. No; he has sent me the hardest conditions in the world. You have heard of a booby brother of mine, that was sent to sea, three years ago? This brother, my father hears, is landed; whereupon, he very affectionately sends me word, if I will make a deed of conveyance of my right to his estate, after his death, to my younger brother, he will immediately furnish me with four thousand pounds, to pay my debts and make my fortune. This was once proposed before, and I refused it; but the present impatience of my creditors for their money, and my own impatience of confinement, and absence from Angelica, force me to consent.

Scand. A very desperate demonstration of your love to Angelica! and, I think, she has never given you any assurance of hers.

Val. You know her temper; she never gave me any great reason either of hope or despair.

Scand. Women of her airy temper, as they seldom think before they act, so they rarely give us any light to guess at what they mean. But you have little reason to believe that a woman of this age, who has had an indifference for you in your prosperity, will fall in love with your ill fortune. Besides, Angelica has a great fortune of her own; and great fortunes either expect another great fortune, or a fool.

Re-enter JEREMY.

Jer. More misfortunes, sir!

Val. What! another dun?

Jer. No, sir; but Mr. Tattle is come to wait upon you.

Val. Well, I can't help it; you must bring him up; he knows I don't go abroad. [*Exit JEREMY.*]

Scand. Plague on him, I'll begone.

Val. No, prythee, stay: Tattle and you should never be asunder; you are light and shadow, and shew one another. He is perfectly thy reverse, both in humour and understanding; and as you set up for defamation, he is a member of defamations.

Scand. A mender of reputations! ay, just as he is a keeper of secrets; another virtue that he sets up for in the same manner. For the rogue will speak aloud, in the posture of a whisper; and deny a woman's name, while he gives you the marks of her person: he will forswear receiving a letter from her, and, at the same time, shew you her hand in the

superscription; and yet, perhaps, he has counterfeited the hand, too, and sworn to a truth. In short, he is a public professor of secrecy, and makes proclamation that he holds private intelligence. He is here.

Enter TATTLE.

Tat. Valentine, good morrow: Scandal, I am your's—that is, when you speak well of me.

Scand. That is, when I am your's: for while I am my own, or anybody's else, that will never happen.

Tat. How inhuman!

Val. Why, Tattle, you need not be much concerned at anything that he says: for to converse with Scandal, is to play at Losing Loadum; you must lose a good name to him, before you can win it for yourself.

Tat. But how barbarous that is, and how unfortunate for him, that the world should think the better of any person for his calumnation! I thank heaven, it has always been a part of my character to handle the reputations of others very tenderly, indeed.

Scand. Ay, such rotten reputations as you have to deal with, are to be handled tenderly, indeed.

Tat. Nay, why rotten? why should you say rotten, when you know not the persons of whom you speak? How cruel that is!

Scand. Not know them? Why thou never hadst to do with any one that was not common to all the town.

Tat. Ha, ha, ha! nay, now you make a jest of it, indeed. For there is nothing more known, than that nobody knows anything of that nature of me. As I hope to be saved, Valentine, I never exposed a woman, since I knew what woman was.

Val. And yet you have conversed with several?

Tat. To be free with you, I have; I don't care if I own that; nay, more, (I'm going to say a bold word, now,) I never could meddle with a woman, that had to do with anybody else.

Scand. How!

Tat. Nay, faith! I'm apt to believe him; except her husband, Tattle.

Tat. Oh! that—

Scand. What think you of that noble commoner, Mrs. Drab?

Tat. Pooh! I know Madam Drab has made her brags in three or four places, that I said this and that, and writ to her, and did I know not what—but, upon my reputation, she did me wrong. Well, well! that was malice; but I know the bottom of it. She was bribed to that by one we all know—a man, too—only to bring me into disgrace with a certain woman of quality—

Scand. Whom we all know.

Tat. No matter for that. Yes, yes; everybody knows! no doubt on't, everybody knows my secrets! But I soon satisfied the lady of my innocence; for I told her: "Madam, (says I,) there are some persons who make it their business to tell stories, and say this and that of one and the other, and everything in the world; and, (says I,) if your grace—

Scand. Grace!

Tat. Oh, lord! what have I said? My unlucky tongue!

Val. Ha, ha, ha!

Scand. Why, Tattle, thou hast more impudence than one can in reason expect: I shall have an esteem for thee. Well, and—ha, ha, ha! well, go on; and what did you say to her grace?

Val. I confess this is something extraordinary.

Tat. Not a word, as I hope to be saved; an arrant *lapis linguae*! Come, let us talk of something else.

Val. Well! but how did you acquit yourself?

Tat. Pooh, pooh! nothing at all; I only rallied with you. A woman of ordinary rank was a little jealous of me, and I told her something or other, faith! I know not what. Come, let's talk of something else. [*Hums a song.*]

Scand. Hang him! let him alone; he has a mind we should inquire.

Tat. Valentine, I supped last night with your mistress, and her uncle, old Foresight: I think your father lies at Foresight's.

Val. Yes.

Tat. Upon my soul, Angelica's a fine woman! And so is Mrs. Foresight, and her sister, Mrs. Frail.

Scand. Yes; Mrs. Frail is a very fine woman; we all know her.

Tat. Oh! that is not fair.

Scand. What?

Tat. To tell—

Scand. To tell what? Why, what do you know of Mrs. Frail?

Tat. Who, I? Upon honour, I don't know whether she be a man or a woman; but by the smoothness of her chin, and roundness of her hips.

Scand. No!

Tat. No.

Scand. She says otherwise.

Tat. Impossible!

Scand. Yes, faith! Ask Valentine else.

Tat. Why, then, as I hope to be saved, I believe a woman only obliges a man to secrecy, that she may have the pleasure of telling herself.

Scand. No doubt on't. Well, but has she done you wrong or no? You have succeeded with her, eh?

Tat. Though I have more honour than to tell first, I have more manners than to contradict what a lady has declared.

Scand. Well, you own it?

Tat. I am strangely surprised! Yes, yes; I cannot deny it, if she taxes me with it.

Scand. She'll be here by-and-by; she sees Valentine every morning.

Tat. How?

Val. She does me the favour—I mean, of a visit sometimes. I did not think she had granted more to anybody.

Scand. Nor I, faith! But Tattle does not use to belie a lady; it is contrary to his character. How one may be deceived in a woman, Valentine!

Tat. Nay, what do you mean, gentlemen?

Scand. I'm resolved I'll ask her.

Tat. Oh, barbarous! Why did you not tell me—

Scand. No; you told us.

Tat. And bid me ask Valentine?

Val. What did I say? I hope you won't bring me to confess an answer, when you never asked me the question.

Tat. But, gentlemen, this is the most inhuman proceeding—

Val. Nay, if you have known Scandal thus long, and cannot avoid such a palpable decoy as this was; the ladies have a fine time, whose reputations are in your keeping.

Re-enter JEREMY

Jer. Sir, Mrs. Frail has sent to know if you are stirring.

Val. Shew her up when she comes. [*Exit JEREMY.*]

Tat. I'll begone.

Val. You'll meet her.

Tat. Is there not a back way?

Val. If there were, you have more discretion than to give Scandal such an advantage; why, your running away will prove all that he can tell her.

Tat. Scandal, you will not be so ungenerous. Oh! I shall lose my reputation of secrecy for ever. I shall never be received but upon public days; and my visits will never be admitted beyond a drawing-room: I shall never see a bed-chamber again, never be locked in a closet, nor run behind a screen, or under a table; never be distinguished among the waiting-women by the name of trusty Mr. Tattle more. You will not be so cruel?

Val. Scandal, have pity on him; he'll yield to any conditions.

Tat. Any, any terms!

Scand. Come, then, sacrifice half a dozen women of good reputation to me presently. Come, where are you familiar? And see that they are women of quality, too; the first quality.

Tat. 'Tis very hard. Won't a baronet's lady pass?

Scand. No; nothing under a right honourable.

Tat. Oh, inhuman? You don't expect their names?

Scand. No, their titles shall serve.

Tat. Alas! that is the same thing! Pray spare me their titles; I'll describe their persons.

Scand. Well, begin, then. But take notice, if you are so ill a painter, that I cannot know the person by your picture of her, you must be condemned, like other bad painters, to write the name at the bottom.

Tat. Well, first, then—

Mrs. F. [*Within.*] No, no; bid them wait.

Tat. Oh, unfortunate! she's come already. Will you have patience till another time? I'll double the number.

Scand. Well, on that condition—Take heed you don't fail me.

Enter Mrs. FRAIL.

Mrs. F. I shall get a fine reputation, by coming to see fellows in a morning! Scandal, you devil, are you here, too? Oh! Mr. Tattle, everything is safe with you, we know.

Scand. Tattle!

Tat. Mum—Oh! madam, you do me too much honour.

Val. Well, Lady Galloper, how does Angelica?

Mrs. F. Angelica? Manners!

Val. What, you will allow an absent lover—

Mrs. F. No; I'll allow a lover present with his mistress to be particular; but, otherwise, I think his passion ought to give place to his manners.

Val. But what if he has more passion than manners?

Mrs. F. Then let him marry, and reform.

Val. Marriage, indeed, may qualify the fury of his passion; but it very rarely amends a man's manners.

Mrs. F. You are the most mistaken in the world; there is no creature perfectly civil, but a husband: for in a little time, he grows only rude to his wife; and that is the highest good breeding, for it begets his civility to other people. Well, I'll tell you news; but I suppose you heard your brother Benjamin is landed; and my brother Foresight's daughter is come out of the country: I assure you, there's a match talked of by the old people. Well, if he be but as great a sea beast, as she is a land monster,

we shall have a most amphibious breed; the progeny will be all otters: he has been bred at sea; and she has never been out of the country.

Val. Plague take them! their conjunction bodes no good, I'm sure.

Mrs. F. Now you talk of conjunction, my brother Foresight has cast both their nativities, and prognosticates an admiral, and an eminent justice of the peace, to be the issue male of their two bodies. 'Tis the most superstitious old fool! He would have persuaded me that this was an unlucky day, and would not let me come abroad: but I invented a dream, and sent him to Artemidorus for interpretation, and so stole out to see you. Well, and what will you give me now? what will you give me, Mr. Tattle?

Tat. I? My soul, madam.

Mrs. F. Pooh! no, I thank you; I have enough to do to take care of my own. Well; but I'll come and see you one of these mornings: I hear you have a great many pictures.

Tat. I have a pretty good collection at your service; some originals.

Scand. Hang him! he has nothing but the Seasons, and the Twelve Cæsars, paltry copies; and the Five Senses, as ill-represented as they are in himself; and he himself is the only original you will see there.

Mrs. F. Ay, but I hear he has a closet of beauties.

Scand. Yes; all that have done him favours, if you will believe him.

Mrs. F. Ay! let me see those, Mr. Tattle.

Tat. Oh! madam, those are sacred to love and contemplation. No man but the painter and myself was ever blest with the sight.

Mrs. F. Well, but a woman—

Tat. Nor woman, till she consented to have her picture there, too; for then she is obliged to keep the secret.

Scand. No, no! come to me if you'd see pictures.

Mrs. F. You?

Scand. Yes, faith! I can shew you your own picture, and most of your acquaintance, to the life, and as like as at Kneller's.

Mrs. F. Oh! lying creature! Valentine, does not he lie? I can't believe a word he says.

Val. No, indeed; he speaks truth now; for, as Tattle has pictures of all that has granted him favours, he has the pictures of all that has refused him; if satires, characters, and lampoons are pictures.

Scand. Yes; mine are most in black and white; and yet there are some set out in their true colours, both men and women. I can shew you pride, folly, affectation, wantonness, inconstancy, covetousness, dissimulation, malice, and ignorance, all in one piece. Then, I can shew you lying, foppishness, vanity, cowardice, bragging, and ugliness, in another piece: and yet one of these is a celebrated beauty, and t'other a professed beau. I have some hieroglyphics, too.

Mrs. F. Come, let's hear them.

Scand. I have a lawyer with a hundred hands, two heads, and but one face; a divine, with two faces, and one head; and I have a soldier, with his brains in his belly, and his heart where his head should be.

Tat. And no head?

Scand. No head.

Mrs. F. Pooh! this is all invention. Well, I'll come, if it be but to disprove you.

Re-enter JEREMY.

Jer. Sir, here's the steward again from your father.

Nat. I'll come to him. [Exit JEREMY.] Will you give me leave? I'll wait on you again presently.

Mrs. F. No; I'll begone. Come, who squares me to the Exchange? I must call on my sister Foresight there.

Scand. I will: I have a mind to your sister.

Mrs. F. Civil!

Nat. [To Mrs. FRAIL.] I will; because I have a tender for your ladyship.

Mrs. F. That's somewhat the better reason, to my opinion. [Exeunt Mrs. FRAIL and TARTLE.

Nat. Tell Angelica I am about making hard conditions to come abroad, and be at liberty to see her.

Scand. I'll give an account of you and your proceedings. If indiscretion be a sign of love, you are the most a lover of anybody that I know. You fancy that parting with your estate will help you to your mistress; in my mind, he is a thoughtless adventurer.

Who hopes to purchase wealth by selling land;

Or win a mistress with a living hand. [Exeunt.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Room in Foresight's House.

Enter FORESIGHT and JAMES.

For. Heyday! What are all the women of my family abroad? Is not my wife come home? nor my sister, nor my daughter?

James. No, sir.

For. Mercy on us! what can be the meaning of it? Sure, the moon is in all her fortitudes! Is my niece Angelica at home?

James. Yes, sir.

For. I believe you lie, sir.

James. Sir?

For. I say, you lie, sir. It is impossible that anything should be as I would have it; for I was born, sir, when the crab was ascending; and all my affairs go backward.

James. I can't tell, indeed, sir.

For. No, I know you can't, sir; but I can tell, and foretell, sir.

Enter Nurse.

Nurse, where's your young mistress?

Nurse. Wee'st heart! I know not; they're none of them come home yet. Poor child! I warrant she's fond of seeing the town! Marry, pray heaven, they have given her any dinner! Good lack-a-day! ha, ha, ha! Oh, strange! I'll vow and swear now, ha, ha, ha! Marry, and did you ever see the like?

For. Why, how now! what's the matter?

Nurse. Pray heaven send your worship good luck! marry, and amen, with all my heart! for you have put on one stocking with the wrong side outward.

For. Ha! how? Faith and troth, I'm glad of it! and so I have; that may be good luck, in troth; in troth, it may, very good luck! nay, I have had some omens. I got out of bed backwards, too, this morning, without premeditation; pretty good that, too. But, then, I stumbled coming down stairs, and met a weasel; bad omens those! Some bad, some good;

ACT. DRAWA.—NOS. 109 & 110.

our lives are chequered, mirth and sorrow, woe and plenty, night and day, make up our time. But, in troth, I am pleased at my stocking—very well pleased at my stocking! Oh! here's my niece! Sirrah, go tell Sir Sampson Legend I'll wait on him, if he's at leisure. [Exit JAMES.] 'Tis now three o'clock, a very good hour for business; Mercury governs this hour.

Enter ANGELICA.

Ang. Is it not a good hour for pleasure, too, uncle? Pray lend me your coach; mine's gone to be mended.

For. What, would you be gadding now? Sure, all females are mad to-day. It is of evil portent, and bodes mischief to the master of a family. I remember an old prophecy, written by Meschalah, the Arabian, and thus translated by a reverend Buckinghamshire bard:

When housewives all the house furnish,
And leave good men to brew and bake,
Withouther gulls, then he it shall,
That house with wand upon its head;
And when the head is set in ground,
No mar! if it be fruitful found.

Fruitful! the head fruitful! that bodes horns; the fruit of the head is horns! Dear niece, stay at home; for by the head of the house, is meant the husband; the prophecy needs no explanation.

Ang. Well, but I can neither make you a cuckold, uncle, by going abroad, nor secure you from being one, by staying at home.

For. Yes, yes: while there's one woman left, the prophecy is not in full force.

Ang. But my inclinations are in force. I have a mind to go abroad; and if you won't lend me your coach, I'll take a hackney, or a chair. Why don't you keep your wife at home, if you are jealous of her when she's abroad? You know my aunt is a little retrograde (as you call it) in her nature. Uncle, I'm afraid you are not lord of the ascendant! Ha, ha, ha!

For. Well, pill-fitter! you are very pert; and always ridiculing that celestial science.

Ang. Nay, uncle, don't be angry. If you are, I'll reap up all your false prophecies, ridiculous dreams, and idle divinations. I'll swear you are a nuisance to the neighbourhood. What a bustle did you keep against the last invisible eclipse, laying in provision, as it were for a siege! What a world of fire and candle, matches and tinder-boxes, did you purchase! One would have thought we were ever after to live under ground; or, at least, to make a voyage to Greenland, to inhabit there all the dark season. Indeed, uncle, I'll invite you for a wizard.

For. How, hussy! was there ever such a provoking mix?

Nurse. Oh! merciful father, how she talks!

Ang. Yes, I can make oath of your unlawful midnight practices! you and the old nurse there.

Nurse. Marry, heaven defend! I at midnight practices! Oh, lord! what's here to do? I in unlawful doings with my master's worship! Why, did you ever hear the like now? Sir, did ever I do anything but warm your bed, and buck you up, and set the candle and your tobacco-box by you, and now and then rub the soles of your feet? Oh, lord! I—

Ang. Yes, I saw you together, through the key-hole of the closet, one night, like Saul and the witch of Endor, turning the sieve and shears, and

pricking your thumbs to write poor innocent servants' names in blood, about a little nutmeg-grater which she had forgot in the caudle-cup.

For. I defy you, hussy! but I'll remember this. I'll be revenged on you, cockatrice! I'll hamper you! You have your fortune in your own hands! But I'll find a way to make your lover, your prodigal spendthrift gallant, Valentine, pay for all, I will. I will have patience, since it is the will of the stars that I should be thus tormented; this is the effect of the malicious conjunctions and oppositions in the third house of my nativity; there the curse of kindred was foretold. But I will have my doors locked up; I'll punish you; not a man shall enter my house.

Ang. Do, uncle; lock them up quickly, before my aunt comes home; you'll have a letter for all-mo-to-morrow morning! But let me begone first; and then let no mankind come near the house: but converse with spirits and the celestial signs; the bull, and the ram, and the goat. Bless me! there are a great many horned beasts among the twelve signs, uncle! But cuckolds go to heaven!

For. But there's but one virgin among the twelve signs, spitfire! but one virgin!

Ang. Nor there had not been that one, if she had had to do with anything but astrologers, uncle! That makes my aunt go abroad.

For. How, how! is that the reason? Come, you know something; tell me, and I'll forgive you; do, good niece. Come, you shall have my coach and horses; faith and troth, you shall. Does my wife complain? Come, I know women tell one another.

Ang. Ha, ha, ha!

For. Do you laugh? Well, gentlewoman, I'll—But, come, be a good girl; don't perplex your poor uncle! Tell me—Won't you speak? Od! I'll—

Enter JAMES.

James. Sir Sampson is coming to wait upon you, sir.

Ang. Good b'ye, uncle. Call me a chair. I'll find out my aunt, and tell her she must not come home.

For. I am so perplexed and vexed, I am not fit to receive him; I shall scarce recover myself before the hour be past. Go, nurse, and bid them tell Sir Sampson I'm ready to wait on him.

Nurse. Yes, sir.

For. Well—why, if I were born to be a cuckold, there's no more to be said! He is here already.

Enter Sir SAMPSON LEGEND, with a paper.

Sir S. Nor no more to be done, old boy; that is plain—here it is, I have it in my hand, old Ptolemy; I'll make the ungracious prodigal know who begat him; I will, old Nostrodamus. What, I warrant, my son thought nothing belonged to a father but forgiveness and affection; no authority, no correction, no arbitrary power; nothing to be done, but for him to offend, and me to pardon! I warrant you, if he danc'd till doomsday, he thought I were to pay the piper. Well, but here it is under black and white, *signatum, sigillatum, and deliberatum*—that, as soon as my son Benjamin is arrived, he is to make over to him his right of inheritance. Where's my daughter that is to be, eh! old Merlin? Body of me! I'm so glad I'm revenged on this undutiful rogue!

For. Ods! let me see; let me see the paper. Ay, faith and troth, here it is, if it will but hold; I wish things were done, and the conveyance made.

When was this signed? what hour? Ods! you should have consulted me for the time. Well, but we'll make haste.

Sir S. Haste! ay, ay, haste enough; my son Ben will be in town to-night; I have ordered my lawyer to draw up writings of settlement and jointure; all shall be done to-night. No matter for the time; pr'ythee, brother Foresight, leave superstition; there's no time but the time present; there's no more to be said of what's past; and all that is to come will happen. If the sun shine by day, and the stars by night—why, we shall know one another's faces without the help of a candle; and that's all the stars are good for.

For. How, how, Sir Sampson? that all? Give me leave to contradict you, and tell you, you are ignorant.

Sir S. I tell you, I am wise; and *sapiens dominabitur astris*; there's Latin for you to prove it, and an argument to confound your Ephemeris. Ignorant! I tell you I have travelled, old Percu! and know the globe. I have seen the antipodes, where the sun rises at midnight, and sets at noon-day.

For. But I tell you I have travelled, and travelled in the celestial spheres; know the signs and the planets, and their houses; can judge of motions, direct and retrograde; of sextiles, quadrates, trines, and oppositions; fiery trigons, and aquatical trigons; know whether life shall be long or short, happy or unhappy; whether diseases are curable or incurable; if journeys shall be prosperous, undertakings successful, or goods stolen, recovered: I know—

Sir S. I know the length of the emperor of China's foot; have kissed the great mogul's slipper, and rid a hunting upon an elephant with the cham of Tartary. Body o'me! I have made a cuckold of a king; and the present majesty of Bantam is the issue of these loins.

For. I know when travellers lie, or speak truth, when they don't know it themselves.

Sir S. I have known an astrologer make a cuckold in the twinkling of a star.

For. What! does he twit me with my wife, too? I must be better informed of this. [*Aside.*] Do you mean my wife, Sir Sampson? Though you made a cuckold of the king of Bantam, yet, by the body of the sun—

Sir S. By the horns of the moon, you would say, brother Capricorn.

For. Capricorn in your teeth, thou modern Mandeville; Ferdinand Mendez Pinto was but a type of thee, thou liar of the first magnitude. Take back your paper of inheritance; send your son to sea again. I'll wed my daughter to an Egyptian mummy, ere she shall incorporate with a contemner of sciences and a defamer of virtue.

Sir S. [*Aside.*] Body o'me! I have gone too far; I must not provoke honest Albumazer. An Egyptian mummy is an illustrious creature, my trusty hieroglyphic; and may have significations of futurity about him. Odsbud! I would my son were an Egyptian mummy for thy sake. What! thou art not angry for a jest, my good Haly? I reverence the sun, moon, and stars, with all my heart. What! I'll make thee a present of a mummy. Now I think on't, body o'me! I have a shoulder of an Egyptian king, that I purloined from one of the pyramids, powdered with hieroglyphics; thou shalt have it brought home to thy house, and make an entertainment for all the philomaths, and students in physic and astrology, in and about London.

For. But what do you know of my wife, Sir Sampson?

Sir S. Thy wife is a constellation of virtues; she is the moon, and thou art the man in the moon; nay, she is more illustrious than the moon; for she has her chastity, without her incontinency. 'Sbud! I was but in jest.

Enter JEREMY.

How now? who sent for you, eh? what would you have?

For. Nay, if you were but in jest—Who's that fellow? I don't like his physiognomy.

Sir S. [*To JEREMY.*] My son, sir? what son, sir? my son Benjamin, eh?

Jer. No, sir; Mr. Valentine, my master! it is the first time he has been abroad since his confinement, and he comes to pay his duty to you.

Sir S. Well, sir?

Enter VALENTINE

Jer. He is here, sir.

Val. Your blessing, sir!

Sir S. You've had it already, sir; I think I sent it you to-day, in a bill of four thousand pounds. A great deal of money, brother Foresight!

For. Ay, indeed, Sir Sampson, a great deal of money for a young man; I wonder what he can do with it!

Sir S. Body o' me! so do I. Harkye! Valentine, if there be too much, refund the superfluity; dost hear, boy?

Val. Superfluity, sir! it will scarcely pay my debts. I hope you will have more indulgence than to oblige me to those hard conditions which my necessity signed to.

Sir S. Sir! how, I beseech you, what were you pleased to intimate concerning indulgence?

Val. Why, sir, that you would not go to the extremity of the conditions, but release me at least from some part.

Sir S. Oh! sir, I understand you; that's all, eh?

Val. Yes, sir; all that I presume to ask; but what you, out of fatherly fondness, will be pleased to add, will be doubly welcome.

Sir S. Here's a rogue, brother Foresight, makes a bargain under hand and seal in the morning, and would be released from it in the afternoon! here's a rogue, dog! here's conscience and honesty! This is your wit now, this is the morality of your wit! You are a wit, and have been a beau, and may be a—Why, sirrah! is it not here under hand and seal? Can you deny it?

Val. Sir, I don't deny it!

Sir S. Sirrah, you'll be hanged; I shall live to see you go up Holborn-hill. Has he not a rogue's face? Speak, brother; you understand physiognomy; a hanging look to me; of all my boys the most unlike me. He has a d—d Tyburn face, without the benefit of the clergy.

For. Hum! Truly, I don't care to discourage a young man; he has a violent death in his face; but I hope no danger of hanging.

Val. Sir, is this usage for your son? For that old weather-headed fool, I know how to laugh at him; but you, sir—

Sir S. You, sir! and you, sir! Why, who are you, sir?

Val. Your son, sir.

Sir S. That's more than I know, sir; and I believe not.

Val. Faith! I hope not.

Sir S. What, would you have your mother a whore? Did you ever hear the like? did you ever hear the like? Body o' me—

Val. I would have an excuse for your barbarity and unnatural usage.

Sir S. Excuse! Impudence! Why, sirrah, mayn't I do what I please? are not you my slave? did not I beget you? and might not I have chosen whether I would have begot you or no? Oons! who are you? whence came you? what brought you into the world? how came you here, sir? here, to stand here, upon those two legs, and look erect, with that audacious face, eh? Answer me that. Did you come a volunteer into the world? or did I, with the lawful authority of a parent, press you to the service?

Val. I know no more why I came, than you do why you called me. But here I am; and if you don't mean to provide for me, I desire you would leave me as you found me.

Sir S. With all my heart. Come, uncase, strip, and go naked out of the world as you came into it.

Val. My clothes are soon put off; but you must also divest me of my reason, thought, passions, inclinations, affections, appetites, senses, and the huge train of attendants that you begot along with me.

Sir S. Body o' me! what a many-headed monster have I propagated!

Val. I am of myself, a plain, easy, simple creature; and to be kept at small expense: but the retinue that you gave me are craving and invincible; they are so many devils that you have raised, and will have employment.

Sir S. Oons! what had I to do to get children? Can't a private man be born without all these followers? why, nothing under an emperor should be born with appetites; why, at this rate, a fellow that has but a groat in his pocket may have a stomach capable of a ten shilling ordinary.

Jer. Nay, that's as clear as the sun; I'll make oath of it before any justice in Middlesex.

Sir S. Here's a cormorant, too! 'Sheart! this fellow were not born with you? I did not beget him, did I?

Jer. By the provision that's made for you, you might have begot me, too. Nay, and to tell your worship another truth, I believe you did; for I find I was born with those same whorson appetites, too, that my master speaks of.

Sir S. Why, look you there now! I'll maintain it, that, by the rule of right reason, this fellow ought to have been born without a palate. 'Sheart! what should he do with a distinguishing taste? I warrant, now, he'd rather eat a pheasant than a piece of poor John: and smell, now; why, I warrant, he can smell, and loves perfume above a stink: why, there's it; and music—don't you love music, scoundrel?

Jer. Yes, I have a reasonable good ear, sir, as to jigs and country-dances, and the like. I don't much matter your solos or sonatas; they give me the spleen.

Sir S. The spleen! Ha, ha, ha! A pox confound you! Solos or sonatas! Oons! whose son are you, muckworm?

Jer. I am, by my father, the son of a chairman; my mother sold oysters in winter, and cucumbers in summer: and I came up stairs into the world; for I was born in a cellar.

For. By your looks you shall go up stairs out of the world, too, friend.

Sir S. And if this rogue were anatomized now,
4 G 2

and dissected, he has his vessels of digestion and concoction, and so forth, large enough for the inside of a cardinal; this son of a cucumber! These things are unaccountable and unreasonable. Body o' me! why were I not a bear, that my cubs might have lived upon sucking their paws? Nature has been provident only to bears and spiders; the one has its nutriment in its own hands; and the other spins its habitation out of its own entrails.

Val. Fortune was provident enough to supply all the necessities of my nature, if I had my right inheritance.

Sir S. Again! Oons! haven't you four thousand pounds? If I had it again I would not give thee a groat. What, wouldst thou have me turn pelican, and feed thee out of my own vitals. Odsheart! live by your wits; you are always fond of the wits. Now let's see if you have wit enough to keep yourself. Your brother will be in town to-night, or to-morrow morning; and then, look you perform covenants; and so your friend and servant. Come, brother Foresight.

[*Exit with FORESIGHT.*]

Jer. I told you what your visit would come to.

Val. 'Tis as much as I expected. I did not come to see him; I came to see Angelica; but since she was gone abroad, it was easily turned another way, and at least looked well on my side. What's here? Mrs. Foresight and Mrs. Frail! They are earnest. I'll avoid them. Come this way, and go and inquire when Angelica will return.

[*Exit with JEREMY.*]

Enter Mrs. FORESIGHT and Mrs. FRAIL.

Mrs. F. What have you to do to watch me? 'Slife! I'll do what I please.

Mrs. For. You will?

Mrs. F. Yes, marry, will I! A great piece of business to go to Covent Garden, to take a turn in a hackney-coach with one's friend!

Mrs. For. Nay, two or three turns, I'll take my oath.

Mrs. F. Well, what if I took twenty? I warrant, if you had been there, it had only been innocent recreation! Lord! where's the comfort of this life, if we can't have the happiness of conversing where we like?

Mrs. For. But can't you converse at home? I own it, I think there's no happiness like conversing with an agreeable man; I don't quarrel at that, nor I don't think but your conversation was very innocent. But the place is public; and to be seen with a man in a hackney-coach is scandalous. What if anybody else should have seen you alight, as I did? How can anybody be happy, while they are in perpetual fear of being seen and censured? Besides, it would not only reflect upon you, sister, but on me.

Mrs. F. Pooh! here's a clutter! Why should it reflect upon you? I don't doubt but you have thought yourself happy in a hackney-coach before now! If I had gone to Knightsbridge, or to Chelsea, or to Spring Gardens, or to Barn Elms, with a man alone, something might have been said.

Mrs. For. Why, was I ever in any of those places? What do you mean, sister?

Mrs. F. Was I? What do you mean?

Mrs. For. You have been at a worse place.

Mrs. F. I at a worse place, and with a man?

Mrs. For. I suppose you would not go alone to the World's-end.

Mrs. F. The World's-end! What, do you mean to banter me?

Mrs. For. Poor innocent! You don't know that

there is a place called the World's-end? I'll swear, you can keep your countenance purely! you'd make an admirable player!

Mrs. F. I'll swear you have a great deal of confidence, and, in my mind, too much for the stage.

Mrs. For. Very well; that will appear who has most. You never were at the World's-end?

Mrs. F. No.

Mrs. For. You deny it positively to my face?

Mrs. F. Your face? What's your face?

Mrs. For. No matter for that; it's as good a face as your's.

Mrs. F. Not by a dozen years' wearing. But I do deny it positively to your face, then.

Mrs. For. I'll allow you now to find fault with my face; for, I'll swear your impudence has put me out of countenance. But look you here now, where did you lose this gold bodkin? Oh! sister, sister!

Mrs. F. My bodkin!

Mrs. For. Nay, 'tis your's; look at it.

Mrs. F. Well, if you go to that, where did you find this bodkin? Oh! sister, sister! sister every way!

Mrs. For. Oh! devil on't! that I could not discover her without betraying myself!

[*Aside.*]

Mrs. F. I have heard gentlemen say, sister, that one should take great care, when one makes a thrust in fencing, not to lay open one's self.

Mrs. For. It is very true, sister. Well, since all's out, and, as you say, since we are both wounded, let us do what is often done in duels, take care of one another, and grow better friends than before.

Mrs. F. With all my heart. Well, give me your hand, in token of sisterly secrecy and affection.

Mrs. For. Here it is, with all my heart.

Mrs. F. Well, to tell truth, and speak openly one to another, I'm afraid the world have observed us more than we have observed one another. You have a rich husband, and are provided for: I am at a loss, and have no great stock either of fortune or reputation, and, therefore, must look sharply about me. Sir Sampson has a son that is expected to-night; and, by the account I have heard of his education, can be no conjurer. The estate, you know, is to be made over to him. Now, if I could wheedle him, sister, eh? you understand me?

Mrs. For. I do; and will help you, to the utmost of my power. And I can tell you one thing that falls out luckily enough; my awkward daughter-in-law, who, you know, is designed to be his wife, is grown fond of Mr. Tattle; now, if we can improve that, and make her have an aversion for the booby, it may go a great way towards his liking you. Here they come together; and let us contrive some way or other to leave them together.

Enter TATTLE and Miss PRUE.

Miss P. Mother, mother, mother, look you here!

Mrs. For. Fie, fie, miss, how you bawl! Besides, I have told you, you must not call me mother.

Miss P. What must I call you, then? are you not my father's wife?

Mrs. For. Madam; you must say madam.

Miss P. Look you here, madam, then, what Mr. Tattle has given me. Look you here, cousin; here's a snuff-box; nay, there's snuff in't: here, will you have any? Oh, good! how sweet it is! Mr. Tattle is all over sweet; his peruke is sweet, and his gloves are sweet, and his handkerchief is sweet, pure sweet, sweeter than roses; smell him, mother—madam, I mean. He gave me this ring for a kiss.

Tat. Oh, fie! miss; you must not kiss and tell.

Miss P. Yes, I may tell my mother. And he says he'll give me something to make me smell so. Oh! pray, lend me your handkerchief. Smell, cousin; is it not pure? It's better than lavender, mun. I'm resolved I won't let nurse put any more lavender among my clothes, eh! cousin?

Mrs. F. Fie, miss!

Tat. Oh! madam, you are too severe upon miss; you must not find fault with her pretty simplicity; it becomes her strangely. Pretty miss, don't let them persuade you out of your innocence.

Mrs. For. I wish you don't persuade her out of her innocence.

Tat. Who, I, madam? Oh, lord! how can your ladyship have such a thought? sure, you don't know me.

Mrs. F. Ah! devil, sly devil! He's as close, sister, as a confessor. He thinks we don't observe him.

Tat. Upon reputation—Oh, lord! I swear I would not for the world.

Mrs. F. Oh, hang you! who'll believe you? You'll be hanged before you'd confess. We know you—she's very pretty! Lord! ne'er stir; I don't know, but I fancy, if I were a man—

Miss P. How you love to jeer one, cousin!

Mrs. For. Harkye! sister, by my soul, the girl is spoiled already: d'ye think she'll ever endure a great lubberly tarpaulin? 'Gad! I warrant you, she won't let him come near her, after Mr. Tattle.

Mrs. F. On my soul, I am afraid not, eh! filthy creature, that smells all of pitch and tar! Devil take you, you confounded toad! you will supplant the sailor.

Mrs. For. My husband will hang us: he'll think we brought them acquainted.

Mrs. F. Come, faith, let us begone. If my brother Foresight should find us with them, he'd think so, sure enough.

Mrs. For. So he would: but then, the leaving them together is as bad; and he's such a sly devil, he'll never miss an opportunity.

Mrs. F. I don't care; I won't be seen in it. *[Exit.*

Mrs. For. Well, Mr. Tattle, we trust to your discretion. *[Exit.*

Miss P. What makes them go away, Mr. Tattle? What do they mean, do you know?

Tat. Yes, my dear, I think I can guess; but hang me if I know the reason of it.

Miss P. Come, must not we go too?

Tat. No, no; they don't mean that.

Miss P. No! what then? What shall you and I do together?

Tat. I must make love to you, pretty miss; will you let me make love to you?

Miss P. Yes, if you please.

Tat. Frank, egad! at least. What a plague does Mrs. Foresight mean by this civility? Is it to make a fool of me? or does she leave us together out of good morality, and do as she would be done by. Egad! I'll understand it so. *[Aside.*

Miss P. Well, and how will you make love to me? Come, I long to have you begin. Must I make love, too? You must tell me how.

Tat. You must let me speak, miss; you must not speak first. I must ask you questions, and you must answer.

Miss P. What, is it like the catechism? Come, then, ask me.

Tat. D'ye think you can love me?

Miss P. Yes.

Tat. Pooh! plague! you must not say yes al-

ready. I sha'n't care a farthing for you, then, in a twinkling.

Miss P. What must I say, then?

Tat. Why, you must say no; or, believe not; or, you can't tell.

Miss P. Why, must I tell a lie then?

Tat. Yes, if you'd be well-bred. All well-bred persons lie. Besides, you are a woman; you must never speak what you think: your words must contradict your thoughts; but your actions must contradict your words. So, when I ask you if you can love me, you must say no; but you must love me, too. If I tell you you are handsome, you must deny it, and say, I flatter you; but you must think yourself more charming than I speak you, and like me for the beauty which I say you have, as much as if I had it myself. If I ask you to kiss me, you must be angry; but you must not refuse me. If I ask you for more, you must be more angry but more complying; and as soon as ever I make you say you'll cry out, you must be sure to hold your tongue.

Miss P. Oh, lord! I swear this is pure! I like it better than our old-fashioned country way of speaking one's mind. And must not you lie, too?

Tat. Hum! Yes; but you must believe I speak truth.

Miss P. Oh, gemeni! Well, I always had a great mind to tell lies; but they frightened me, and said it was a sin.

Tat. Well, my pretty creature, will you make me happy by giving me a kiss?

Miss P. No, indeed; I'm angry at you.

[Runs and kisses him.]

Tat. Hold, hold! that's pretty well: but you should not have given it to me, but have suffered me to have taken it.

Miss P. Well, we'll do it again.

Tat. With all my heart. Now, then, my little angel!

[Kisses her.]

Miss P. Pish!

Tat. That's right. Again, my charmer!

[Kisses again.]

Miss P. Oh, fie! nay, now I can't abide you.

Tat. Admirable! That was as well as if you had been born and bred in Covent-garden. And won't you shew me, pretty miss, where your bed-chamber is?

Miss P. No, indeed, won't I: but I'll run there, and hide myself from you, behind the curtains.

Tat. I'll follow you.

Miss P. Ah! but I will hold the door with both hands, and be angry; and you shall push me down before you come in.

Tat. No, I'll come in first.

Miss P. Will you? then I'll be more angry, and more complying.

Tat. Then I'll make you cry out.

Miss P. Oh! but you sha'n't, for I'll hold my tongue.

Tat. Oh! my dear, apt scholar!

Miss P. Well, now I'll run, and make more haste than you. *[Exit.]*

Tat. You shall not fly so fast as I'll pursue. *[Exit.]*

Enter Nurse.

Nurse. Miss, miss, Miss Prue! Come to your father, child. Open the door, miss. I hear you cry husht! Oh, lord! who's there? *[Peeps.]* A man with her! *[Knocks.]* Won't you open the door? I'll come in the back way. *[Exit.]*

Re-enter TATTLE and MISS PRUE.

Miss P. Oh, lord! she's coming; and she'll tell my father. What shall I do now?

Tat. Plague take her! if she had staid two minutes longer, I should have wished for her coming.

[*Aside.*]

Miss P. Oh, dear! what shall I say? Tell me, Mr. Tattle, tell me a lie.

Tat. There's no occasion for a lie; I could never tell a lie to no purpose. But, since we have done nothing, we must say nothing, I think. I hear her. I'll leave you together, and come off as you can.

[*Thrusts her in, shuts the door, and exits.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Room in Foresight's House.

Enter VALENTINE, SCANDAL, and ANGELICA.

Ang. You can't accuse me of inconstancy; I never told you that I loved you.

Val. But I can accuse you of uncertainty, for not telling me whether you did or not.

Ang. You mistake indifference for uncertainty; I never had concern enough to ask myself the question.

Scand. Nor good-nature enough to answer him that did ask you: I'll say that for you, madam.

Ang. What are you setting up for good-nature?

Scand. Only for the affectation of it, as the women do for ill-nature.

Ang. Persuade your friend that it is all affectation.

Val. I shall receive no benefit from the opinion, for I know no effectual difference between continued affectation and reality.

Enter Sir SAMPSON LEGEND, Mrs. FRAIL, TATTLE, MISS PRUE, and JAMES.

Sir S. Is Ben come? Odso! my son Ben come? Ods! I'm glad on't. Where is he? I long to see him. Now, Mrs. Frail, you shall see my son Ben. Body o' me! he's the hopes of my family. I haven't seen him these three years: I warrant he's grown! Call him in; bid him make haste. I'm ready to cry for joy.

[*Exit JAMES.*]

Mrs. F. Now, miss, you shall see your husband.

[*Aside to Miss P.*]

Miss P. Pish! he shall be none of my husband.

[*Aside to Mrs. F.*]

Mrs. F. Hush! Well, he sha'n't: leave that to me. I'll beckon Mr. Tattle to us.

Ang. Won't you stay and see your brother?

Val. We are the twin stars, and cannot shine in one sphere; when he rises, I must set. Besides, if I should stay, I don't know but my father, in good-nature, may press me to the immediate signing the deed of conveyance of my estate; and I'll defer it as long as I can. Well, you'll come to a resolution.

Ang. I cannot. Resolution must come to me, or I shall never have one.

Scand. Come, Valentine, I'll go with you: I have something in my head to communicate to you.

[*Exit with VALENTINE.*]

Sir S. What! is my son Valentine gone? What! is he sneaked off, and would not see his brother? There's an unnatural whelp! there's an ill-natured dog! What! were you here, too, madam, and could not keep him? could neither love, nor duty, nor natural affection, oblige him? Odsbud! madam, have no more to say to him; he is not worth your consideration. The rogue has not a drachm of ge-

nerous love about him! all interest, all interest! He's an undone scoundrel, and courts your estate. Body o' me! he does not care a doit for your person.

Ang. I am pretty even with him, Sir Sampson; for, if ever I could have liked anything in him, it should have been his estate, too.

Sir S. Odsbud! well spoken! and you are a wiser woman than I thought you were.

Ang. If I marry, Sir Sampson, I am for a good estate with any man, and for any man with a good estate: therefore, if I were obliged to make a choice, I declare I'd rather have you than your son.

Sir S. Faith and troth! you are a wise woman; and I'm glad to hear you say so. I was afraid you were in love with a reprobate. Od! I was sorry for you with all my heart. Hang him, mongrel! cast him off. You shall see the rogue shew himself, and make love to some desponding Cadua of fourscore for sustenance. Od! I love to see a young spend-thrift forced to cling to an old woman for support, like ivy round a dead oak; faith I do. I love to see them hug and cotton together, like down upon a thistle.

Enter BEN and JAMES.

Ben. Where's father?

James. There, sir; his back's towards you. [*Exit.*]

Sir S. My son Ben! Bless thee, my dear boy! Body o' me! thou art heartily welcome.

Ben. Thank you, father; and I'm glad to see you.

Sir S. Odsbud! and I'm glad to see thee. Kiss me, boy; kiss me again and again, dear Ben.

[*Kisses him.*]

Ben. Sc, so; enough, father. Mess! I'd rather kiss these gentlewomen.

Sir S. And so thou shalt. Mrs. Angelica, my son Ben.

Ben. Forsooth, if you please! [*Salutes ANG.*] Nay, mistress, I'm not for dropping anchor here; about ship, i'faith! [*Kisses Mrs. F.*] Nay, and you, too, my little cock-boat! so. [*Kisses Miss P.*]

Tat. Sir, you're welcome ashore.

Ben. Thank you, thank you, friend.

Sir S. Thou hast been many a weary league, Ben, since I saw thee.

Ben. Ay, ay! been? been far enough, and that be all. Well, father, and how do all at home? how does brother Dick, and brother Val?

Sir S. Dick! Body o' me! Dick has been dead these two years. I writ you word when you were at Leghorn.

Ben. Mess! that's true: marry, I had forgot. Dick is dead, as you say. Well, and how? I have a many questions to ask you. Well, you ben't married again, father, be you?

Sir S. No; I intend you shall marry, Ben; I would not marry, for thy sake.

Ben. Nay, what does that signify? An' you marry again, why, then, I'll go to sea again; so there's one for t'other, and that be all. Pray, don't let me be your hindrance; e'en marry, a' God's name, and the wind sit that way. As for my part, mayhap, I have no mind to marry.

Mrs. F. That would be pity, such a handsome young gentleman.

Ben. Handsome! he, he, he! Nay, forsooth, an' you be for joking, I'll joke with you; for I love my jest, an' the ship were sinking, as we said at sea. But I'll tell you why I don't much stand towards matrimony. I love to roam about from port to port, and from land to land; I could never abide to be port-bound, as we call it. Now, a man that is mar-

ried, has, as it were, d'ye see, his feet in the bilboes, and, mayhap, mayn't get them out again when he would.

Sir S. Ben is a wag.

Ben. A man that is married, d'ye see, is no more like another man, than a galley-slave is like one of us free sailors: he is chained to an oar all his life; and, mayhap, forced to tug a crazy vessel into the bargain.

Sir S. A very wag! Ben is a very wag! only a little rough; he wants a little polishing.

Mrs. F. Not at all: I like his humour mightily; it is plain and honest. I should like such a humour in a husband extremely.

Ben. Say'n you so, forsooth? Marry, and I should like such a handsome gentlewoman for a bedfellow hugely. How say you, mistress? would you like going to sea? Mess! you're a tight vessel, and well rigged, an' you were but as well manned.

Mrs. F. I should not doubt that, if you were master of me.

Ben. But I'll tell you one thing, an' you come to sea in a high wind, or that lady, you mayn't carry so much sail o' your head. Top and top-gallant, by the mess!

Mrs. F. No! why so?

Ben. Why, an' you do, you may run the risk to be overset; and then you'll carry your keels above water. He, he, he!

Ang. I swear, Mr. Benjamin is the veriest wag in nature; an absolute sea wit.

Sir S. Nay, Ben has parts; but, as I told you before, they want a little polishing. You must not take anything ill, madam.

Ben. No, I hope the gentlewoman is not angry: I mean all in good part: for, if I give a jest, I'll take a jest: and so, forsooth, you may be as free with me.

Ang. I thank you, sir; I am not at all offended. But, methinks, Sir Sampson, you should leave him alone with his mistress. Mr. Tattle, we must not hinder lovers.

Tat. [Aside to Miss P.] Well, miss, I have your promise. [Exit with ANGELICA.]

Sir S. Body o' me! madam, you say true. Look you, Ben, this is your mistress. Come, miss, you must not be shame-faced; we'll leave you together.

Miss P. I can't abide to be left alone. Mayn't my cousin stay with me?

Sir S. No, no. Come, let's away.

Ben. Look you, father? mayhap, the young woman mayn't take a liking to me.

Sir S. I warrant thee, boy! Come, come; we'll begone. I'll venture that. [Exit with Mrs. F.]

Ben. Come, mistress, will you please to sit down? For, an' you stand a-stern a that'n, we shall never grapple together. Come, I'll haul a chair; there, an' you please you to sit, I'll sit by you.

Miss P. You need not sit so near one; if you have anything to say, I can hear you farther off; I a'n't deaf.

Ben. Why, that's true, as you say, nor I a'n't dumb; I can be heard as far as another. I'll heave off, to please you. [Sits farther off.] An' we were a league asunder, I'd undertake to hold discourse with you, an' 'twere not a main high wind, indeed, and full in my teeth. Look you! forsooth, I am, as it were, bound for the land of matrimony; 'tis a voyage, d'ye see, that was none of my seeking; I was commanded by father. How say you, mistress? The short of the thing is, that, if you like me, and I like you, we may chance to swing in a hammock together.

Miss P. I don't know what to say to you; nor I don't care to speak with you at all.

Ben. No! I'm sorry for that. But, pray, why are you so scornful?

Miss P. As long as one must not speak one's mind, one had better not speak at all, I think; and, truly, I won't tell a lie for the matter.

Ben. Nay, you say true in that; it's but a folly to lie: for to speak one thing, and to think just the contrary way, is, as it were, to look one way, and to row another. Now, for my part, d'ye see, I'm for carrying things above board; I'm not for keeping anything under hatches; so, that, if you ben't as willing as I, say so, a God's name! there's no harm done. Mayhap, you may be shame-faced; some maidens, thof they love a man well enough, yet they don't care to tell'n so to 's face. If that's the case, why silence gives consent.

Miss P. But I'm sure it is not so, for I'll speak sooner than you shall believe that; and I'll speak truth, though one should always tell a lie to a man; and I don't care, let my father do what he will; I'm too big to be whipped; so I'll tell you plainly, I don't like you, nor love you at all; nor never will, that's more. So, there's your answer for you; and don't trouble me no more, you ugly thing!

Ben. Look you! young woman, you may learn to give good words, however. I spoke you fair, d'ye see, and civil. As for your love, or your liking, I don't value it of a rope's-end; and, mayhap, I like you as little as you do me. What I said in obedience to father. 'Gad! I fear a whipping no more than you do. But I tell you one thing, if you should give such language at sea, you'd have a cat-o'-nine-tails laid across your shoulders. Flesh! who are you? You heard t'other handsome young woman speak civilly to me of her own accord. Whatever you think of yourself, 'gad! I don't think you are any more to compare to her, than a can of small beer to a bowl of punch.

Miss P. Well, and there's a handsome gentleman, and a fine gentleman, and a sweet gentleman, that was here, that loves me, and I love him; and if he sees you speak to me any more, he'll thrash your jacket for you, he will, you great sea-calf!

Ben. What! do you mean that fair-weather spark that was here just now? Will he thrash my jacket? Let'n, let'n! But an' he comes near me, mayhap, I may give'n a salt eel for's supper, for all that. What does father mean, to leave me alone, as soon as I come home, with such a dirty dowdy? Sea-calf! I a'n't calf enough to lick your chalked face, you cheese-curd, you! Marry thee! Oons! I'll marry a Lapland witch as soon, and live upon selling contrary winds and wrecked vessels.

Miss P. I won't be called names, nor I won't be abused thus, so I won't! If I were a man [Cries.] you durst not talk at this rate; no, you durst not, you stinking tar-barrel.

Enter Mrs. FORESIGHT and Mrs. FRAIL.

Mrs. For. They have quarrelled, just as we could wish. [Apart to Mrs. F.]

Ben. Tar-barrel! Let your sweetheart there call me so, if he'll take your part—your Tom Essence—and I'll say something to him. 'Gad! I'll lace his musk doublet for him. I'll make him smell more like a weasel than a civet-cat, afore I ha' done with'n.

Mrs. For. Bless me! what's the matter, miss? What, does she cry? Mr. Benjamin, what have you done to her?

Ben. Let her cry: the more she cries the less she'll—she has been gathering foul weather in her mouth, and now it rains out at her eyes.

Mrs. For. Come, miss, come along with me; and tell me, poor child!

Mrs. F. Lord! what shall we do? There's my brother Foresight and Sir Sampson coming. Sister, do you take miss down into the parlour, [*Exeunt Mrs. For. and Miss P.*] and I'll carry Mr. Benjamin into my chamber; for they must not know that they are fallen out. Come, sir, will you venture yourself with me? [*Looking kindly on him.*]

Ben. Venture! Mess! and that I will, though it were to sea in a storm. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter Sir SAMPSON LEGEND and FORESIGHT.

Sir S. I left them together here. What, are they gone? *Ben* is a brisk boy: he has got her into a corner. Father's own son, faith! he'll toulze her, and mouzle her. The rogue's sharp-set, coming from sea. If he should not stay for saying grace, old Foresight, but fall to without the help of a parson, eh? Od! if he should, I could not be angry with him; 'twould be but like me, a chip of the old block. Ha! thou'rt melancholic, old prognostication! as melancholic as if thou hadst spilt the salt, or pared thy nails on a Sunday. Come, cheer up; look about thee; look up, old star-gazer! Now is he poring upon the ground for a crooked pin, or an old horse-nail, with the head towards him.

For. Sir Sampson, we'll have the wedding to-morrow morning.

Sir S. With all my heart.

For. At ten o'clock; punctually at ten.

Sir S. To a minute, to a second: thou shalt set thy watch, and the bridegroom shall observe its motions; they shall be married to a minute, go to bed to a minute—

Enter JAMES.

James. Sir, Mr. Scandal desires to speak with you upon earnest business, which must be told you, he says, within this hour, or 'twill be too late.

For. I'll wait on him. Sir Sampson, your servant. [*Exit.*]

Sir S. What is this business, friend?

James. Sir, 'tis about your son Valentine: something has appeared to him in a dream, that makes him prophecy. [*Exit.*]

Sir S. Hoity-toity! what have I to do with his dreams or his divinations? Body o' me! this is a trick to defer signing the conveyance. I warrant, the devil will tell him, in a dream, that he must not part with his estate. But I'll bring him a parson to tell him that the devil's a liar; or, if that won't do, I'll bring a lawyer that shall out-lie the devil; and so, I'll try whether my blackguard or his shall get the better of the day. [*Exit.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—Valentine's Lodgings.

Enter SCANDAL and JEREMY.

Scand. Well, is your master ready? Does he look madly, and talk madly?

Jer. Yes, sir; you need make no great doubt of that: he, that was so near turning poet yesterday morning, can't be much to seek in playing the mad-man to-day.

Scand. Would he have Angelica acquainted with the design?

Jer. No, sir, not yet. He has a mind to try whether his playing the madman won't make her play the fool, and fall in love with him; or, at least, own that she has loved him all this while, and concealed it.

Scand. I saw her take coach just now with her maid; and I think I heard her bid the coachman drive hither.

Jer. Like enough, sir; for I told her maid this morning, my master was run stark mad, only for love of her mistress. [*Knock.*] I hear a coach stop; if it should be she, sir, I believe he would not see her, till he hears how she takes it.

Scand. Well, I'll try her: 'tis she; here she comes.

Enter ANGELICA and JENNY.

Ang. Mr. Scandal, I suppose you don't think it a novelty to see a woman visit a man at his own lodgings in a morning.

Scand. Not upon a kind occasion, madam. But when a lady comes tyrannically to insult a ruined lover, and make manifest the cruel triumphs of her beauty, the barbarity of it something surprises me.

Ang. I don't like raillery from a serious face. [*To JEREMY.*] Pray, tell me what is the matter?

Jer. No strange matter, madam; my master's mad, that's all. I suppose your ladyship has thought him so a great while.

Ang. How d'ye mean, mad?

Jer. Why, faith, madam, he's mad for want of his wits, just as he was poor for want of money. His head is e'en as light as his pockets; and anybody that has a mind to a bad bargain, can't do better than to beg him for his estate.

Ang. If you speak truth, your endeavouring at wit is very unseasonable.

Scand. She's concerned, and loves him! [*Aside.*]

Ang. Mr. Scandal, you can't think me guilty of so much inhumanity as not to be concerned for a man I must own myself obliged to. Pray, tell me the truth.

Scand. Faith! madam, I wish telling a lie would mend the matter. But this is no new effect of an unsuccessful passion.

Ang. [*Aside.*] I know not what to think: yet I should be vexed to have a trick put upon me. May I not see him?

Scand. I am afraid the physician is not willing you should see him yet. Jeremy, go in and inquire. [*Exit JEREMY.*]

Ang. Ha! I saw him wink and smile. I fancy a trick. I'll try. [*Aside.*] I would disguise to all the world, sir, a failing, which I must own to you: I fear my happiness depends upon the recovery of Valentine.

Scand. So, this is pretty plain! [*Aside.*] Be not too much concerned, madam: I hope his condition is not desperate. An acknowledgment of love from you, perhaps, may work a cure, as the fear of your aversion occasioned his distemper.

Ang. Say you so? nay, then, I'm convinced; and if I don't play trick for trick, may I never taste the pleasure of revenge! [*Aside.*] Acknowledgment of love! I find you have mistaken my compassion, and think me guilty of a weakness I am a stranger to. Good-nature and humanity oblige me to be concerned for him; but to love, is neither in my power nor inclination.

Scand. Eh! brave woman, i'faith! Won't you see him, then, if he desires it?

Ang. What signifies a madman's desires? Besides, 'twould make me uneasy. If I don't see him, perhaps my concern for him may lessen. If I forget him, 'tis no more than he has done by himself; and now the surprise is over, methinks I am not half so sorry as I was.

Scand. So, faith! good-nature works apace; you were confessing just now an obligation to his love.

Ang. But I have considered that passions are unreasonable and involuntary. If he loves, he can't help it; and if I don't love, I cannot help it, no more than he can help his being a man, or I my being a woman; or no more than I can help my want of inclination to stay longer here.

[*Exit with JENNY.*]

Scand. Humph! An admirable composition, faith! this same womankind.

Re-enter JEREMY.

Jer. What, is she gone, sir?

Scand. Gone! why, she was never here, nor anywhere else; nor I don't know her if I see her, nor you neither.

Jer. Good lack! what's the matter now? Are any more of us to be mad? Why, sir, my master longs to see her; and is almost mad in good earnest with the joyful news of her being here.

Scand. We are all under a mistake. Ask no questions, for I can't resolve you; but I'll inform your master. In the meantime, if our project succeed no better with his fancy than it does with his mistress, he may descend from his exaltation of madness into the road of common sense, and be content only to be made a fool with other reasonable people. I hear Sir Sampson. You know your cue; I'll to your master. [*Exit.*]

Enter Sir SAMPSON LEGEND and BUCKRAM.

Sir S. D'ye see, Mr. Buckram, here's the paper signed with his own hand?

Buck. Good, sir! And the conveyance is ready drawn in this bag, if he be ready to sign and seal.

Sir S. Ready! Body o' me! he must be ready: his sham sickness shan't excuse him. Oh! here's his scoundrel. Sirrah, where's your master?

Jer. Ah; sir, he's quite gone.

Sir S. Gone! what, he's not dead?

Jer. No, sir; not dead.

Sir S. What, is he gone out of town? run away, eh? has he tricked me? Speak, varlet!

Jer. No, no, sir; he's safe enough, sir, an' he were but as sound, poor gentleman! He is, indeed, here, sir, and not here, sir.

Sir S. Heyday, rascal! do you banter me, sirrah, d'ye banter me? Speak, sirrah! where is he? for I will find him.

Jer. Would you could, sir! for he has lost himself. Indeed, sir, I have almost broke my heart about him. I can't refrain tears when I think on him, sir. I'm as melancholy for him as a passing-bell, sir; or a horse in a pond.

Sir S. A plague confound your similitudes, sir! Speak to be understood; and tell me in plain terms what is the matter with him, or I'll crack your fool's skull.

Jer. Ah! you've hit, sir; that's the matter with him, sir: his skull's cracked, poor gentleman! he's stark mad, sir.

Sir S. Mad!

Buck. What, is he *non compos*?

Jer. Quite *non compos*, sir.

Buck. Why, then, all's obliterated, Sir Sampson. If he be *non compos mentis*, his act and deed will be of no effect; it is not good in law.

Sir S. Oons! I won't believe it; let me see him, sir. Mad! I'll make him find his senses.

Jer. Mr. Scandal is with him, sir: I'll knock at the door.

[*Goes to the scene, which opens and discovers VALENTINE upon a couch, disorderly dressed; SCANDAL near him.*]

Sir S. How now! what's here to do?

Val. Ha! who's that?

[*Starting.*]

Scand. For heaven's sake! softly, sir, and gently: don't provoke him.

Val. Answer me; who's that and that?

Sir S. Gadsbobs! does he not know? is he mischievous? I'll speak gently. Val, Val, dost thou not know me, boy? not know thy own father; Val? I am thy own father; and this, honest Brief Buckram, the lawyer.

Val. It may be so—I did not know you—the world is full. There are people that we do know, and people that we do not know; and yet the sun shines upon all alike. There are fathers that have many children; and there are children that have many fathers—'tis strange! but I am honesty, and come to give the world the lie.

Sir S. Body o' me! I know not what to say to him.

Val. Why does that lawyer wear black? Does he carry his conscience without-side? Lawyer, what art thou? dost thou know me?

Buck. Oh, lord! what must I say? Yes, sir.

Val. Thou liest; for I am honesty. 'Tis hard I cannot get a livelihood amongst you. I have been sworn out of Westminster-hall the first day of every term. Let me see—no matter how long—I am honesty, and can't tell: I have very few acquaintance.

Sir S. Body o' me! he talks sensibly in his madness. Has he no intervals?

Jer. Very short, sir.

Buck. Sir, I can do you no service while he's in this condition. Here's your paper, sir. He may do me a mischief, if I stay. The conveyance is ready, sir, if he recovers his senses. [*Exit.*]

Sir S. Hold, hold! don't you go yet.

Scand. You'd better let him go, sir; and send for him, if there be occasion; for I fancy his presence provokes him more.

Val. Is the lawyer gone? 'Tis well! then we may drink about without going together by the ears. Heigho! what o'clock is it? My father here! your blessing, sir.

Sir S. He recovers! Bless thee, Val! How dost thou do, boy?

Val. Thank you, sir, pretty well. I have been a little indisposed. Won't you please to sit, sir?

Sir S. Ay, boy! Come, thou shalt sit down by me.

Val. Sir, 'tis my duty to wait.

Sir S. No, no: come, come, sit thee down, honest Val. How dost thee do? Let me feel thy pulse. Oh! pretty well now, Val. Body o' me! I was sorry to see thee indisposed: but I am glad thou art better, honest Val!

Val. I thank you, sir.

Scand. Miracle! the monster grows loving!

[*Aside.*]

Sir S. Let me feel thy hand again, Val. It does not shake: I believe thou canst write, Val. Eh, boy? thou canst write thy name, Val? Jeremy,

step and overtake Mr. Buckram: bid him make haste back with the conveyance; quick!

[Exit JEREMY.]

Scand. [Aside.] That ever I should suspect such a heathen of any remorse!

Sir S. Dost thou know this paper, Val? I know thou'rt honest, and will perform articles.

[Shows him the paper, but holds it out of his reach.]

Val. Pray, let me see it, sir; you hold it so far off, that I can't tell whether I know it or not.

Sir S. See it, boy! Ay, ay; why, thou dost see it: 'tis thy own hand, Vally. Why, let me see, I can read it as plain as can be. Look you here: [reads] "*The condition of this obligation*"—look you, as plain as can be, so it begins. And, then, at the bottom: "*As witness my hand, VALENTINE LEGEND*," in great letters. Why, 'tis as plain as the nose on one's face. What, are my eyes better than thine? I believe I can read it farther off yet: let me see. [Stretches his arm as far as he can.]

Val. Will you please to let me hold it, sir?

Sir S. Let thee hold it, say'st thou? Ay, with all my heart. What matter is it who holds it? What need anybody hold it? I'll put it in my pocket, Val, and then nobody need hold it. [Puts the paper in his pocket.] There, Val: it's safe enough, boy. But thou shalt have it as soon as thou hast set thy hand to another paper, little Val.

Enter JEREMY and BUCKRAM.

Val. What, is my bad genius here again? Oh! no; 'tis the lawyer with an itching palm; and he's come to be scratched. My nails are not long enough. Let me have a pair of red-hot tongs, quickly; and you shall see me act St. Dunstan, and lead the devil by the nose.

Buck. Oh, lord! let me be gone. I'll not venture myself with a madman. [Runs out.]

Val. Ha, ha, ha; you need not run so fast. Honesty will not overtake you. Ha, ha, ha! the rogue found me to be in *formâ pauperis* presently.

Sir S. Oons! what a vexation is here! I know not what to do or say, or which way to go.

Val. Who's that, that's out of his way? I am honesty, and can set him right. Harkye! friend, the straight road is the worst way you can go. But it is wonderful strange, Jeremy!

Jer. What is it, sir?

Val. That grey hairs should cover a green head—and I make a fool of my father.

For. [Without.] Where is he? where is he?

Val. What's here? *Erra pater*, or a bearded sibyl? If prophecy comes, honesty must give place. [Exit VALENTINE and JEREMY.]

Enter FORESIGHT, Mrs. FORESIGHT, and Mrs. FRAIL.

For. What says he? What did he prophecy? Ah! Sir Sampson! Bless us! how are we?

Sir S. Are we? A plague on your prognostications! Why, we are fools as we used to be. Oons! that you could not foresee that the moon would predominate, and my son be mad! Where are your oppositions, your trines, and your quadrates? Ah! plague on't: that I, who know the world, and men and manners, who don't believe a syllable in the sky and stars, and sun and almanacs, and trash, should be directed by a dreamer, an omen-hunter, and defer business in expectation of a lucky hour! when, body o'me! there never was a lucky hour after the first opportunity. [Exit.]

For. Ah! Sir Sampson, heaven help your head!

This is none of your lucky hour! *Nemo omnibus horis sapit!* What, is he gone, and in contempt of science? Ill stars and unconvertible ignorance attend him!

Scand. You must excuse his passion, Mr. Foresight, for he has been heartily vexed. His son is *non compos mentis*; and, thereby, incapable of making any conveyance in law; so, that all his measures are disappointed.

For. Ah! say you so?

Mrs. F. What, has my sea-lover lost his anchor of hope, then? [Aside to Mrs. FORESIGHT.]

Mrs. For. Oh! sister, what will you do with him.

Mrs. F. Do with him! Send him to sea again in the next foul weather. He's used to an inconstant element, and won't be surprised to see the tide turned.

For. Wherein was I mistaken, not to foresee this? [Considers.]

Scand. But would you not talk with Valentine? Perhaps you may understand him; I am apt to believe, there is something mysterious in his discourse; and, sometimes, rather think him inspired than mad.

For. You speak with singular good judgment, Mr. Scandal, truly. I am inclining to your Turkish opinion in this matter, and do reverence a man whom the vulgar think mad. Let us go to him.

[Exit with SCANDAL.]

Mrs. F. Sister, do you go with them; I'll find out my lover, and give him his discharge, and come to you. [Exit Mrs. FORESIGHT.] On my conscience, here he is!

Enter BEN.

Ben. All mad, I think. Flesh! I believe all the calentures of the sea are come ashore, for my part.

Mrs. F. Mr. Benjamin in choler?

Ben. No, I'm pleased well enough, now I have found you. Mess! I have had such a hurricane on your account yonder!

Mrs. F. My account? Pray, what's the matter?

Ben. Why, father came, and found me squabbling with yon chitty-faced thing, as he would have me marry; so he asked what was the matter. He asked in a surly sort of a way. It seems brother Val is gone mad, and so that put'n in a passion; but what did I know of that? what's that to me? So he asked in a surly sort of manner, and, gad! I answered 'em as surly. What tho' he be my father, I a'n't bound prentice to 'em: so, faith, I told'n in plain terms, if I were minded to marry, I'd marry to please myself, not him; and for the young woman that he provided for me, I thought it more fitting for her to learn her sampler, and make dirt-pies, than to look after a husband; for my part, I was none of her man, I had another voyage to make, let him take it as he will.

Mrs. F. So, then, you intend to go to sea again?

Ben. Nay, nay, my mind ran upon you, but I would not tell him so much. So he said, he'd make my heart ache; and if so be that he could get a woman to his mind, he'd marry himself. Gad! says I, an' you play the fool, and marry at these years, there's more danger of your head's aching than my heart. He was wondrous angry when I giv'n that wipe, he hadn't a word to say; and so I left'n; and the green girl together; mayhap, the bee may bite, and he'll marry her himself—with all my heart!

Mrs. F. And were you this undutiful and graceless wretch to your father?

Ben. Then why was he graceless first?

Mrs. F. Oh! impiety, now have I been mistaken. What an inhuman merciless creature have I set my heart upon. Oh! I am happy to have discovered the shelves and quicksands that lurk beneath that faithless smiling face!

Ben. Hey-toss! what's the matter now? Why, you ben't angry, be you?

Mrs. F. Oh! see me no more, for thou wert born among rocks, suckled by whales, cradled in a tempest, and whistled to by winds; and thou art come forth with fins and scales, and three rows of teeth, a most outrageous fish of prey.

Ben. Oh, lord! oh, lord! she's mad, poor young woman. Love has turned her senses; her brain is quite overset. Well-a-day! how shall I do to set her to-rights?

Mrs. F. No, no, I am not mad, monster; I am wise enough to find you out. Hadst thou the impudence to aspire at being a husband, with that stubborn and disobedient temper? You, that know not how to submit to a father, presume to have a sufficient stock of duty to undergo a wife? I should have been finely fobbed indeed, very finely fobbed.

Ben. Harkye! forsooth, if so be that you are in your right senses, d'ye see! for aught as I perceive I'm like to be finely fobbed, if I have got anger here upon your account, and you are tacked about already. What d'ye mean? after all your fair speeches and stroking my cheeks, and kissing and hugging, what, would you sheer off so? would you? and leave me aground?

Mrs. F. No, I'll leave you adrift, and go which way you will.

Ben. What, are you false-hearted then?

Mrs. F. Only the wind's changed.

Ben. More shame for you. The wind's changed? It is an ill-wind blows nobody good. Mayhap I have a good riddance on you, if these be your tricks. What, did you mean all this while to make a fool of me?

Mrs. F. Any fool, but a husband.

Ben. Husband! Gad! I would not be your husband, if you would have me, now I know your mind; thof you had your weight in gold and jewels, and thof I loved you never so well.

Mrs. F. Why, canst thou love, Porpus?

Ben. No matter what I can do; don't call names. I don't love you so well as to bear that, whatever I did. I'm glad you shew yourself, mistress: let them marry you as don't know you. Gad! I know you too well, by sad experience; I believe, he, that marries you, will go to sea in a hen-pecked frigate. I believe that, young woman; and mayhap may come to an anchor at Cuckold's Point; so there's a dash for you, take it as you will; mayhap you may hollow after me when I won't come to you. [*Exit.*]

Mrs. F. Ha, ha, ha! no doubt on't. [*Sings.*] "My true love is gone to sea!"

Enter Mrs. FORESIGHT.

Oh! sister, had you come a minute sooner, you would have seen the resolution of a lover. Honest Tar and I are parted; and with the same indifference that we met. On my life, I am half vexed at the insensibility of a brute I despised.

Mrs. For. What, then, he bore it most heroically?

Mrs. F. Most tyrannically; for you see he has got the start of me; and I, the poor forsaken maid, am left complaining on the shore. But I'll tell you a hint that he has given me. Sir Sampson is en-

raged, and talks desperately of committing matrimony himself. If he has a mind to throw himself away, he can't do it more effectually than upon me, if we could bring it about.

Mrs. For. Oh! hang him, old fox! he's too cunning; besides, he hates both you and me. But I have a project in my head for you, and I have gone a good way towards it. I have almost made a bargain with Jeremy, Valentine's man, to sell his master to us.

Mrs. F. Sell him? how?

Mrs. For. Valentine raves upon Angelica, and took me for her; and Jeremy says will take anybody for her that he imposes on him. Now I have promised him mountains, if in one of his mad fits he will bring you to him in her stead, and get you married. Here they come; stand aside a little, and tell me how you like the design.

Enter SCANDAL and JEREMY

Scand. And have you given your master a hint of their plot upon him? [*To JEREMY.*]

Jer. Yes, sir; he says he'll favour it, and mistake her for Angelica.

Scand. It may make us sport.

Enter VALENTINE and FORESIGHT.

For. Mercy on us!

Val. Hush! interrupt me not; I'll whisper prediction to thee, and thou shalt prophecy. I have told thee what's past, now I'll tell what's to come. Dost thou know what will happen to-morrow? Answer me not, for I will tell thee. To-morrow, knaves will thrive through craft, and fools through fortune; and honesty will go as it did, frost-nipt in a summer-suit. Ask me questions concerning to-morrow.

Scand. Ask him, Mr. Foresight.

For. Pray, what will be done at court?

Val. Scandal will tell you—I am honest; I never come there.

For. In the city?

Val. Oh! prayers will be said in empty churches, at the usual hours. Yet you will see such zealous faces behind counters, as if religion were to be sold in every shop. Oh! things will go methodically in the city. Husbands and wives will drive distinct trades; and care and pleasure separately occupy the family. But, hold! I must examine you before I go further; you look suspiciously. Are you a husband?

For. I am married.

Val. Poor creature! Is your wife of Covent Garden parish?

For. No; St. Martin in the Fields.

Val. Alas! poor man! his eyes are sunk, and his hands shrivelled; his legs dwindled, and his back bowed. Pray, pray for a metamorphosis. Change thy shape, and shake off age; get thee Medea's kettle, and be boiled anew; come forth, with labouring callous hands, a chine of steel and Atlas' shoulders. Let Taliacotius trim the calves of twenty chairmen, and make thee pedestals to stand erect upon, and look matrimony in the face. Ha, ha, ha! that a man should have a stomach to a wedding-supper, when the pigeons ought rather to be laid to his feet. Ha, ha, ha!

For. His frenzy is very high now, Mr. Scandal.

Scand. I believe it is a spring-tide.

For. Very likely, truly; you understand these matters. Mr. Scandal, I shall be very glad to confer with you about these things which he has

uttered. His sayings are very mysterious and hieroglyphical.

Val. Oh! why would Angelica be absent from my eyes so long?

Jer. She's here, sir.

Mrs. For. Now sister.

Mrs. F. Oh, lord! what must I say?

Scand. Humour him, madam, by all means.

Val. Where is she? Oh! I see her. She comes like riches, health, and liberty, at once, to a despairing, starving, and abandoned wretch. Oh! welcome, welcome!

Mrs. F. How d'ye, sir? can I serve you?

Val. Harkye! I have a secret to tell you: Eudymion and the moon shall meet us upon Mount Latmos, and we'll be married in the dead of night. But say not a word. Hymen shall put his torch into a dark lantern, that it may be secret; and Juno shall give her peacock poppy-water, that he may fold his ogling tail; and Argus' hundred eyes be shut, eh? Nobody shall know but Jeremy.

Mrs. F. No, no; we'll keep it secret; it shall be done presently.

Val. The sooner the better; Jeremy, come hither—closer, that none may overhear us. Jeremy, I can tell you news. Angelica is turned nun; and I am turned friar: and yet we'll marry one another in spite of the pope. Get me a cowl and beads, that I may play my part; for she'll meet me two hours hence in black and white, and a long veil to cover the project; and we won't see one another's faces, till we have done something to be ashamed of; and then we'll blush once for all.

Jer. I'll take care and—

Val. Whisper.

Enter ANGELICA and TATTLE.

Ang. Nay, Mr. Tattle, if you make love to me, you spoil my design; for I intend to make you my confidant.

Scand. How's this! Tattle making love to Angelica!

Tat. But, madam, to throw away your person, such a person, and such a fortune, on a madman!

Ang. I never loved him till he was mad; but don't tell anybody so.

Tat. Tell, madam! alas! you don't know me. I have much ado to tell your ladyship how long I have been in love with you; but, encouraged by the impossibility of Valentine's making any more addresses to you, I have ventured to declare the very inmost passion of my heart. Oh! madam, look upon us both. There you see the ruins of a poor decayed creature! Here, a complete lively figure, with youth and health, and all his five senses in perfection, madam; and to all this, the most passionate lover.

Ang. Oh! fie for shame, hold your tongue. A passionate lover, and five senses in perfection! When you are as mad as Valentine, I'll believe you love me; and the maddest shall take me.

Val. It is enough. Ah! who's there?

Mrs. F. Oh, lord! her coming will spoil all.

[*To JEREMY.*]

Jer. No, no, madam; he won't know her; if he should, I can persuade him.

Val. Scandal, who are these? Foreigners? If they are, I'll tell you what I think. Get away all the company but Angelica, that I may discover my design to her.

[*Whispers.*]

Scand. I will. I have discovered something of Tattle, that is of a piece with Mrs. Frail. He

courts Angelica: if we could contrive to couple them together—Harkye!

[*Whispers.*]

Mrs. F. He won't know you, cousin; he knows nobody.

For. But he knows more than anybody. Oh! niece, he knows things past and to come, and all the profound secrets of time.

Tat. Look you, Mr. Foresight; it is not my way to make many words of matters, and so I sha'n't say much. But, in short, d'ye see, I will hold you a hundred pounds, now, that I know more secrets than he.

For. How? I cannot read that knowledge in your face, Mr. Tattle. Pray what do you know?

Tat. Why, d'ye think I'll tell you, sir? Read it in my face! No, sir, it is written in my heart; and safer there, sir, than letters written in juice of lemon, for no fire can fetch it out. I'm no blab, sir.

Val. Acquaint Jeremy with it: he may easily bring it about. They are welcome, and I'll tell them so myself. [*To SCANDAL.*] What, do you look strange upon me? Then I must be plain: [*coming up to them*] I am honest, and hate an old acquaintance with a new face.

[*SCANDAL goes aside with JEREMY.*]

Tat. Do you know me, Valentine?

Val. You? Who are you? I hope not.

Tat. I am Jack Tattle, your friend.

Val. My friend! what to do? I'm no married man, and thou canst not lie with my wife. I am very poor, and thou canst not borrow money of me. Then what employment have I for a friend?

Tat. Ha! a good open speaker, and not to be trusted with a secret.

Ang. Do you know me, Valentine?

Val. Oh! very well.

Ang. Who am I?

Val. You're a woman; one to whom nature gave beauty, when it grafted roses on a briar. You are the reflection of heaven in a pond; and he that leaps at you is sunk. You are all white; a sheet of lovely spotless paper, when you were first born; but you are to be scrawled and blotted by every goose's quill. I know you; for I loved a woman, and loved her so long, that I found out a strange thing, I found out what a woman is good for.

Tat. Ay, pr'ythee, what's that?

Val. Why, to keep a secret.

Tat. Oh, lord!

Val. Oh! exceedingly good to keep a secret; for though she should tell, yet she is not believed.

Tat. Ha! good again, faith.

Jer. I'll do't, sir.

Scand. Mr. Foresight, we had best leave him. He may grow outrageous, and do mischief.

For. I will be directed by you. [*Exit FORESIGHT.*]
Jer. [*To Mrs. FRAIL.*] You'll meet, madam. I'll take care everything shall be ready.

Mrs. F. Thou shalt do what thou wilt; in short, I will deny thee nothing.

Tat. Madam, shall I wait upon you?

[*To ANGELICA.*]

Ang. No; I'll stay with him. Mr. Scandal will protect me. Aunt, Mr. Tattle desires you would give him leave to wait upon you.

Tat. Pox on't! there's no coming off, now she has said that—Madam, will you do me the honour?

Mrs. For. Mr. Tattle might have used less ceremony.

[*Exeunt Mrs. FRAIL, Mrs. FORESIGHT, and TATTLE.*]

Scand. Jeremy, follow Tattle. [*Exit JEREMY.*]

Ang. Mr. Scandal, I only stay till my maid comes, and because I have a mind to be rid of Mr. Tattle.

Scand. Madam, I am very glad that I overheard a better reason which you gave to Mr. Tattle; for his impertinence forced you to acknowledge a kindness for Valentine, which you denied to all his sufferings and my solicitations. So, I'll leave him to make use of the discovery; and your ladyship to the free confession of your inclinations.

Ang. Oh! heavens, you won't leave me alone with a madman?

Scand. No, madam; I only leave a madman to his remedy. *[Exit.*

Val. Madam, you need not be very much afraid, for I fancy I begin to come to myself.

Ang. Ay, but if I don't fit you, I'll be hanged. *[Aside.*

Val. You see what disguises love makes us put on. Gods have been in counterfeited shapes for the same reason; and the divine part of me, my mind, has worn this masque of madness, and this motley livery, only as the slave of love and menial creature of your beauty.

Ang. Mercy on me, how he talks! Poor Valentine!

Val. Nay, faith, now let us understand one another; hypocrisy apart. The comedy draws towards an end; and let us think of leaving acting, and be ourselves; and since you have loved me, you must own, I have at length deserved you should confess it.

Ang. *[Sighs.]* I would I had loved you; for heaven knows, I pity you; and, could I have foreseen the bad effects, I would have striven; but that's too late.

Val. What bad effects? what's too late? My seeming madness has deceived my father, and procured me time to think of means to reconcile me to him, and preserve the right of my inheritance to his estate; which, otherwise, by articles, I must this morning have resigned. And this I had informed you of to-day, but you were gone before I knew you had been here.

Ang. How! I thought your love of me had caused this transport in your soul; which, it seems, you only counterfeited for mercenary ends and sordid interest.

Val. Nay, now you do me wrong; for, if any interest was considered, it was your's; since I thought I wanted more than love to make me worthy of you.

Ang. Then you thought me mercenary; but how am I deluded by this interval of sense, to reason with a madman!

Val. Oh! 'tis barbarous to misunderstand me longer.

Enter JEREMY.

Ang. Oh! here's a reasonable creature; sure he will not have the impudence to persevere! Come, Jeremy, acknowledge your trick, and confess your master's madness counterfeited.

Jer. Counterfeit, madam! I'll maintain him to be as absolutely and substantially mad as any freeholder in Bedlam. Nay, he's as mad as any projector, fanatic, chemist, lover, or poet, in Europe.

Val. Sirrah! you lie; I'm not mad.

Ang. Ha, ha, ha! you see he denies it.

Jer. Oh, lord! madam, did you ever know any madman mad enough to own it?

Val. So! can't you apprehend?

Ang. Why, he talked very sensibly just now

Jer. Yes, madam; he has intervals: but you see he begins to look wild again now.

Val. Why, you thick-skulled rascal, I tell you the farce is done, and I'll be mad no longer.

[Beats him.

Ang. Ha, ha, ha! is he mad or no, Jeremy?

Jer. Partly, I think; for he does not know his own mind two hours. I'm sure I left him just now in the humour to be mad; and I think I have not found him very quiet at the present. *[Knocking without.]* Who's there? *[Erit.*

Val. Go see, you sot! I'm very glad that I can move your mirth, though not your compassion.

Ang. I did not think you had apprehension enough to be exceptionary; but madmen shew themselves most by over-pretending to a sound understanding, as drunken men do by over-acting sobriety. I was half inclining to believe you, till I accidentally touched upon your tender part. But now you have restored me to my former opinion and compassion.

Re-enter JEREMY.

Jer. Sir, your father has sent to know if you are any better yet. Will you please to be mad, sir, or how?

Val. Stupidity! you know the penalty of all I'm worth must pay for the confession of my senses. I'm mad, and will be mad, to everybody but this lady.

Jer. So; just the very reverse of truth. But lying is a figure in speech, that interlards the greatest part of my conversation. Madam, your ladyship's woman. *[Erit.*

Enter JENNY.

Ang. Well, have you been there? Come hither.

Jenny. Yes, madam; Sir Sampson will wait upon you presently. *[Aside to ANGELICA.*

Val. You are not leaving me in this uncertainty? *Ang.* Would anything but a madman complain of uncertainty? Uncertainty and expectation are the joys of life. Security is an insipid thing; and the overtaking and possessing of a wish, discovers the folly of the chase. Never let us know one another better; for the pleasure of a masquerade is done, when we come to shew our faces. But I'll tell you two things before I leave you; I am not the fool you take me for; and you are mad, and don't know it. *[Ereunt ANGELICA and JENNY.*

Re-enter JEREMY.

Val. From a riddle you can expect nothing but a riddle. There's my instruction, and the moral of my lesson.

Jer. What, is the lady gone again, sir? I hope you understood one another before she went?

Val. Understood! she is harder to be understood than a piece of Egyptian antiquity, or an Irish manuscript; you may pore till you spoil your eyes, and not improve your knowledge.

Jer. I have heard them say, sir, they read hard Hebrew books backwards. May be, you begin to read at the wrong end.

Val. Yet, while she does not seem to hate me, I will pursue her, and know her, if it be possible, in spite of the opinion of my satirical friend, who says,—

*That women are like tricks by sleight of hand;
Which, to admire, we should not understand.*

[Ereunt.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Room in Foresight's House.

Enter ANGELICA and JENNY.

Ang. Where is Sir Sampson? Did you not tell me he would be here before me?

Jenny. He's at the great glass in the dining-room, madam, setting his cravat and wig.

Ang. How! I'm glad on't. If he has a mind I should like him, it's a sign he likes me; and that's more than half my design.

Jenny. I hear him, madam.

Ang. Leave me; and, d'ye hear? if Valentine should come, or send, I am not to be spoken with.

[*Exit JENNY.*]

Enter Sir SAMPSON LEGEND.

Sir S. I have not been honoured with the commands of a fair lady a great while. Ods! madam, you have revived me—not since I was five and thirty.

Ang. Why, you have no great reason to complain, Sir Sampson; that's not long ago.

Sir S. Zooks! but it is, madam; a very great while to a man that admires a fine woman as much as I do.

Ang. You're an absolute courtier, Sir Sampson.

Sir S. Not at all, madam. Odsbud! you wrong me: I am not so old neither to be a bare courtier, only a man of words. Come, come; let me tell you, you women think a man old too soon; faith and troth, you do. Come, don't despise fifty; ods! fifty, in a hale constitution, is no such contemptible age!

Ang. Fifty a contemptible age! not at all: a very fashionable age, I think; I assure you, I know very considerable beaux, that set a good face upon fifty. Fifty! I have seen fifty in a side-box, by candle-light, out-blossom five and twenty.

Sir S. Outsides, outsides! a pize take them, mere outsides. Hang your side-box beaux; no, I'm none of those, none of your forced trees, that pretend to blossom in the fall, and bud when they should bring forth fruit. I am of a long-lived race, and inherit vigour. None of my ancestors married till fifty; yet they begot sons and daughters till fourscore. I am of your patriarchs; I, a branch of one of your antediluvian families, fellows that the flood could not wash away. Well, madam, what are your commands? Has any young rogue affronted you, and shall I cut his throat; or—

Ang. No, Sir Sampson, I have no quarrel upon my hands; I have more occasion for your conduct than your courage at this time. To tell you the truth, I'm weary of living single, and want a husband.

Sir S. Madam, you deserve a good husband; and 'twere pity you should be thrown away upon any of these young idle rogues about the town. Od! there's ne'er a young fellow worth hanging; that is, a very young fellow.

Ang. Therefore, I ask your advice, Sir Sampson. I have fortune enough to make any man easy that I can like; if there were such a thing as a young agreeable man, with a reasonable stock of good nature and sense; for I would neither have an absolute wit, nor a fool.

Sir S. Od! you are hard to please, madam: to find a young fellow that is neither a wit in his own

eye, nor a fool in the eye of the world, is a very hard task. But, faith and troth, you speak very discreetly. I hate a wit; I had a son that was spoiled among them; a good hopeful lad, till he learned to be a wit, and might have risen in the state. But, a plague on't! his wit ran him out of his money, and now his poverty has run him out of his wits.

Ang. Sir Sampson, as your friend, I must tell you, you are very much abused in that matter; he's no more mad than you are.

Sir S. How, madam! would I could prove it.

Ang. I can tell you how that may be done; but it is a thing that would make me appear to be too much concerned in your affairs.

Sir S. Odsbud! I believe she likes me. [*Aside.*] If I had Peru in one hand, and Mexico in t'other, and the eastern empire under my feet; it would make me only a more glorious victim to be offered at the shrine of your beauty.

Ang. Bless me, Sir Sampson, what's the matter?

Sir S. Od! madam, I love you; and if you would take my advice in a husband—

Ang. Hold, hold! Sir Sampson, I asked your advice for a husband, and you are giving me your consent. I was, indeed, thinking to propose something like it in jest, to satisfy you about Valentine; for if a match were seemingly carried on between you and me, it would oblige him to throw off his disguise of madness, in apprehension of losing me; for, you know, he has long pretended a passion for me.

Sir S. Gadzooks! a most ingenious contrivance, if we were to go through with it. But why must the match only be seemingly carried on? Od! let it be a real contract.

Ang. Oh, fie! Sir Sampson, what would the world say?

Sir S. Say! They would say you were a wise woman, and I a happy man. Od! madam, I'll love you as long as I live, and leave you a good jointure when I die.

Ang. Ay, but that is not in your power, Sir Sampson; for when Valentine confesses himself in his senses, he must make over his inheritance to his younger brother.

Sir S. Od! you're cunning; a wary baggage. Faith and troth, I like you the better. But, I warrant you, I have a proviso in the obligation in favour of myself. Body o'me! I have a trick to turn the settlement upon the issue male of our two bodies begotten. Odsbud! let us find children, and I'll find an estate.

Ang. Will you! Well, do you find the estate, and leave the other to me.

Sir S. Oh! rogue! but I'll trust you. And will you consent? Is it a match, then?

Ang. Let me consult my lawyer concerning this obligation; and if I find what you propose practicable, I'll give you my answer.

Sir S. With all my heart. Come in with me, and I'll lend you the bond. Ods! here's somebody coming. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter TATTLE and JEREMY.

Tat. Is not that she gone out just now?

Jer. Ay, sir, she's just going to the place of appointment.

Tat. Egad! thou art a pretty fellow. But I hope you are secret in your nature; private, close, eh?

Jer. Oh! sir, for that, sir, 'tis my chief talent; I'm as secret as the head of Nilus.

Tat. Ay! who's he, though? A privy councillor?
Jer. Oh! ignorance! [*Aside.*] A cunning Egyptian, sir, that with his arms could overrun the country, yet nobody could ever find out his headquarters.

Tat. Close dog! a rare fellow amongst the wenches, I warrant him. The time draws nigh, Jeremy; Angelica will be veiled like a nun, and I must be hooded like a friar, eh, Jeremy?

Jer. Ay, sir; hooded like a hawk, to seize at first sight upon the quarry. It is the whim of my master's madness to be so dressed; and she is so in love with him, she'll comply with anything to please him. Poor lady! I'm sure she'll have reason to pray for me, when she finds what a happy change she has made, between a madman and so accomplished a gentleman.

Tat. Ay, faith, so she will, Jeremy: you're a good friend to her, poor creature! I swear I do it hardly so much in consideration of myself, as compassion to her.

Jer. 'Tis an act of charity, sir, to save a fine woman with sixty thousand pounds, from throwing herself away.

Tat. So 'tis, faith! I might have saved several others in my time; but, egad! I could never find in my heart to marry anybody before.

Jer. Well, sir, I'll go and tell her my master's coming; and meet you in half a quarter of an hour, with your disguise, at your own lodgings. You must talk a little madly; she won't distinguish the tone of your voice.

Tat. No, no; let me alone for a counterfeit. I'll be ready for you. [*Exit JEREMY.*]

Enter Miss PRUE.

Miss P. Oh! Mr. Tattle, are you here? I am glad I have found you. I have been looking up and down for you like anything, till I am as tired as anything in the world.

Tat. Oh! plague; how shall I get rid of this foolish girl? [*Aside.*]

Miss P. Oh! I have pure news, I can tell you pure news; I must not marry the seaman now, my father says so. Why won't you be my husband? You say you love me, and you won't be my husband; and I know you may be my husband now, if you please.

Tat. Oh! fie, miss! Who told you so, child?

Miss P. Why, my father; I told him that you loved me.

Tat. Oh! fie, miss! Why did you do so? and who told you so, child?

Miss P. Who! why you did, did not you?

Tat. Oh! plague! that was yesterday, miss; that was a great while ago, child. I have been asleep since; slept a whole night, and did not so much as dream of the matter.

Miss P. Psha! Oh! but I dreamt that it was so, though.

Tat. Ay, but your father will tell you, that dreams come by contraries, child. Oh, fie! what we must not love one another now. Psha! that would be a foolish thing, indeed. Fie, fie! you're a woman now, and must think of a new man every morning, and forget him every night. No, no; to marry is to be a child again, and play with the same rattle always. Oh, fie! marrying is a paw thing.

Miss P. Well, but don't you love me as well as you did last night, then?

Tat. No, no, child; you would not have me.

Miss P. No? Yes, but I would, though.

Tat. Psha! but I tell you, you would not. You forget you are a woman, and don't know your own mind.

Miss P. But here's my father, and he knows my mind.

Enter FORESIGHT.

For. Oh! Mr. Tattle, your servant; you are a close man; but, methinks, your love to my daughter was a secret I might have been trusted with; or had you a mind to try if I could discover it by my art? Hum, ha! I think there is something in your physiognomy that has a resemblance of her; and the girl is like me.

Tat. And so you would infer, that you and I are alike. What does the old prig mean? I'll banter him, and laugh at him, and leave him. [*Aside.*] I fancy you have a wrong notion of faces.

For. How? what? a wrong notion! How so?

Tat. In the way of art, I have some taking features, not obvious to vulgar eyes, that are indicative of a sudden turn of good fortune in the lottery of wives; and promise a great beauty and great fortune, reserved alone for me, by a private intrigue of destiny, kept secret from the piercing eye of perspicuity, from all astrologers, and the stars themselves.

For. How? I will make it appear that what you say is impossible.

Tat. Sir, I beg your pardon, I am in haste—

For. For what?

Tat. To be married, sir—married!

For. Ay, but pray take me along with you, sir.

Tat. No, sir; it is to be done privately; I never make confidants.

For. Well; but my consent, I mean. You won't marry my daughter without my consent?

Tat. Who, I, sir? I am an absolute stranger to you and your daughter, sir.

For. Heyday! What time of the moon is this?

Tat. Very true, sir; and desire to continue so. I have no more love for your daughter, than I have likeness of you; and I have a secret in my heart, which you would be glad to know, and sha'n't know; and yet you shall know it, too, and be sorry for it afterwards. I'd have you know, sir, that I am as knowing as the stars, and as secret as the night. And I'm going to be married just now, yet did not know of it half an hour ago, and the lady stays for me, and does not know of it yet. There's a mystery for you! I know you love to untie difficulties. Or, if you can't solve this, stay here a quarter of an hour, and I'll come and explain it to you. [*Exit.*]

Miss P. Oh! father, why will you let him go? Won't you make him to be my husband?

For. Mercy on us! what do these lunacies portend? Alas! he's mad, child, stark wild!

Miss P. What, and must not I have e'er a husband, then? What, must I go to bed to nurse again, and be a child as long as she's an old woman? Indeed, but I won't. For, now my mind is set upon a man, I will have a man some way or other.

For. Oh! fearful! I think the girl's influenced, too. Hussy! you shall have a rod.

Miss P. A fiddle of a rod! I'll have a husband; and if you won't get me one, I'll get one for myself. I'll marry our Robin, the butler; he says he loves me; and he's a handsome man, and shall be my husband: I warrant he'll be my husband, and thank me, too; for he told me so.

Enter Nurse.

For. Did he so? I'll despatch him for it presently! Rogue! Oh! Nurse, come hither.

Nurse. What is your worship's pleasure?

For. Here, take your young mistress, and lock her up presently, till farther orders from me. Not a word, hussy; do what I bid you. No reply: away! and bid Robin make ready to give an account of his plate and linen, d'ye hear? Begone, when I bid you.

[*Exeunt Nurse and Miss P.*]

Enter Mrs. FORESIGHT and SCANDAL.

Mrs. For. What's the matter, husband?

For. 'Tis not convenient to tell you now. Mr. Scandal, heaven keep us all in our senses! I fear there is a contagious frenzy abroad. How does Valentine?

Scand. Oh! I hope he will do well again. I have a message from him to your niece Angelica.

For. I think she has not returned since she went abroad with Sir Sampson.

Enter BEN.

Here's Mr. Benjamin; he can tell us, if his father be come home.

Ben. Who? Father? Ay, he's come home with a vengeance!

Mrs. For. Why, what's the matter?

Ben. Matter! why, he's mad.

For. Mercy on us! I was afraid of this.

Ben. And there's a handsome young woman, she, as they say, brother Val went mad for; she's mad, too, I think.

For. Oh! my poor niece, my poor niece! is she gone, too? Well, I shall run mad next.

Mrs. For. Well, but how mad? How d'ye mean?

Ben. Nay, I'll give you leave to guess; I'll undertake to make a voyage to Antigua. No; I mayn't say so, neither; but I'll sail as far as Leghorn, and back again, before you shall guess at the matter, and do nothing else. Mess! you may take in all the points of the compass, and not hit the right.

Mrs. For. Your experiment will take up a little too much time.

Ben. Why, then, I'll tell you: there's a new wedding upon the stocks, and they two are a-going to be married to-night.

Scand. Who?

Ben. Why, father, and—the young woman—I can't hit her name.

Scand. Angelica?

Ben. Ay, the same.

Mrs. For. Sir Sampson and Angelica? Impossible.

Ben. That may be; but I'm sure it is as I tell you.

Scand. 'Sdeath! it is a jest. I can't believe it.

Ben. Lookye, friend; it is nothing to me, whether you believe it or no. What I say is true, d'ye see; they are married, or just going to be married, I know not which.

For. Well, but they are not mad; that is, not lunatic?

Ben. I don't know what you may call madness, but she's mad for a husband, and he's horn-mad, I think, or they'd never make a match together. Here they come.

Enter Sir SAMPSON LEGEND, ANGELICA, and BUCKRAM.

Sir S. Where's this old soothsayer? this uncle of mine elect.—Aha! old Foresight! uncle Foresight! wish me joy, uncle Foresight, double joy, both as uncle and astrologer: here's a conjunction that was

not foretold in your Ephemeris. The brightest star in the blue firmament is shot from above; and I'm lord of the ascendant. Od! you're an old fellow, Foresight, uncle I mean; a very old fellow, uncle Foresight; and yet you shall live to dance at my wedding; faith and troth, you shall. Od! we'll have the music of the spheres for thee, old Lilly, that we will; and thou shalt lead up a dance in *via lactea*.

For. I'm thunderstruck! You are not married to my niece?

Sir S. Not absolutely married, uncle; but very near it; within a kiss of the matter, as you see.

[*Kisses ANGELICA.*]

Ang. 'Tis very true, indeed, uncle; I hope you'll be my father, and give me.

Sir S. That he shall, or I'll burn his globes.

Scand. Death and hell! Where's Valentine?

[*Exit.*]

Mrs. For. This is so surprising—

Sir S. How! What does my aunt say? surprising, aunt? not at all, for a young couple to make a match in winter. Not at all; it's a plot to undermine cold weather, and destroy that usurper of a bed, called a warming-pan.

Mrs. For. I'm glad to hear you have so much fire in you, Sir Sampson.

Ben. Mess! I fear his fire's little better than tinder.

Sir S. Why, you impudent tarpaulin! sirrah, do you bring your forecastle jests upon your father? But I shall be even with you; I won't give you a groat. Mr. Buckram, is the conveyance so worded, that nothing can possibly descend to this scoundrel? I would not so much as have him have the prospect of an estate, though there were no way to come to it but by the north-east passage.

Buck. Sir, it is drawn according to your directions; there is not the least cranny of the law un-stopped.

Ben. Lawyer, I believe there's many a cranny and leak unstopped in your conscience. If so be that one had a pump to your bosom, I believe we should discover a foul hold. They say a witch will sail in a sieve; but I believe the devil would not venture aboard your conscience. And that's for you.

Sir S. Hold your tongue, sirrah. How now! who's here?

Enter Mrs. FRAIL and TATTLE.

Mrs. F. Oh! sister, the most unlucky accident.

Mrs. For. What's the matter?

Tat. Oh! the two most unfortunate poor creatures in the world we are.

For. Bless us! how so?

Mrs. F. Ah! Mr. Tattle and I, poor Mr. Tattle and I are—I can't speak it out.

Tat. Nor I. But poor Mrs. Frail and I are—

Mrs. F. Married.

For. Married! how?

Tat. Suddenly; before we knew where we were, that villain Jeremy, by the help of disguises, tricked us into one another.

For. Why, you told me just now, you went hence, in haste, to be married.

Ang. But I believe Mr. Tattle meant the favour for me, I thank him.

Tat. I did, as I hope to be saved, madam; my intentions were good. But this is the most cruel thing, to marry, one does not know how, nor why, nor wherefore. The devil take me, if ever I was so much concerned at anything in my life!

Ang. 'Tis very unhappy, if you don't care for one another.

Tat. The least in the world; that is, for my part, I speak for myself. 'Gad! I never had the least thought of serious kindness; I never liked anybody less in my life. Poor woman! 'Gad! I'm sorry for her, too; for I have no reason to hate her, neither; but I believe I shall lead her a d—d sort of a life.

Mrs. For. He's better than no husband at all—though he's a coxcomb. [To Mrs. F.]

Mrs. F. [To Mrs. For.] Ay, ay; it's well it's no worse. Nay, for my part, I always despised Mr. Tattle of all things; nothing but his being my husband could have made me like him less.

Tat. Look you there, I thought as much! Plague on't! I wish we could keep it secret; why, I don't believe any of this company would speak of it.

Ben. If you suspect me, friend, I'll go out of the room.

Mrs. F. But, my dear, that's impossible; the parson and that rogue Jeremy will publish it.

Tat. Ay, my dear, so they will, as you say.

Ang. Oh! you'll agree very well in a little time; custom will make it easy for you.

Tat. Easy! Plague on't! I don't believe I shall sleep to-night.

Sir S. Sleep, quotha! No; why, you would not sleep on your wedding-night? I'm an older fellow than you, and don't mean to sleep.

Ben. Why, there's another match now, as thof a couple of privateers were looking for a prize, and should fall foul of one another. I'm sorry for the young man with all my heart. Look you, friend! if I may advise you, when she's going—for that you must expect; I have experience of her—when she's going, let her go; for no matrimony is tough enough to hold her; and if she can't drag her anchor along with her, she'll break her cable, I can tell you that. Who's here, the madman?

Enter VALENTINE, SCANDAL, and JEREMY.

Val. No; here's the fool; and if occasion be, I'll give it under my hand.

Sir S. How now?

Val. Sir, I am come to acknowledge my errors, and ask your pardon.

Sir S. What, have you found your senses at last, then? In good time, sir.

Val. You were abused, sir; I never was distracted.

For. How? not mad, Mr. Scandal?

Scand. No, really, sir; I am his witness, it was all counterfeit.

Val. I thought I had reasons—but it was a poor contrivance; the effect has shewn it such.

Sir S. Contrivance! what, to cheat me? to cheat your father? Sirrah, could you hope to prosper?

Val. Indeed, I thought, sir, when the father endeavoured to undo the son, it was a reasonable return of nature.

Sir S. Very good, sir. Mr. Buckram, are you ready? Come, sir, will you sign and seal?

Val. If you please, sir; but first, I would ask this lady one question.

Sir S. Sir, you must ask me leave first. That lady! no, sir; you shall ask that lady no questions till you have asked her blessing, sir; that lady is to be my wife.

Val. I have heard as much, sir; but I would have it from her own mouth.

Sir S. That is as much as to say, I lie, sir; and you don't believe what I say.

ACT. DRAMA.—NOS. 111 & 112.

Val. Pardon me, sir. But I reflect that I, very lately, counterfeited madness: I don't know but the frolic may go round.

Sir S. Come, chuck! satisfy him, answer him. Come, Mr. Buckram, the pen and ink.

Buck. Here it is, sir, with the deed; all is ready.

[VALENTINE goes to ANGELICA.]

Ang. 'Tis true, you have a great while pretended love to me; nay, what if you were sincere? Still you must pardon me, if I think my own inclinations have a better right to dispose of my person than your's.

Sir S. Are you answered now, sir?

Val. Yes, sir.

Sir S. Where's your plot, sir? and your contrivance now, sir? Will you sign, sir? Come, will you sign and seal, sir?

Val. With all my heart, sir.

Scand. 'Sdeath! you are not mad, indeed? to ruin yourself?

Val. I have been disappointed of my only hope; and he that loses hope, may part with anything. I never valued fortune but as it was subservient to my pleasure; and my only pleasure was to please this lady: I have made many vain attempts, and find, at last, that nothing but my ruin can effect it; which, for that reason, I will sign to. Give me the paper.

Ang. Generous Valentine!

[Aside.]

Buck. Here is the deed, sir.

Val. But where is the bond by which I am obliged to sign this?

Buck. Sir Sampson, you have it.

Ang. No, I have it; and I'll use it as I would everything that is an enemy to Valentine.

[Tears the paper.]

Sir S. How now?

Val. Ah!

Ang. Had I the world to give you, it could not make me worthy of so generous and faithful a passion. Here's my hand; my heart was always your's, and struggled very hard to make this utmost trial of your virtue.

[To VALENTINE.]

Val. Between pleasure and amazement, I am lost: but on my knees I take the blessing.

Sir S. Oons! what is the meaning of this?

Ben. Mess! here's the wind changed again. Father, you and I may make a voyage together now.

Ang. Well, Sir Sampson, since I have played you a trick, I'll advise you how you may avoid such another. Learn to be a good father, or you'll never get a second wife. I always loved your son, and hated your unforgiving nature; and it is hardly more pleasure to me, that I can make him and myself happy, than that I can punish you.

Sir S. Oons! you're a crocodile!

For. Really, Sir Sampson, this is a sudden eclipse.

Sir S. You're an illiterate old fool; and I'm another. The stars are liars; and if I had breath, I'd curse them and you, myself, and all the world.

Tat. Sir, sir, if you are in all this disorder for want of a wife, I can spare you mine.

Sir S. Confound you and your wife together!

[Exit Sir S. and For.]

Tat. Oh! are you there, sir? I am indebted to you for my happiness.

[To JEREMY.]

Jer. Sir, I ask you ten thousand pardons: it was an arrant mistake. You see, sir, my master was never mad, nor anything like it. Then how can it be otherwise?

Val. Tattle, I thank you: you would have interposed between me and heaven, but Provi-

4 H

dence laid purgatory in your way. You have but justice.

Scand. [To ANG.] Well, madam, you have done exemplary justice, in punishing an inhuman father, and rewarding a faithful lover: but there is a third good work, which I, in particular, must thank you for: I was an infidel to your sex, and you have converted me; for now I am convinced that all women are not, like fortune, blind in bestowing favours, either on those who do not merit, or who do not want them.

Ang. It is an unreasonable accusation that you lay upon our sex. You tax us with injustice, only to cover your own want of merit. You would all have the reward of love; but few have the constancy to stay till it becomes your due. How few, like Valentine, would persevere even to martyrdom, and sacrifice their interest to their constancy? In admiring me, you misplace the novelty.

The miracle to-day is, that we find

A lover true; not that a woman's kind. [Exeunt.

ROSINA;

AN OPERA IN TWO ACTS;

BY MRS. BROOKE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

CAPTAIN BELVILLE
MR. BELVILLE
WILLIAM
RUSTIC
Irishmen
Villagers.

DORCAS
PHOEBE
ROSINA.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A cottage.

DORCAS, seated on a bench, is spinning; ROSINA and PHOEBE are measuring corn; WILLIAM enters, and they sing the following

TRIO.

*When the rosy morn appearing,
Paints with gold the verdant lawn,
Bees, on banks of thyme disporting,
Sip the sweets, and hail the dawn.
Warbling birds, the day proclaiming,
Carol sweet the lively strain;*

*They forsake their leafy dwelling,
To secure the golden grain.*

*See, content, the humble gleaner
Takes the scatter'd ears that fall;
Nature, all her children viewing,
Kindly bounteous, cares for all.*

[WILLIAM retires with PHOEBE.

Ros. See, my dear Dorcas, what we gleaned yesterday in Mr. Belville's field.

Dor. Lord love thee! but take care of thyself; thou art but tender.

Ros. Indeed, it does not hurt me. Shall I put out the lamp?

Dor. Do, dear; the poor must be sparing.

[ROSINA going to put out the lamp, DORCAS looks after her and sighs; she returns hastily.

Ros. Why do you sigh, Dorcas?

Dor. I cannot bear it: it's nothing to Phoebe and me, but thou wast not born to labour.

Ros. Why should I repine? Heaven, which deprived me of my parents, and my fortune, left me health, content and innocence. Nor is it certain that riches lead to happiness. Do you think the nightingale sings the sweeter for being in a gilded cage?

Dor. Sweeter, I'll maintain it, than the poor little linnet that thou pick'dst up half starved under the hedge yesterday, after its mother had been shot, and brought'st to life in thy bosom. Let me speak to his honour; he's main kind to the poor.

Ros. Not for the world, Dorcas; I want nothing; you have been a mother to me.

Dor. Would I could! Would I, could! I have worked hard and 'arn'd money in my time; but now I am old and feeble, and am pushed about by every body. More's the pity, I say; it was not so in my young time; but the world grows wickeder every day.

Ros. Your age, my good Dorcas, requires rest; go into the cottage, whilst Phœbe and I join the gleaners, who are assembling from every part of the village.

Dor. Many a time have I carried thy dear mother, an infant, in these arms; little did I think a child of her's would live to share my poor pittance. But I won't grieve thee. [DORCAS enters the cottage.

Phœ. What makes you so melancholy, Rosina? Mayhap it's because you have not a sweetheart? But you are so proud, you won't let our young men come a-near you. You may live to repent being so scornful. [ROSINA retires.

AIR.—PHŒBE.

When William at eve meets me down at the stile,

How sweet is the nightingale's song!

Of the day I forget all the labour and toil,

Whilst the moon plays yon branches among.

By her beams, without blushing, I hear him complain,

And believe every word of her song:

You know not how sweet 'tis to love the dear swain,

Whilst the moon plays yon branches among.

[During the last stanza, WILLIAM appears, and makes signs to PHŒBE; who steals softly to him, and they disappear.

Ros. How small a part of my evils is poverty! And how little does Phœbe know the heart she thinks insensible! the heart which nourishes a hopeless passion. I blest, like others, Belville's gentle virtues, and knew not that 'twas love. Unhappy, lost Rosina!

AIR.—ROSINA.

The morn returns, in saffron drest,

But not to sad Rosina rest.

The blushing morn awakes the strain,

Awakes the tuneless choir;

But sad Rosina ne'er again

Shall strike the sprightly lyre.

Rust. [Without.] To work, my hearts of oak, to work; here the sun is half an hour high, and not a stroke struck yet.

Enter RUSTIC, singing, followed by Reapers.

AIR.

Rust. *See, ye swains, yon streaks of red*

Call you from your slothful bed:

Late you till'd the fruitful soil;

See! where harvest crowns your toil!

Cho. *Late you till'd the fruitful soil;*

See! where harvest crowns your toil!

Rust. *As we reap the golden corn,*

Laughing plenty fills her horn:

What would gilded pomp avail,

Should the peasant's labour fail?

Cho. *What would gilded pomp avail*

Should the peasant's labour fail?

Rust. *Ripen'd fields your cares repay;*

Sons of labour, haste away;

Bending, see the waving grain

Crown the year, and cheer the swain.

Cho. *Bending, see the waving grain*

Crown the year, and cheer the swain.

Rush. Hist! there's his honour. Where are all the lazy Irishmen, hired yesterday at market?

Enter BELVILLE, followed by two Irishmen.

1 Irish. Is it us he's talking of, Paddy? Then the devil may thank him for his good commendations.

Bel. You are too severe, Rustic; the poor fellows came three miles this morning; therefore I made them stop at the manor-house to take a little refreshment.

1 Irish. Bless your sweet face, my jewel, and all those who take your part. Bad luck to myself, if I would not, with all the veins of my heart, split the dew before your feet in a morning.

Rust. If I do speak a little cross, it's for your honour's good. [The Reapers cut the corn, and make it into sheaves. ROSINA follows and gleanes.] What a dickens does this girl do here? Keep back; wait till the reapers are off the field; do like the other gleaners.

Ros. If I have done wrong, sir, I will put what I have gleaned down again. [She lets fall the ears.

Bel. How can you be so unfeeling, Rustic? She is lovely, virtuous, and in want. Let fall some ears, that she may glean the more.

Rust. Your honour is too good by half.

Bel. No more: gather up the corn she has let fall. Do as I command you.

Rust. There; take the whole field since his honour chooses it. [Putting the corn into her apron.

[Exit.

Ros. I will not abuse his goodness.

[Retires gleanings.

2 Irish. Upon my soul, now, his honour's no churl of the wheat, whatever he may be of the barley.

[Exeunt.

Bel. [Looking after ROSINA.] What bewitching softness! There is a blushing, bashful gentleness, an almost infantine innocence in that lovely countenance, which it is impossible to behold without emotion. She turns this way: what bloom on that cheek! 'Tis the blushing down of the peach.

AIR.—BELVILLE.

Her mouth, which a smile

Devoid of all guile,

Half opens to view,

Is the bud of the rose,

In the morning that blows,

Impearl'd with the dew.

More fragrant her breath

Than the flow'r-scented heath.

At the dawning of day;

The hawthorn in bloom,

The lily's perfume,

Or the blossoms of May.

Enter CAPTAIN BELVILLE, in a riding-dress.

Capt. B. Good morrow, brother; you are early abroad.

Bel. My dear Charles, I am happy to see you. True, I find, to the first of September.

Capt. B. I meant to have been here last night, but one of my wheels broke, and I was obliged to sleep at a village six miles distant, where I left my chaise, and took a boat down the river at day-break. But your corn is not off the ground.

Bel. You know our harvest is late in the north; but you will find all the lands cleared on the other side of the mountain.

Capt. B. And pray, brother, how are the partridges this season?

Bel. There are twenty coveys within sight of my house, and the dogs are in fine order.

Capt. B. The gamekeeper is this moment leading them round. I am fired at the sight. But where is my little rustic charmer? O! there she is: I am transported. [*Aside.*] Pray, brother, is not that the little girl, whose dawning beauty we admired so much last year?

Bel. It is, and more lovely than ever. I shall dine in the field with my reapers to-day, brother: will you share our rural repast, or have a dinner prepared at the manor-house?

Capt. B. By no means: pray let me be of your party: your plan is an admirable one, especially if your girls are handsome. I'll walk round the field, and meet you at dinner-time. [*Exit BELVILLE.*]

AIR.

*By the dawn to the dawns we repair,
With bosoms right jocund and gay,
And gain more than pheasant or hare;
Gain health by the sports of the day.
Mark! mark! to the right hand, prepare!
See Diana! she points: see, they rise:
See, they float on the bosom of air!
Fire away! whilst loud echo replies,
Fire away!*

*Hark! the volley resounds to the skies;
Whilst echo in thunder replies:
In thunder replies,
And resounds to the skies,
Fire away! Fire away! Fire away!*

[*ROSINA re-appears, CAPTAIN BELVILLE goes up to her, gleans a few ears, and presents them to her; she refuses them, and runs out; he follows her.*]

Enter WILLIAM, speaking as he enters.

Will. Lead the dogs back, James; the Captain won't shoot to-day. [*Seeing RUSTIC and PHÆBE behind.*] Indeed, so close! I don't half like it.

Enter RUSTIC and PHÆBE.

Rust. That's a good girl! do as I bid you, and you sha'n't want encouragement.

[*He goes up to the Reapers, and WILLIAM comes forward.*]

Will. O no, I dare say she won't. So, Mrs. Phæbe!

Phæ. And so, Mr. William, if you go to that!

Will. A new sweetheart, I'll be sworn; and a pretty comely lad he is: but he's rich, and that's enough to win a woman.

Phæ. I don't deserve this of you, William; but I'm rightly sayed, for being such an easy fool. You think, mayhap, I'm at my last prayers; but you may find yourself mistaken.

Will. You do right to cry out first; you think, belike, that I did not see you take that posey from Harry.

Phæ. And you, belike, that I did not catch you tying up one, of cornflowers and wild roses, for the miller's maid; but I'll be fool'd no longer; I have done with you, Mr. William.

Will. I sha'n't break my heart, Mrs. Phæbe. The miller's maid loves the ground I walk on.

DUET.—WILLIAM and PHÆBE.

Will. I've kiss'd and I've prattled with fifty fair maids,
And chang'd them as oft d'ye see!

But of all the fair maidens that dance on the green,

The maid of the mill for me.

Phæ. There's fifty young men, who have told me fine tales,

And call'd me the fairest she:

But of all the gay wrestlers that sport on the green,

Young Harry's the lad for me.

Will. Her eyes are as black as a sloe in the hedge,

Her face like the blossoms in May,

*Her teeth are as white as the new-shorn flock,
Her breath like the new-made hay.*

Phæ. He's tall and he's straight as the poplar tree,

His cheeks are as fresh as the rose;

*He looks like a squire of high degree,
When drest in his Sunday clothes.*

Will. I've kiss'd and I've prattled, &c.

Phæ. There's fifty young men. &c.

[*Exit PHÆBE and WILLIAM.*]

ROSINA runs across the stage, CAPTAIN BELVILLE following her.

Capt. B. Stay and hear me, Rosina. Why will you fatigue yourself thus? Only homely girls are born to work. Your obstinacy is vain; you shall hear me.

Ros. Why do you stop me, sir? My time is precious. When the gleaming season is over, will you make up my loss?

Capt. B. Yes.

Ros. Will it be any advantage to you to make me lose my day's work?

Capt. B. Yes.

Ros. Would it give you pleasure to see me pass all my days in idleness?

Capt. B. Yes.

Ros. We differ greatly then, sir. I only wish for so much leisure as makes me return to my work with fresh spirit. We labour all the week, 'tis true; but then how sweet is our rest on Sunday!

AIR.

*Whilst with village maids I stray,
Sweetly wears the joyous day;
Cheerful glows my artless breast,
Mild content the constant guest.*

Capt. B. Mere prejudice, child; you will know better. I pity you, and will make your fortune.

Ros. Let me call my mother, sir; I am young, and can support myself by my labour; but she is old and helpless, and your charity will be well bestowed. Please to transfer to her the bounty you intended for me.

Capt. B. Why—as to that—

Ros. I understand you, sir; your compassion does not extend to old women.

Capt. B. Really—I believe not.

Enter DORCAS, from the Cottage.

Ros. You are just come in time, mother. I have met with a generous gentleman, whose charity inclines him to succour youth.

Dor. 'Tis very kind. And old age—

Ros. He'll tell you that himself. [*Exit*]

Dor. I thought so. Sure, sure, 'tis no sin to be old.

Capt. B. You must not judge of me by others, honest Dorcas. I am sorry for your misfortunes, and wish to serve you.

Dor. And to what, your honour, may I owe this kindness?

Capt. B. You have a charming daughter—
Dor. I thought as much. A vile wicked man!

[*Aside.*]

Capt. B. Beauty like her's might find a thousand resources in London; the moment she appears there, she will turn every head.

Dor. And is your honour sure her own won't turn at the same time?

Capt. B. She shall live in affluence, and take care of you too, Dorcas.

Dor. I guess your honour's meaning; but you are mistaken, sir. If I must be a trouble to the dear child, I had rather owe my bread to her labour than her shame.

[*Goes into the Cottage, and shuts the door.*]

Capt. B. These women astonish me; but I won't give it up so.

Enter RUSTIC, crossing the stage.

Capt. B. A word with you, Rustic.

Rust. I am in a great hurry, your honour; I am going to hasten dinner.

Capt. B. I sha'n't keep you a minute. Take these five guineas.

Rust. For whom, sir?

Capt. B. For yourself. And this purse.

Rust. For whom, sir?

Capt. B. For Rosina; they say she is in distress, and wants assistance.

Rust. What pleasure it gives me to see you so charitable? But why give me money, sir?

Capt. B. Only to—tell Rosina there is a person who is very much interested in her happiness.

Rust. How much you will please his honour by this! He takes mightily to Rosina, and prefers her to all the young women in the parish.

Capt. B. Prefers her! Ah! you sly rogue!

Rust. Your honour's a wag; but I'm sure I meant no harm.

Capt. B. Give her the money, and tell her she shall never want a friend: but not a word to my brother.

Rust. All's safe, your honour. [*Exit CAPTAIN BELVILLE.*] I don't vastly like this business. At the Captain's age, this violent charity is a little dubious. I am his honour's servant, and it's my duty to hide nothing from him. I'll go seek his honour; O, here he comes.

Enter BELVILLE.

Bel. Well, Rustic, have you any intelligence to communicate?

Rust. A vast deal, sir. Your brother begins to make good use of his money; he has given me these five guineas for myself, and this purse for Rosina.

Bel. For Rosina! 'Tis plain he loves her. [*Aside.*] Obey him exactly; but as distress renders the mind haughty, and Rosina's situation requires the utmost delicacy, contrive to execute your commission in such a manner, that she may not even suspect from whence the money comes.

Rust. I understand your honour.

Bel. Have you gained any intelligence in respect to Rosina?

Rust. I endeavoured to get all I could from the old woman's grand-daughter; but all she knew was, that she was no kin to Dorcas, and that she had had a good bringing-up; but here come the reapers.

Enter Captain BELVILLE, followed by the Reapers.

FINALE.

Bel. By this fountain's flow'ry side,
 Drest in nature's blooming pride,

Where the poplar trembles high,
 And the bees in clusters fly,
 Whilst the herdman on the hill
 Listens to the falling rill,
 Pride and cruel scorn away,
 Let us share the festive day.

Ros. Taste our pleasures ye who may,
Bel. This is Nature's holiday.

Cho. Simple Nature ye who prize,
 Life's fantastic for—despise.

Cho. Taste our pleasures ye who may,
 This is Nature's holiday.

Capt. B. Blushing Bell, with downcast eyes,
 Sighs, and knows not why she sighs.
 Tom is near her—we shall know—
 How he eyes her—Is't not so?

Cho. Taste our pleasures ye who may,
 This is Nature's holiday.

Will. He is fond, and she is shy;
 He would kiss her!—fie!—oh, fie!

Cho. Mind thy sickle, let her be;
 By and by she'll follow thee.

Cho. Busy censors, hence! away!
 This is Nature's holiday.

Rust. Now we'll quaff the nut-brown ale,
 Then we'll tell the sportive tale;

Cho. All is jest, and all is glee,
 All is youthful jollity.

Cho. Taste our pleasures ye who may,
 This is Nature's holiday.

Phœ. Lads and lasses, all advance,
 Carol blithe, and form the dance;

Cho. Trip it lightly while you may,
 This is Nature's holiday.

Cho. Trip it lightly while you may,
 This is Nature's holiday.

[*Dance.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—The same.

Enter RUSTIC.

Rust. This purse is the plague of my life; I hate money when it is not my own. I'll e'en put in the five guineas he gave me for myself; I don't want it, and they do. They certainly must find it there. But I hear the cottage-door open.

[*Puts the purse on the bench, and retires.*]

Enter DORCAS and ROSINA, from the cottage. DORCAS with a great basket on her arm, filled with skeins of thread.

Dor. I am just going, Rosina, to carry this thread to the weaver's.

Ros. This basket is too heavy for you; pray, let me carry it. [*Sets the basket on the bench.*]

Dor. No, no. [*Peevishly.*]

Ros. If you love me, only take half; this evening, or to-morrow morning, I will carry the rest. [*Takes part of the skeins out of the basket.*] There, be angry with me if you please.

Dor. No, my sweet lamb, I am not angry; but beware of men.

Ros. Have you any doubts of my conduct, Dorcas?

Dor. Indeed I have not, love; and, yet, I am uneasy.

Enter Captain BELVILLE, unperceived.
 Go back to the reapers, whilst I carry this thread.
Ros. I'll go this moment.

Dor. But as I walk but slow, and 'tis a good way, you may chance to be at home, before me; so take the key.

Ros. I will.

Capt. B. [*Aside.*] Rosina to be at home before Dorcas! How lucky! I'll slip into the house, and wait her coming, if 'tis till midnight. [*Exit.*]

Dor. Let nobody go into the house.

Ros. I'll take care.

Dor. But first I'll double lock the door. [*Locks the door, and going to take up the basket, sees the purse.*] Good luck! What is here? A purse, as I live!

Ros. How!

Dor. Come, and see; 'tis a purse, indeed.

Ros. Heavens! 'tis full of gold.

Dor. We must put up a bill at the church-gate, and restore it to the owner. The best way is to carry the money to his honour, and get him to keep it till the owner is found. You shall go with it, love.

Ros. Pray excuse me, I always blush so.

Dor. 'Tis nothing but childishness: but his honour will like your bashfulness better than too much courage. [*Exit.*]

Ros. I cannot support his presence; my embarrassment—my confusion—a stronger sensation than that of gratitude agitates my heart. Yet, hope, in my situation, were madness.

AIR.—ROSINA.

Sweet transports, gentle wishes, go!

In vain his charms have gain'd my heart:

Since fortune, still to love a foe,

And cruel duty, bid us part,

Ah! why does duty chain the mind,

And part those souls which love has join'd?

Enter WILLIAM.

Pray, William, do you know of anybody that has lost a purse?

Will. I knows nothing about it.

Ros. Dorcas, however, has found one.

Will. So much the better for she.

Ros. You will oblige me very much, if you will carry it to Mr. Belville, and beg him to keep it till the owner is found.

Will. Since you desire it, I'll go: it sha'n't be the lighter for my carrying.

Ros. That I am sure of, William. [*Exit.*]

Enter PHÆBE.

Phæ. There's William; but I'll pretend not to see him.

AIR.—PHÆBE.

Henry cul'd the flow'ret's bloom,

Marian lov'd the soft perfume,

Had playful kiss'd, but prudence near

Whisper'd timely in her ear,

Simple Marian, ah! beware;

Touch them not, for love is there.

[*Throws away her nosegay. While she is singing, WILLIAM turns, looks at her, whistles, and plays with his stick.*]

Will. That's Harry's posy; the slut likes me still.

[*Aside.*]

Phæ. That's a copy of his countenance, I'm sartin; he can no more help following me nor he can be hanged.

[*Aside.—WILLIAM crosses again, singing.*]

Will. Of all the fair maidens that dance on the green,
The maid of the mill for me.

Phæ. I'm ready to choke wi' madness; but I'll not speak first, an' I die for't.

[*WILLIAM sings, throwing up his stick, and catching it.*]

Will. Her eyes are as black as the sloe in the hedge,
Her face like the blossoms in May.

Phæ. I can't bear it no longer; you vile, ungrateful, perfidious—but it's no matter. I can't think what I could see in you. Harry loves me, and is a thousand times more handsomer.

[*Sings, sobbing at every word.*]

*Of all the gay wrestlers that sport on the green,
Young Harry's the lad for me.*

Will. He's yonder a reaping: shall I call him?
[*Offers to go.*]

Phæ. My grandmother leads me the life of a dog; and it's all along of you.

Will. Well, then she'll be better temper'd now.

Phæ. I did not value her scolding of a brass farthing, when I thought as how you were true to me.

Will. Wasn't I true to you! Look in my face, and say that.

AIR.—WILLIAM.

*When bidden to the wake or fair,
The joy of each free-hearted swain,
Till Phæbe promis'd to be there,
I loiter'd, last of all the train.*

*If chance some fairing caught her eye,
The riband gay, or silken glove,
With eager haste I ran to buy;
For what is gold compar'd to love?*

*My posy on her bosom plac'd,
Could Harry's sweeter scents exhale
Her auburn locks my riband grac'd,
And flutter'd in the wanton gale.*

*With scorn she hears me now complain,
Nor can my rustic presents move:
Her heart prefers a richer swain,
And gold, alas! has banish'd love. [*Going.*]*

Will. [*Returns.*] Let's part friendly, howsomever. Bye, Phæbe: I shall always wish you well.

Phæ. Bye, William. [*Cries.*]

Will. My heart begins to melt a little. [*Aside.*] I loved you very well once, Phæbe: but you are grown so cross, and have such vagaries.

Phæ. I'm sure I never had no vagaries with you, William. But go; mayhap Kate may be angry.

Will. And who cares for she? I never minded her anger, nor her coaxing neither, till you were cross to me.

Phæ. O the father! I cross to you, William?

Will. Did you not tell me, this very morning, as how you had done wi' me?

Phæ. One word's as good as a thousand. Do you love me, William?

Will. Do I love thee? Do I love dancing on the green better than threshing in a barn? Do I love a wake, or a harvest-home?

Phæ. Then I'll never speak to Harry again the longest day I have to live.

Will. I'll turn my back o'the miller's maid the first time I meet her.

Phæ. Will you, indeed and indeed?

Will. Marry will I; and more nor that, I'll go speak to the parson this moment: I'm happier—Zooks! I'm happier nor a lord or a squire of five hundred a-year.

DUET.—*PHOEBE and WILLIAM.*

Phoe. In gaudy courts, with aching hearts,
The great at fortune rail:
The hills may higher honours claim,
But peace is in the vale.

Will. See high-born dames, in rooms of state,
With midnight revels pale;
No youth admires their fading charms,
For beauty's in the vale.

Both. Amid the shades the virgin's sighs
Add fragrance to the gale:
So they that will may take the hill,
Since love is in the vale.

[*Exeunt.*]Enter *BELVILLE.*

Bel. I tremble at the impression this lovely girl has made on my heart. My cheerfulness has left me, and I am grown insensible even to the delicious pleasure of making those happy who depend on my protection.

AIR.—*BELVILLE.*

*Ere bright Rosina met my eyes,
How peaceful pass'd the joyous day!
In rural sports I gain'd the prize,
Each virgin listen'd to my lay.
But now no more I touch the lyre,
No more the rustic sport can please;
I live the slave of fond desire,
Lost to myself, to mirth, and ease.
The tree, that in a happier hour,
Its boughs extended o'er the plain,
When blasted by the lightning's power,
Nor charms the eye, nor shades the swain.*

Since the sun rose, I have been in continual exercise; I feel exhausted, and will try to rest a quarter of an hour on this bank. [*Lies down on a bank.*]

Gleaners cross the stage; enter *ROSINA.*AIR.—*ROSINA.*

*Light as thistle-down moving, which floats on the air,
Sweet gratitude's debt to this cottage I bear:
Of autumn's rich store I bring home my part,
The weight on my head, but gay joy on my heart.*

What do I see? Mr. Belville asleep? I'll steal softly—at this moment I may gaze on him without blushing. [*Lays down the corn, and walks softly up to him.*] The sun points full on this spot; let me fasten these branches together with this riband, and shade him from its beams; yes, that will do. But if he should wake—[*Takes the riband from her bosom, and ties the branches together.*]—how my heart beats! One look more—ah! I have waked him.

[*She runs to the door of the cottage.*]

Bel. What noise was that? This riband I have seen before, and on the lovely Rosina's bosom.

[*Goes towards the cottage.*]

Ros. I will hide myself in the house. [*ROSINA opening the door, sees Capt. BELVILLE, and starts back.*] Heavens! a man in the house!

Capt. B. Now, love assist me!

[*Comes out and seizes Rosina; she breaks from him, and runs affrighted across the stage; BELVILLE follows; Capt. BELVILLE, who comes out to pursue her, sees his brother and steals off at the other side. BELVILLE leads ROSINA back.*]

Bel. Why do you fly thus, Rosina?*Ros.* Where is he? A gentleman pursued me.

Bel. Don't be alarmed, 'twas my brother; he could not mean to offend you.

Ros. Your brother! Why then does he not intimate your virtues? Why was he here?

Bel. Forget this; you are safe. But tell me, Rosina, for the question is to me of importance, have I not seen you wear this riband?

Ros. Forgive me, sir; I did not mean to disturb you. I only meant to shade you from the too great heat of the sun.

Bel. To what motive do I owe this tender attention?

Ros. Ah, sir; do not the whole village love you?

Bel. You tremble; why are you alarmed?

DUET.—*BELVILLE and ROSINA.*

Bel. For you, my sweet maid, nay, be not afraid,
I feel an affection which yet wants a name.

Ros. When first—but in vain—I seek to explain,
What heart but must love you? I blush, fear, and shame—

Bel. Why thus timid, Rosina? still safe by my side,
Let me be your guardian, protector, and guide.

Ros. My timid heart pants—still safe by your side,
Be you my protector, my guardian, my guide.

Bel. Why thus timid, &c.

Ros. My timid heart pants, &c.

Bel. Unveil your mind to me, Rosina. The graces of your form, the native dignity of your mind which breaks through the lovely simplicity of your deportment, a thousand circumstances concur to convince me you were not born a villager.

Ros. To you, sir, I can have no reserve. A pride, I hope an honest one, made me wish to sigh in secret over my misfortunes.

Bel. They are at an end.

Ros. Dorcas approaches, sir; she can best relate my melancholy story.

Enter *DORCAS.*

Dor. His honour here? Good lack!

Bel. Will you let me speak with you a moment alone, Dorcas?

Dor. Rosina, take this basket.

[*Exit ROSINA with the basket.*]

Bel. Rosina has referred me to you, Dorcas, for an account of her birth, which I have long suspected to be above her present situation.

Dor. To be sure, your honour, since the dear child gives me leave to speak, she's of as good a family as any in England. Her mother, sweet lady, was my bountiful old master's daughter, 'Squire Welford, of Lincolnshire. His estate was seiz'd for a mortgage of not half its value, just after young madam was married, and she ne'er got a penny of her portion.

Bel. And her father?

Dor. Was a brave gentleman, too, a colonel. His honour went to the Eastern Indies, to better his fortune, and madam would go with him. The ship was lost, and they, with all the little means they had, went to the bottom. Young madam Rosina was their only child; they left her at school; but when this sad news came, the mistress did not care for keeping her, so the dear child has shared my poor morsel.

Bel. But her father's name?

Dor. Martin; Colonel Martin.

Bel. I am too happy; he was the friend of my father's heart; a thousand times have I heard him

lament his fate. Rosina's virtues shall not go unrewarded.

Dor. Yes, I know'd it would be so. Heaven never forsakes the good man's children.

Bel. I have another question to ask you, Dorcas. and answer me sincerely; is her heart free?

Dor. To be sure, she never would let any of our young men come a-near her; and yet—

Bel. Speak; I am on the rack.

Dor. I'm afraid, she mopes and she pines. But your honour would be angry; I'm afraid the Captain—

Bel. Then my foreboding heart was right. [*Aside.*]

Enter RUSTIC.

Rust. Help, for heaven's sake, sir! Rosina's lost; she is carried away

Bel. Rosina!

Enter Captain BELVILLE.

Capt. B. Don't be alarmed; let me go; I'll fly to save her.

Bel. With me, sir; I will not lose sight of you. Rustic hasten instantly with our reapers. Dorcas, you will be our guide.

Rust. Don't be frightened, sir; the Irishmen have rescued her; she is just here. [*Exit.*]

Enter two Irishmen.

I Irish. Dry your tears, my jewel; we have done for them.

Dor. Have you sav'd her? I owe you more than life.

I Irish. Faith, good woman, you owe me nothing at all. I'll tell your honour how it was. My comrades and I were crossing the meadow, going home, when we saw them first; and hearing a woman cry, I look'd up, and saw them putting her into a skiff against her will. Says I, "Paddy, is not that the clever little crater that was glancing in the field with us this morning?" "'Tis so, sure enough," says he. "By St. Patrick," says I, "there's enough of us to rescue her." With that we ran for the bare life, waded up to the knees, laid about us bravely with our shillelaghs, knock'd them out of the skiff, and brought her back safe; and here she comes, my jewel.

Re-enter RUSTIC, leading ROSINA, who throws herself into DORCAS's arms.

Dor. I cannot speak; art thou safe?

Bel. I dread to find the criminal.

Rust. Your honour need not go far a-field, I believe; it must have been some friend of the Captain's, for his French valet commanded the party.

Capt. B. I confess the crime; my passion for Rosina hurried me out of myself.

Bel. You have dishonoured me, dishonoured the glorious profession you have embraced. But be gone; I renounce you as my brother, and renounce my ill-plac'd friendship.

Capt. B. Your indignation is just; I have offended almost past forgiveness. Will the offer of my hand repair the injury?

Bel. If Rosina accepts it, I am satisfied.

Ros. [*To BELVILLE.*] Will you, sir, suffer—This, sir, is a second insult. Whoever offends the object of his love, is unworthy of obtaining her.

Bel. This noble refusal paints your character. I know another, Rosina, who loves you with as

strong, though purer ardour;—but if allowed to hope—

Ros. Do not, sir, envy me the calm delight of passing my independent days with Dorcas, in whom I have found a mother's tenderness.

Bel. Do you refuse me too, then, Rosina?

Dor. You, sir? You?

Ros. My confusion, my blushes,—

Bel. Then I am happy! My life! my Rosina!

Phæ. Do you speak to his honour, William.

Will. No; do you speak, Phæbe.

Phæ. I am ashamed: William and I, your honour—William prayed me to let him keep me company; so he gained my good will to have him, if so be my grandmother consents.

Will. If your honour would be so good to speak to Dorcas.

Bel. Dorcas, you must not refuse me anything today. I'll give William a farm.

Dor. Your honour is too kind: take her, William, and make her a good husband.

Will. That I will, dame.

[*BELVILLE joins their hands; they bow and curtsy.*]

Will. and *Phæ.* Thank your honour.

Will. What must I do with the purse, your honour? Dorcas would not take it.

Bel. I believe my brother has the best right.

Capt. B. 'Tis your's, William; dispose of it as you please.

Will. Then I'll give it to our honest Irishmen, who fought so bravely for Rosina.

[*Exeunt Irishmen.*]

Bel. You have made good use of it, William; nor shall my gratitude stop here.

Capt. B. Allow me to retire, brother. When I am worthy of your esteem, I will return, and demand my rights in your affection.

Bel. You must not leave us, brother. Resume the race of honour; be indeed a soldier, and be more than my brother; be my friend.

FINALE.

Bel. To bless, and to be blest, be ours,
Whate'er our rank, whate'er our powers;
On some her gifts kind fortune showers,
Who reap, like us, in this rich scene.

Capt. B. Yet those who taste her bounty less,
The sigh malevolent repress,
And loud the feeling bosom bless,
Which something leaves for want to glean.

Ros. How blest am I, supremely blest!
Since Belville all his soul exprest,
And fondly clasp'd me to his breast:
I now may reap—how chang'd the scene!
But ne'er can I forget the day,
When all to want and woe a prey,
Soft pity taught his soul to say,
"Unfeeling Rustic, let her glean!"

Rust. The hearts you glad your own display,
The heav'n's such goodness must repay;
And blest through many a summer's day,
Full crops you'll reap in this rich scene;
Will. And O! when summer's joys are o'er,
Phæ. And autumn yields its fruits no more,
New blessings be there yet in store,
For winter's sober hours to glean.

Cho. And O! when summer's joys are o'er, &c.
[*Exeunt.*]

THOMAS AND SALLY ;

OR, THE SAILOR'S RETURN :

A MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT, IN TWO ACTS.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

THE 'SQUIRE
THOMAS.

SALLY
DORCAS.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Village at the foot of a hill, with a cottage more advanced than the rest, on one side.*

SALLY discovered spinning at the door.

AIR.—SALLY.

*My time how happy once, and gay !
Oh ! blithe I was as blithe could be :
But now I'm sad, ah, well-a-day !
For my true love is gone to sea.
The lads pursue, I strive to shun,
Though all their arts are lost on me
For I can never love but one,
And he, alas ! is gone to sea.
They bid me to the wake, the fair,
To dances on the neighb'ring lea ;
But how can I in pleasure share,
While my true love is out at sea ?
The flowers droop till light's return,
The pigeon mourns its absent she ;
So will I droop, so will I mourn,
Till my true love comes back from sea.*

Enter DORCAS.

Dorcas. What, will you never quit this idle trade ?
Still, still in tears ? Ah ! you're a foolish maid !
In time, have prudence, your own int'rest see ;
Youth lasts not always ; be advis'd by me.

AIR.—DORCAS.

*That May-day of life is for pleasure,
For singing, for dancing, and shew ;
Then why will you waste such a treasure
In sighing, and crying heigho ?
Let's copy the bird in the meadows,
By her's tune your pipe when 'tis low ;
Fly round, and coquet it as she does,
And never sit crying heigho !*

*Though when in the arms of a lover,
It sometimes may happen, I know,
That, e'er all our toying is over,
We cannot help crying heigho !
In age ev'ry one a new part takes,
I find, to my sorrow, 'tis so ;
When old, you may cry till your heart aches,
But no one will mind you—heigho !*

Sally. Leave me.

Dorcas. Go to. I come to make you glad,
Odzooks ! what's here ? this folly sets me mad.
You're grieving, and for whom ? 'tis pretty sport !
For one that gets a wife at ev'ry port.

Sally. Dorcas, for shame ! how can you be so base ?

Or after this, look Thomas in the face ?

His ship's expected—

Dorcas. Tell not me. The 'Squire—
As Tom is your's, you are his heart's desire.
You're grieving, and for whom ? 'tis pretty sport !
Then why so peevish, and so froward still ?
He'll make your fortune, let him have his will.

AIR.—SALLY.

*Were I as poor as wretch can be,
As great as any monarch he,
Ere on such terms I'd mount his throne,
I'd work my fingers to the bone.
Grant me, ye Pow'rs, (I ask not wealth,)
Grant me but innocence and health,
Ah ! what is grandeur link'd to vice ?
'Tis only virtue gives it price. [Exit.*

Dorcas. Well, go your ways. I cannot choose but smile :

Would I were young again ! alas, the while !
But what are wishes ? wishes will not do :
One cannot eat one's cake and have it too.

AIR.—DORCAS.

*When I was a young one, what girl was like me ?
So wanton, so airy, and brisk as a bee :
I tattled, I rambled, I laugh'd, and where'er
A fiddle was heard, to be sure I was there.
To all that came near I had something to say ;
'Twas this, sir, and that, sir, but scarce ever nay ;
And Sundays, dress'd out in my silks and my lace,
I warrant I stood by the best in the place.
At twenty, I got me a husband—poor man !
Well, rest him, we all are as good as we can ;
Yet he was so peevish, he'd quarrel for straws ;
And jealous—though, truly, I gave him some cause.*

*He snubb'd me and luff'd me; but let me alone,
Egad! I've a tongue and I paid him his own.
Ye wives, take the hint, and when spouse is untow'rd,
Stand firm to our charter, and have the last word.
But now I'm quite alter'd, the more to my woe;
I'm not what I was forty summers ago;
This time's a sore foe, there's no shunning his dart;
However, I keep up a pretty good heart.
Grown old, yet I hate to be sitting mumchance;
I still love a tune, though unable to dance;
And books of devotion laid by on my shelf,
I teach that to others I once did myself.* [Exit.]

The 'SQUIRE appears, descending the hill, with Huntsmen.

AIR.—The 'SQUIRE.

*Hark, hark! the shrill horn calls the sportsmen abroad;
To horse, my brave boys, and away;
The morning is up, and the cry of the hounds
Upbraids our too tedious delay.
What pleasure we feel in pursuing the fox!
O'er hill and o'er valley he flies;
Then follow, we'll soon overtake him—Huzza!
The traitor is seiz'd on, and dies.
Triumphant returning at night with the spoil,
Like Bacchanals, shouting and gay;
How sweet with a bottle and lass to refresh,
And lose the fatigues of the day!
With sport, love, and wine, fickle fortune defy;
Dull wisdom all happiness sours:
Since life is no more than a passage at best,
Let's strew the way over with flow'rs.
[Exeunt Huntsmen. The 'SQUIRE knocks at the door of the cottage.*

Enter SALLY.

Sally. Ah! whither have my heedless steps betray'd?

'Squire. Where would you fly? of who are you afraid?

Here's neither spectre, ghost, nor goblin nigh;
Nor any one but Cupid, you, and I.

Sally. Unlucky! [Aside.]

'Squire. 'Sdeath! she sets me all on fire.

Bewitching girl! I languish with desire.
But wherefore do you shrink, and trembling stand,
So coy, so silly?

Sally. Pray, sir, loose my hand.

AIR.—The 'SQUIRE.

*When late I wander'd o'er the plain,
From nymph to nymph I strove in vain
My wild desires to rally;
But now they're of themselves come home,
And, strange, no longer seek to roam:
They centre all in Sally.
Yet she, unkind one, damps my joy;
And cries I court but to destroy:
Can love with ruin tally?
By those dear lips, those eyes, I swear,
I would all deaths, all torments bear,
Rather than injure Sally.
Come, then, oh! come, thou sweeter far
Than jessamine and roses are,
Or lilies of the valley;
Oh! follow love, and quit your fear,
He'll guide you to these arms, my dear,
And make me bless'd in Sally.*

Sally. Sir, you bemean yourself; and, to be free,
Some lady you should choose of fit degree:
I am too low, too vulgar—

'Squire. Rather say,
There's some more favour'd rival in the way:
Some happy sweetheart in your thoughts takes place;
For him you keep your favours; that's the case.
Sally. Well, if it be, 'tis neither shame nor sin;
An honest lad he is, of honest kin:
No higher than my equal I pretend:
You have your answer, sir, and there's an end.

DUET.—The 'SQUIRE and SALLY.

'Squire. Come, come, my dear girl, I must not be deny'd;

Fine clothes you shall flash in, and rant it away.

I'll give you this purse, too; and, hark you! beside,

We'll kiss and we'll toy all the long summer's day.

Sally. Of kissing and toying you soon would be tir'd,

Oh! should hapless Sally consent to be naught.

Besides, sir, believe me, I scorn to be hir'd;
The heart's not worth gaining which is to be bought.

'Squire. Perhaps you're afraid of the world's busy tongue;

But know, above scandal you then shall be put;

And laugh, as you roll in your chariot along,
At draggle-tail chastity walking a-foot.

Sally. If only thro' fear of the world I were shy,
My coyness and modesty were but ill shewn;

Its pardon 'twere easy with money to buy;
But how, tell me how, I should purchase my own?

'Squire. Leave morals to grey beards, those lips were design'd

For better employment—

Sally. I will not endure—

'Squire. Oh fie! child, love bids you be rich, and be kind—

Sally. But virtue commands me be honest and poor. [Exeunt.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—The Sea-side.

Enter THOMAS, with Sailors in a boat, from which they land.

Thomas. Avast! my boys, avast! all hands ashore,
Messmates, what cheer? Old England, eh! once more.

I'm thinking how the wenches will rejoice;
Out with your presents, boys, and take your choice.
I've an old sweetheart—but look, there's the town;
Weigh anchor, tack about, and let's bear down.

AIR and CHORUS.—THOMAS and Sailors.

*How happy is the sailor's life,
From coast to coast to roam;
In every port he finds a wife,
In every land a home.
He loves to range,
He's no where strange:*

*He ne'er will turn his back,
To friend or foe ;
No, masters, no ;
My life for honest Jack.*

Cho. *He loves to range,* &c.*

*If saucy foes dare make a noise,
And to the sword appeal ;
We out, and quickly larn 'em boys,
With whom they have to deal.
We know no craft,
But 'fore and aft'
Lay on our strokes amain ;
Then, if they're stout,
For t'other bout,
We drub 'em o'er again.*

Cho. *We know no craft, &c.*

*Or fair or foul, let Fortune blow,
Our hearts are never dull ;
The pocket that to-day ebbs low,
To-morrow shall be full ;
For if so be,
We want, d'ye see ?
A pluck of this here stuff ;
In Indi—a,
And Americ—a,
We're sure to find enough.*

Cho. *For if so be, &c.*

*Then bless the king and bless the state,
And bless our captains all ;
And ne'er may chance unfortunate,
The British fleet befall.
But prosp'rous gales,
Where'er she sails,
And ever may she ride,
Of sea and shore,
Till time's no more,
The terror and the pride.*

Cho. *But prosp'rous gales, &c. [Exeunt.*

Enter the 'SQUIRE and DORCAS.

'Squire. In vain I've ev'ry wily art assay'd,
Nor promises can tempt, nor vows persuade ;
No prospect of success is left me now :
How shall I gain her ?

Dorcas. Why, I'll tell you how.
This way she comes ; the wench is full of pride,
Lay oaths, and vows, and promises aside :
Often, when regular approaches fail,
Besiegers storm a place, and so prevail.

AIR.—DORCAS.

*All you would wish to succeed with a lass,
Learn how the affair's to be done ;
For if you stand fooling, and shy, like an ass,
You'll lose her as sure as a gun.
With whining, and sighing, and vows, and all that,
As far as you please you may run ;
She'll hear you, and jeer you, and give you a pat,
But jilt you, as sure as a gun.*

*To worship, and call her bright goddess, is fine ;
But mark you the consequence, mum ;
The baggage will think herself really divine,
And scorn you as sure as a gun.*

*Then be with a maiden, bold, frolic, and stout,
And no opportunity shun ;*

*She'll tell you she hates you, and swear she'll cry out,
But mum—she's as sure as a gun. [Exeunt.*

Enter SALLY, with a milking pail.

Sally. How cruel those who, with ungen'rous aim,
Strive to seduce, and bring poor maids to shame !

That brutish 'squire ! but wherefore should I fear ?
I ne'er can turn false-hearted to my dear.
No, when he came his last farewell to take,
He bid me wear this token for his sake ;
He shall not prove me fickle and unkind ;
Or say, that—out of sight was out of mind.

AIR.—SALLY.

*Auspicious spirits guard my love,
In time of danger near him bide ;
With out-spread wings around him move,
And turn each random ball aside.
And you his foes, though hearts of steel,
Oh ! may you then with me accord ;
A sympathetic passion feel,
Behold his face, and drop the sword.
Ye winds, your blust'ring fury leave ;
Like airs that o'er the garden sweep ;
Breathe soft in sighs, and gently hush
The calm, smooth bosom of the deep.
Till halcyon peace return'd, once more,
From blasts secure, and hostile harms,
My sailor views his native shore,
And harbours safe in these fond arm.*

Enter the 'SQUIRE.

DUET.—The 'SQUIRE and SALLY.

'Squire. Well met, pretty maid ;
Nay, don't be afraid ;
I mean you no mischief, I vow ;
Psha ! what is't you ail ?
Come, give me your pail,
And I'll carry it up to your cow.

Sally. Pray let it alone,
I've hands of my own,
Nor need your's to help me—*forbear !*
How can you persist ?
I won't, sir, be kiss'd,
Nor teas'd thus—go trifle elsewhere.

'Squire. In yon lonely grove,
I saw an alcove,
All round the sweet violet springs ;
And there was a thrush,
Hard by in a bush,
'Twould charm you to hear how he sing.

Sally. But hark ! pr'ythee, hark !
Look, yonder's a lark,
It warbles and pleases me so ;
To hear the soft tale,
O' th' sweet nightingale,
I would not be tempted to go.

'Squire. Then here we'll sit down ;
Come, come, never frown,
No longer my bliss I'll retard ;
Kind Venus shall spread,
Her veil over head,
And the little rogue, Cupid, keep guard.

Enter THOMAS.

Thomas. What's this I see ? May I believe my eyes ?

A pirate just about to board my prize !
'Tis well I this way chanc'd my course to steer—
Sal, what's the matter ?

Sally. Thomas !

'Squire. 'Sdeath ! who's here ?

Fellow, begone, or—

Thomas. Larn your phrase to mend :
Do you sheer off, or else I'll make you, friend.
Let go the wench, I claim her for my share,
And now lay hands upon her—if you dare.

TRIO.—*The 'Squire, THOMAS, and SALLY.*

'Squire. *Saucy rascal, this intrusion*

*You shall answer to your cost :
Bully'd !—scandaliz'd !—confusion !
All my schemes and wishes cross'd.*

Thomas. *Hark you, master, keep your distance ;*

*'Sblood ! take notice what I say :
There's the channel, no resistance,
Tack about, and bear away.*

Sally. *Would you wrest our freedom from us ?*

*Now my heart has lost its fear :
Oh ! my best, my dearest Thomas,
Sure some angel brought you here.*

'Squire. *Since her paltry inclination,
Stoops to such a thing as you ;*

*Thus I make a recantation,
Wretched, foolish girl, adieu !* [Exit.

Sally. *Oh ! welcome, welcome ! How shall I im-
part*

*The joy this happy meeting gives my heart ?
Now, Tom, in safety stay at home with me,
And never trust again that treach'rous sea.*

Thomas. *Excuse me, Sir, while mighty George
has foes,*

On land and main, their malice I'll oppose.

*But hang this talking, my desires are keen ;
You see yon steeple, and know what I mean.*

DUET.—*THOMAS and SALLY.*

Thomas. *Let fops pretend in flames to melt,
And talk of pangs they never felt ;
I speak without disguise or art,
And with my hand bestow my heart.*

Sally. *Let ladies prudishly deny,
Look cold, and give their thoughts the lie ;
I own the passion in my breast,
And long to make my lover blest.*

Thomas. *For this the sailor on the mast,
Endures the cold and cutting blast ;
All dripping wet, wears out the night,
And braves the fury of the fight.*

Sally. *For this the virgin pines and sighs,
With throbbing heart, and streaming eyes ;
Till sweet reverse of joy she proves,
And clasps the faithful lad she loves.*

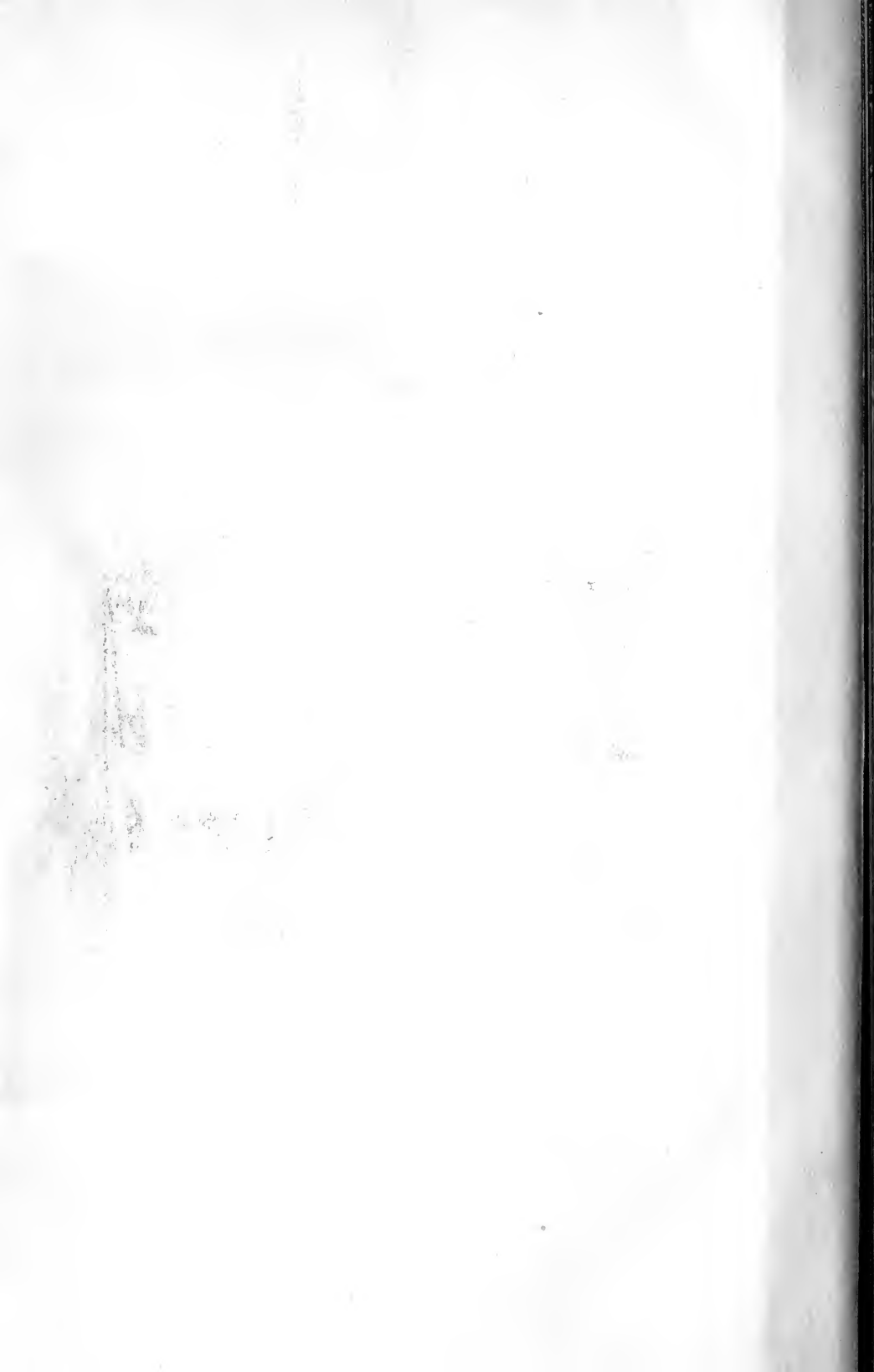
Both. *Ye British youths, be brave, you'll find,
The British virgins will be kind ;
Protect their beauty from alarms,
And they'll repay you with its charms.* [Exeunt.

FINIS.









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The acting drama

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